



### **The Lesson of Lifelong Learning- BBB (Borrow)**

*Continuing Professional Development A Practical Approach* by John Lorriman

Reviewed by Nick Sands

Few books have been written on the subject of professional development, though some very interesting work has been done in this area. John Lorriman is certainly dedicated to self-development and he has provided guidance for the rest of us in *Continuing Professional Development; A Practical Approach*. Lorriman has been a member of the Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE), now the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET), where he was a past chairman of the Professional Development Committee and founder of the Training Committee. He is also a member of the International Association for Continuing Engineering Education (IACEE), and chair of the Professional Development Working group. He has written articles, newsletters, and two books on professional development.

The author starts an explanation of continuing professional development (CPD). Formal and informal definitions are given, but Lorriman also asks the reader to develop his or her own definition. CPD is presented as the responsibility of the individual, but also of great benefit to companies and other organizations. A manager's primary role should be coaching and helping individuals grow toward their potential. To reinforce the message that CPD is a personal responsibility, the author has included testimonials by a variety of individuals.

The next chapters provide some guidance on how to proceed once you accept the need for CPD. One step is to identify your key competencies or skill areas, either technical or non-technical. This can be done using a competency scale, like 1 to 6 or 1 to 5, to identify current and goal skill levels. Lorriman suggests linking this to performance appraisals. The competency analysis can be documented in a personal development plan (PDP) or a personal development record (PDR). Examples of PDRs, some of which are available free on-line, are shared, along with case studies of organizations which use PDRs.

Mentoring, putting competence into people, and coaching, drawing contributions from people, are important tools for CPD. In an outdated chapter, the author also discusses the use of CD-ROMs, which were new at the time, and software as tools for development. His advice is even truer for the software tools of today. This also applies to distance learning, which is even more available today, and open learning, such as reading, audio tapes and CDs. Other development opportunities are offered through universities and professional organizations like ISA. Several interesting case studies are again provided. In the final chapter Lorriman discusses CPD in an international context.

Lorriman and the IEE, now IET, demonstrated their commitment to CPD by writing and publishing *Continuing Professional Development; A Practical Approach*. This book may not be an obvious choice as an important read, but it may have a real impact on your career. Borrow (BBB) this one and renew your commitment to continue your development. The paperback edition is available from Amazon.com for \$35.