

5 easy ways to boost your professional development

For many, the term 'Professional development is all about learning and building on the skills and knowledge you have so that you can keep pushing the boundaries of what you can achieve. It should be continuous and ongoing so that you are always growing as a professional.

Professional development is all about learning and building on the skills and knowledge you have so that you can keep pushing the boundaries of what you can achieve.

To help you with this, we have developed these 5 easy ways to start boosting your professional development today:

1. **Use the power of social media to forge new connections and share learnings.**

Never have we been so connected – never has it been so easy to communicate with a broad range of people. I mean, you can tweet Mark Zuckerberg! Sure, he probably won't respond, but that gives you an idea of the unprecedented access we have today.

Cultivate a strong online community of people you respect and admire – listen to what they have to say and engage with them. There are hardly any limits on how wide you can cast your net, so don't restrict yourself to people who work exclusively in your industry.

2. **Mentor someone or be mentored.**

"Mentoring is priceless," says Kristine Tuazon, Principal Consultant at Good People HR. It allows you to learn directly from people who've experienced many of the same challenges you might be facing. "A good mentor will help you avoid the pitfalls and mistakes they may have made," says Tuazon.

Also, don't underestimate how beneficial it can be to mentor someone else. You never know what you might learn from an up and comer if you approach the relationship with an open mind and a willingness to learn.

3. **Read, read, read.** Schedule time each week to dedicate to reading, not just news relating to your industry but a diverse reading list. Make this part of your weekly routine and never miss it.

Tuazon suggests starting a book club with like-minded people. This is a great way to

keep yourself accountable, but it also allows you to discuss texts with others, which can often deepen your understanding and enrich the whole experience.

Here are a few Tuazon's favourite reads:

- *Good to Great by Jim Collins*
- *Leaders Eat Last by Simon Sinek*
- *7 Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen Covey*

4. **Podcasts can entertain, teach and broaden your horizons.** 'Podcasts are an inexpensive, up-to-the-minute way of consuming news and information,' says Tuazon. 'Subscribe to relevant and well-known people that have a great reputation in your field.'

Here are a couple of suggestions to help get you started:

- *How I built this by NPR*
- *The school of greatness by Lewis Howes*

5. **Workshops.** Never let a good training opportunity go to waste. If you or someone in your team has recently attended some training make sure that you share those learnings and explore how you can implement some of them back into the business through team workshops.

Workshops can also be opportunity to meet like-minded people and network. Often you can learn just as much from the people you meet there as you can from the person running it.

At the end of the day, you'll get the best results and have the most rewarding experiences if you approach professional development with an open mind and a willingness to engage and learn from others.