GUIDELINE
VOLUNTARY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
(August 2000)

This guideline is intended to assist practising professional engineers and professional geoscientists to maintain and enhance their competence.

What is professional development?

Professional development is the on-going acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes which increase the effectiveness and competence of a professional practitioner.

Why undertake professional development?

Three reasons to undertake Professional Development are:

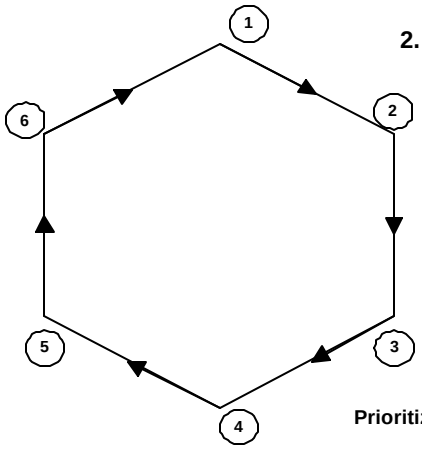
1. To enhance my ability to fulfill my professional responsibilities to the **public**;
2. To enhance my ability to fulfill my professional responsibilities for my **employer** or **client**; and
3. For **personal** benefit, to enhance:
    - job satisfaction
    - advancement potential
    - mobility.

What is the professional development process?

The Professional Development process is a continuous cycle, as illustrated in the diagram below, including planning and action steps. Consultation with colleagues, peers and employer is useful and encouraged.

1. Where am I now?

Identify the scope of my professional responsibilities and my current combination of knowledge, skills and abilities



2. Where do I need/want to be?

For both the short and long term consider the following:
- potential for adverse impact on the public
- nature and extent of change (scientific, technological, organizational, regulatory, business etc.)
- personal goals

3. Where is the gap?

Prioritize the areas in need of upgrading

4. Select appropriate activities

Options include:
- professional practice
- structured courses or programs
- informal activities
- public, professional & community service
- contributions to knowledge

5. Do

Perform the selected professional development activities within a reasonable time frame

6. Document

After performing the activity, ask yourself if you have achieved your goal

As a matter of due diligence, maintain a file of the activities completed

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What are the appropriate activities for undertaking professional development?

Appropriate Professional Development Activities to be selected are largely dependent on the gap you have identified. These include:

1. ***Professional Practice***

Professional practice is known to be a significant factor contributing to competency. Pursue opportunities to learn "on the job" to close the gaps you have identified.

2. ***Structured Courses or Programs***

Structured courses or programs are often for credit, and occasionally involve an evaluation process. Delivery methods can include traditional classroom settings, and remote techniques such as correspondence, video, or interactive electronic exchange. These include:

- Undergraduate or graduate courses provided through universities, technical institutes and colleges
- Industry-sponsored courses, programs and seminars
- Employer-sponsored training programs and structured on-the-job training
- Short course provided by technical societies

3. ***Informal Activities***

Informal activities are those not normally offered by an educational institution or other formalized organization, but which nevertheless expand knowledge, skills or judgement. These include:

- Self-directed study, such as reading technical journals, books, or manuals
- Attendance at conferences, technical sessions, talks, workshops and industry trade shows
- Attendance at meetings of technical, professional or managerial associations or societies
- Structured discussions of technical or professional issues with peers

4. ***Public, Community, and Professional Service***

Undertaking activities that promote peer interaction and provide exposure to new ideas and technologies both enhances the profession and serve the public interest. These include:

- Serving as a mentor to a member in training, a less-experienced professional member or a technologist
- Serving as a supervisor or advisor to a graduate student in the preparation of a thesis
- Presenting to schools, participating in career days, judging science fairs, etc.
- Serving on public bodies that draw on professional experience (e.g. planning boards, development appeal boards, investigative commissions, review panels, community building committees, etc.);
- Activities that contribute to the community requiring professional and ethical behaviour, but not necessarily the application of technical knowledge, including active service for professional, services, and community organizations, or elected office
- Service on standing, advisory or ad-hoc committees of technical, professional, or managerial associations or societies

5. ***Contributions to Knowledge***

Activities that expand or develop technical knowledge include:

- Developing Codes and Standards for publication
- Inventing or discovering a new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement of such, eligible for a patent
- Publishing papers in peer-reviewed technical journals
- Publishing articles in non-reviewed journals
- Reviewing articles for publication
- Editing papers for publication
- Undertaking technical and professional presentations

What are options for documenting professional development activities?

A variety of documentation approaches are possible. Adopt a system appropriate to your requirements. A sample form and a planning example in PDF are available from the APEGM web site at www.apegm.mb.ca under *Professional Development* or from the APEGM office. Another simple but important record keeping measure is to maintain an up-to-date resume.

What about other jurisdictions?

If you are considering practicing in another jurisdiction, be aware that some have a mandatory professional development requirement. Contact the relevant jurisdiction for more information. Links to other Canadian engineering and geoscience associations can be found on the APEGM web site under *Links*.

Where to go for help?

If you need more information to assist you in planning and carrying out your professional development activities visit the APEGM Professional Development web page on the www.apegm.mb.ca web site or contact the Association office.