
Supercharging your CPD with CPD23



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INTRODUCTION

The '23 things' model of training has become popular in recent years, with programmes delivered in many different countries and types of institution. The original 23 things programme was developed by Helene Blowers of the Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County as a way to encourage and support public library workers in their exploration of social media tools.¹ Typically a 23 things programme consists of 23 short exercises designed to help participants explore new technologies, usually with some kind of reward for completing the programme. The model has been adapted for use in academic libraries and for other target groups such as researchers² and in specific research areas such as the digital humanities.³

In 2010, two different 23 things programmes were organised in the University of Cambridge, one for library staff across the university⁴ and the other focusing on the needs of library staff at Cambridge University Medical Library.⁵ One of the authors of this article participated in both programmes, and thought that this model would work well for a professional development programme for new professionals.⁶ 23 Things for Professional Development (CPD23) would focus more on the individual and would combine aspects of continued personal professional development with elements of the traditional social media programme. Most importantly, this programme would not be located in one institu-

23 Things for Professional Development

The screenshot shows a website layout for '23 Things for Professional Development'. The main content area is titled 'Schedule for CPD23 2012' and is dated 'Tuesday, 1 May 2012'. It contains an introductory paragraph, a 'The Plan' section with three weeks of activities, and a 'Contributors' list. The 'Contributors' list includes Helen Murphy, Ieamh Tunney, Bethan Ruddock, Claire Sewell, Ange Fitzpatrick, and wigglesweets. The right sidebar contains 'Useful Information', 'Subscribe To' (with dropdowns for Posts and Comments), 'Follow by Email' (with an input field and Submit button), and 'What's coming up?' (with a link to the full calendar).

The 23 things blog

tion. Instead, it would be open to any information professionals, especially those who do not have the support networks that are available in larger organisations. Further discussion revealed that this programme would also be of interest to librarians who did not meet the 'new professionals' description and to information professionals outside the library sector, so the decision was made to keep 23 Things for Professional Development open to anyone interested in participating.

A core team from the University of Cambridge met to discuss what should be included in a 23 things programme for professional development. We felt that we would benefit from the expertise of particular individuals outside Cambridge, and the final organising team included volunteers from three different countries and six different institutions. Most of the work was conducted online from that point on, and the schedule was finalised using Google Docs. The 23 things were divided between the organising team and invited guest bloggers, and the programme was delivered collaboratively using Blogger.⁷

CPD23 ROUND 1

The first round of 23 Things for Professional Development ran from June to November 2011. Before launch, the programme was promoted through organisers' blogs, mailing lists, social media and traditional media (e.g. newsletters).

The programme was also picked up by influential blogs, such as Tame The Web, who invited a guest blog post;⁸ this helped to raise its profile and widen the audience.

The 23 things included a combination of 'things' on technological tools (e.g. blogging, RSS, Twitter, Evernote, Google Docs, Prezi) as well as 'things' covering different areas of professional development (e.g. reflective practice, online and face-to-face networks, mentoring, and attending and/or presenting at organising events). A full list of the 23 things is available online.⁹


Each thing was scheduled in advance on the blog – we aimed to ensure that all things were ready at least one week in advance to allow time to sort out any problems. In addition to producing the things, the organising team shared responsibility for the social media accounts, keeping them updated each week and monitoring for any questions. We also encouraged use of the hashtag #cpd23 and monitored that from our own Twitter accounts and the programme Twitter account.¹⁰

In order to develop a sense of community, each registered blog was added to a combined RSS feed which was displayed on the programme blog sidebar, and each participant was added to a Delicious account with relevant tags.¹¹ This enabled participants to find others working in a similar area to them or based in a similar location.

23 Things for Professional Development

Pages

- Home
- Participants



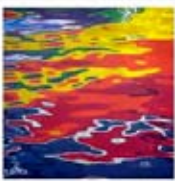
Contributors

- Helen Murphy
- Niamh Tumelty
- Bethan Ruddock
- Claire Sewell
- Ange Fitzpatrick
- wigglesweets
- Men Westbury

Monday, 28 May 2012

Thing 5 - Reflective Practice

Thing 5 already? Yes indeed! Thing 5 is **Reflective Practice**. As you've been working through 'the things' you may have learnt how to use some new tools or had a refresher on the tools that you use already. You may have been encouraged to restart abandoned blogs or join Twitter with a clearer understanding of your online presence and what you want people to know about you. You may have taken steps to get some more current awareness on the go by setting up some RSS feeds. Whatever you have got out of 23 things for professional development so far take a bit of time this week to reflect.



Reflection of Hope by ecotist on Flickr

What is reflective practice?
This post is by no means an in depth piece defining and examining the theories of reflective practice, but more of an introduction to how to get going with it yourself. If you do want a more in depth look into reflective practice I've included some references at the end of post.
I see reflective practice as an important part of not only our professional, but personal development. It provides an opportunity to **review the experiences we have, learning from them and applying what we have learnt.**

How do I become a reflective practitioner?
Everyone will have their own style and preferred process of reflective practice, this

Useful Information

- The cpd23 Things (2012 schedule)
- All about 23 Things
- How do I sign up? (2012)
- Real-life networking: cpd23 meet-ups

Subscribe To

- Posts
- Comments

Follow by Email

What's coming up?

[Go to the full calendar](#)


Showing events after 11:00

Thing 5: Reflective practice

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Contributors

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- Men Westbury

Monday, 16 July 2012

Thing 12: Putting the social into social media



This week is a quiet catch up week so you can all take a deep breath and relax! This is a chance for those still trying to complete previous Things to do so, but it also gives everyone a chance to pause and reflect for a moment (putting into practice the skills you all learnt in Thing 5).

Information professionals are turning more and more towards social media as a way of advancing their professional knowledge and networks. The initial run of CPD23 had nearly 100 registered participants before the programme started, rising to nearly 800. This was all achieved through promotion of the programme on social media, demonstrating the reach that it can have.

Using social media for professional development has been the subject of many recent articles and debates. In an article in CILIP's Update magazine, Debby Raven gave a brief rundown of the advantages of information professionals using social media for professional development.

- Social networking can lead to better communication.** This can be with either people you already know, for example from events or work, or with people that you would never normally have a chance to meet. I've 'met' people on Twitter who I'll probably never meet in real life, mainly because they live all over the world. Without social media it's difficult to think how I could have made these connections

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Showing events after 11:00

Thing 12: Putting the social into social media

Over the course of the first round of the programme, 959 participants signed up and 112 successfully completed all 23 things in time for the certificate – a customised PDF emailed to each participant who successfully completed all 23 things by the cut-off date.

CPD23 ROUND 2

During the first round of CPD23, we had a number of requests for it to be run again at a different time or a slightly slower pace (i.e. with more catch-up weeks). As the content was already

there, we decided to run the programme again at a slightly slower pace during 2012. The second programme ran from May to October 2012. A total of 361 participants signed up, and 44 completed before the end of November 2012 (certificate cut-off date).

EVALUATION

We asked both cohorts to complete a survey, which included quantitative and qualitative feedback on the programme for evaluation purposes. We have received 167 responses so far. The following gives a brief overview of our findings.

Participation

Many participants found out about the programme via social networks (37%), email (28%) or via recommendation from a colleague (25%). A small number (6%) found out at an event (the organising team presented talks and posters at events), whilst others found out about it elsewhere.

Most respondents to the evaluation survey had completed the programme or intended to do so. Those who chose not to gave the following reasons:

- time
- competing priorities (e.g. work became busy)
- completed independently or dipped in and out (but chose not to blog publicly)
- already knew about many of the 'things'

The majority of respondents would be interested in participating at another time; 92% in a follow-up course with additional things, and 10% in the same course at another time.

The 23 things

Most of the things in the programme were rated as very useful or useful, with all receiving an average rating above 3 out of 5. The most popular thing was considering your personal brand. Other popular things included blogging, RSS feeds, reflective practice and Prezi/data visualisation/SlideShare.

Some participants chose not to complete all 23 things or were unable to access the resources (e.g. unable to access some of the sites due to organisational filters).

CPD23 community

Most respondents (85%) followed other 23 Things for Professional Development blogs, with many commenting on other participants' blogs. The other social networks used by the programme varied in popularity: the Twitter account currently has 1037 followers, the Facebook page¹² has 264 likes and the LinkedIn group¹³ has 921 members. Many commented on the value of the community aspect to the programme:

The best things about the programme were feeling part of a community.

Others did not like the community aspect:

I have to admit I found this more of a gimmick.

Some chose to opt out of the community aspects of the programme by participating offline, reflecting purely on an individual basis.

77% of survey respondents felt they had gained new connections and developed their personal learning network; many commented that they plan to continue to use these:

It has helped me connect with people via blogs and Twitter and I will continue to use these connections in my personal learning network to share links of relevance and communicate to share best practice.

The open nature of the programme has helped to build links outside common networks, encouraging connections to be made both locally and internationally:

I got more connected with folks in my library to share what I had learned.

Still making new connections on Twitter (which is the way of it I guess), but made new local connections too, and enjoyed the physical meet up we had.

Being based in the US, cpd23 has enabled me to build an extended network in the UK.

Course feedback

Though people had a number of different reasons for participating and had differing expectations from the programme, these were largely met or exceeded:

I expected the course to provide an introduction to using social media and how to integrate

23 Things for Professional Development

The screenshot shows a website layout for '23 Things for Professional Development'. At the top left is a 'Pages' menu with 'Home' and 'Participants'. Below it is a large 'cpd23' logo. To the right of the logo is a 'Contributors' list with names: Helen Murphy, Niamh Tumely, Bethan Ruddock, Claire Sewell, Ange Fitzpatrick, and wigglesweets. The main content area is dated 'Monday, 24 September 2012' and features the article 'Thing 21: Promoting yourself in job applications and at interview'. The article text includes: 'Well done for making it so far! After learning so many useful things, we need to think about how to promote all the hard work we do and the abilities and skills we have acquired in our career and life so far. Part 1: Identifying your strengths; capitalising on your interests'. There is an illustration of a cartoon character flexing his arm. The text continues: 'These two really go together. What you like doing is often also what interests you, and vice-versa. In order to identify your strengths, take a good look at yourself, your tasks at work, your career, your life, what do you like to do? What do you dislike? Do you remember the last time you felt that feeling of deep satisfaction after creating, building, completing something? What was it about? What skills do you need to do the things you like? These skills are your strengths; they stem from your interests. I am a strong believer in the fact that people are happy when they do something they actually enjoy. As we spend most part of our lives working, a sure way to be happy is to do a job you like (or love, if you are very lucky). A job that allows you to capitalise on your interests and use the skills needed to pursue them.' On the right side of the page, there is a 'Useful Information' section with links: 'The cpd23 Things (2012 schedule)', 'All about 23 Things', 'How do I sign up? (2012)', and 'Real-life networking: cpd23 meet-ups'. Below that is a 'Subscribe To' section with dropdown menus for 'Posts' and 'Comments'. Further down is a 'Follow by Email' section with an 'Email address' input field and a 'Submit' button. At the bottom right is a 'What's coming up?' section with a link 'Go to the full calendar'.

Thing 21: Promoting yourself

social media tools into my professional practice. I expected the course to provide the opportunity for self-exploration and self-reflection while connecting me with other LIS professionals from different sectors. My expectations of the course have been met.

Criticisms of the course included the fact that some of the 'things' were very similar to regular 23 things programmes, so those who had already completed one felt they were repeating some elements. Some commented that they would have preferred a focus on just the technology tools rather than the broader professional development focus, whilst others liked the more reflective focus to supplement the technologies.

98% of respondents felt that the course had developed skills for professional development; many of them commented on the usefulness of the reflective practice element (i.e. considering implications within professional practice and blogging about these). The programme helped some people gain confidence to try new things and participate in professional activities, and a number commented that it had helped towards a qualification (e.g. CILIP certification, award of charter or revalidation):

It's given me wider and deeper opportunities than I was expecting, largely due to my engagement with ACLIP. It's very well structured to provide the relevant kind of evidence for CILIP's CPD programmes.

Blogging has enabled me to develop the skill of self-reflective writing which is a necessary requirement of CILIP Chartership.

Overall, many respondents enjoyed completing the programme and developed skills and knowledge to support professional development and future career:

CPD23 has been a really fun and worthwhile learning experience. It has helped develop and stretch me and I can see my career going in a new direction.

Thanks so much for all your hard work organizing and facilitating cpd23. I know it took a lot of time, energy, and care to start and sustain the program. Please know that your efforts have produced real and positive changes in my professional self.

I would like to thank everyone involved in creating and maintaining the programme. Their patience, help and friendliness made this the best CPD I have done in years! A follow-up course would be amazing!

CHALLENGES MET

The following highlights some of the challenges we faced and how we addressed them; we hope this helps others who might be planning a similar programme.

Challenge: Keeping it relevant to a wide range of information professionals at different stages of their career, particularly difficult since the majority of the organisers are at the librarian end of the spectrum and relatively new to the profession.

Solution: We clearly stated that we were writing from the perspective of our experiences, but that we would love to hear how the topic related to other parts of the profession/stages of participants' careers. We invited contributors from other locations and areas of the profession and welcomed guest posts from librarians at later stages of their career and from less traditional roles, including academic staff and a special library. We also used social media to highlight blog posts from participants in other areas of the profession or with a unique perspective.

Challenge: The volume of content required for a 23 things programme.

Solution: There was a team working on it, so everyone did a little rather than a small number of people trying to write the full course.

Challenge: Supporting such a large and diverse group of participants.

Solution: We had to accept that the same level of support provided in institutional programmes (e.g. drop-in sessions) was not going to be possible in this context. Instead we encouraged peer support using Delicious/Diigo lists, provided a blogroll of recent posts by participants, created a Google Reader bundle, and encouraged real-life meet-ups where there was local demand.

Challenge: Ongoing demand for this sort of training.

Solution: We ran it a second time. We don't have capacity (or energy!) to run it a third time, but content will stay online so people can dip into it as they need to and we intend to put up a blog post suggesting other training opportunities, e.g. MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), Codecademy and other 23 things programmes.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the 23 Things for Professional Development programme demonstrated that the 23 things model can be adapted for different purposes and can be used as a broader training programme, not just at an organisational level. The programme was of particular value to solo librarians with little opportunity to attend more traditional training and conferences.

We were delighted that what began as an idea for a slightly different adaptation of the 23 things approach resulted in a continuing professional development programme which encouraged over 1300 participants to register and was runner-up for the Credo Reference Digital Award for Information Literacy.¹⁴ The project was a truly collaborative one, and shows that with a shared objective and an enthusiastic team, anything is possible!

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