

Learning logs: What tangible value from my first 33 years?

In conversation with Jon Bowles

Summary of Podcast content with timings

- 0.50 When did you start it, and what prompted you to begin this journey?
- 1.10 I had completed my professional certification more than two years previously.
- 1.40 For those two years I had been nagged at my wiser, older far more experienced friend to keep a log.
- 2.15 He knew I needed a flexible, self-driven reflective process that confronted my learning preferences.
- 2.35 I was fortunate to be guided by someone who knew my needs far better I did myself.
- 3.10 My 2nd learning entry was written five weeks after the 1st, headed 'Non completion of learning log'.
- 4.00 My format: A title of 'Significant experience', then 'What happened?' 'Conclusions' 'Actions' 'When?'.
- 4.15 As a not naturally reflective person the most important section is 'Conclusions' - all start with 'that'.
- 5.05 For whom are they most and least appropriate – who gets greatest and least value from doing this?
- 5.25 People often say: 'I am not a reflective person, I couldn't do that'...these people would benefit most.
- 5.45 I do this to confront my inadequacies as a learner, to provide structure for reflection and retention.
- 5.55 The people keeping a learning log most attract are those that stand to gain the least from the effort.
- 6.25 My structure emphasises analysis and reflection, if needed, adapt to stress activity and application.
- 7.10 People resist this and other forms of learning because they don't see swift rewards for efforts made.
- 7.20 Many say 'I don't see the point of this' – how can this be changed, well I am not sure it can be!
- 7.45 Unless we feel the time and effort this takes is worth it we will never find the internal desire it needs.
- 8.00 I spend around an hour a week on my learning log not, I feel, too much to ask of a true professional.
- 8.30 I can't pretend that after my fourth learning log I became a reflective insightful person – it took years.
- 8.45 This form and others of learning doesn't suit people who can be bothered, who prefer to be passive.
- 9.10 I feel it is possible to be competent and capable professional without doing what I do for my CPD.
- 9.25 I do this as a corrective, remedial means to compensate for a lack of reflective competence.
- 9.40 By whatever means, I believe a conscious deliberate means of reflecting enhances practice.
- 11.25 Do you review and read past learning log entries? Answer, 'no I don't – never have'.
- 11.50 The value for me of keeping a hand written record of my learning is that it slows my thinking down.

- 12.15 When writing an entry I often get new and deeper insights that would have otherwise have been lost.
- 12.45 Development value comes not from re-reading, but from the articulation and accessing as I write.
- 13.10 I have seen learning log formats of many pages, it doesn't have to be that complex.
- 13.25 I always write the heading, the 'Significant experience' last, so it reflects and doesn't lead content.
- 13.45 My 'What happened?' section could be a retrospective summary, or a forward look ahead and plan.
- 15.10 The 'Actions' in my learning log can be chronological (by a specified time), or sequential, (next time).
- 15.40 I hand write my learning log because it seems more authentic, and avoids typing and 'editing'.
- 15.50 I started my log in 1987, long before I typed anything – it makes sense to type it up now.
- 17.10 Is it ever too late to start keeping a learning log?
- 17.40 I don't feel any time is too late to record your learning, it's all down as ever to motivation and desire.