Just a click away: Understanding the digital skills of the UK Career Development Sector

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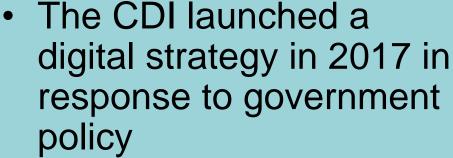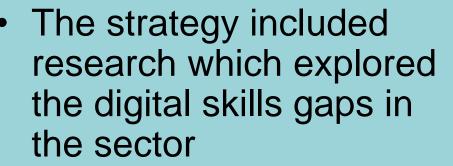# What is this presentation going to cover?

- What skills do career development practitioners have and how have these served us during the current crisis?

- What skills do career development practitioners need to develop and how would these have helped?

- How can career development practitioners develop new digital skills which will help them to innovate and respond when traditional methods of delivery fail.

Background to the research

- The CDI launched a digital strategy in 2017 in response to government policy

- The strategy included research which explored the digital skills gaps in the sector

- This was to help inform a programme of training and development

What have we learned about how digital technology is being used?

The research found that technology was used in two main ways:

- To deliver services - directly with clients
- To manage the activities of practitioners and the organisations that they worked for.

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What has the pandemic told us about how digital technology is being used?

Observations of social media platforms and conversations have shown that this is no different. The main change is the rapid move towards using digital applications. More people than ever before have needed these skills.

What was unthinkable just 6 weeks ago is now a reality for most of us. We can move seamlessly between a variety of platforms for communicating, networking and managing our businesses

What have we learned about the barriers and enablers to the use of digital technology? The research told us…

- Barriers are school policies, lack of skills of both practitioners and clients, and technology failures which undermine practitioner confidence
- Practitioners want to improve their use of technology. Enablers are the availability of equipment, training and support

What have we learned about the barriers and enablers to the use of digital technology? The current crisis has shown us

- Barriers are school policies. There have been concerns raised about the ethics of using digital platforms to provide one to one guidance. These are largely to do with issues of safeguarding.

- The current situation has shown us that necessity is the mother of invention!

What have we learned about career development practitioners digital skills and competence? The research told us

- There is an increasing move away from traditional, desk-based ways of working and traditional working spaces.
- Practitioners are increasingly working flexibly, using a range of devices or 'screens' such as laptops, telephones, and tablet PC's, from home and community settings.
- Practitioners need to develop new skills and know how to manage the change to non-traditional methods and approaches

What have we learned about career development practitioners digital skills and competence? The crisis has shown us…

- Practitioners have been open to embracing the challenge and have sought new ways of working. Home working is now the norm and most have become adept at moving between platforms for meetings, document storage and sharing.

- The time is now!

What is digital literacy?

"Digital literacy refers to the capabilities required for living, learning and working in a digital society" (Jisc 2015)

ICT proficiency and productivity

The confident use of devices, applications, software and services and the ability to stay up to date as technology changes

Digital communication collaboration and participation

The confident, and competent use of communication technology and an understanding of the safe, ethical and legal use of such applications

Digital creation, problem solving and innovation

The use of digital applications to make new artefacts, apply digital solutions in new settings and to research applications to solve a range of problems

What is digital literacy?

Information, data and media literacies

The capacity to find, evaluate, interpret, manage, curate, organise and share digital information in an ethical and legal manner

Digital learning and development

The capacity to design, deliver, participate in and benefit from digital learning opportunities; to identify and use digital learning resources.

Digital identity and wellbeing

The capacity to develop and project a positive digital identity or identities and to manage digital reputation (personal or organisational) across a range of platforms

Strengths and areas for development

Digital productivity and proficiency skills are strong with the exception of contributing to Blogs and public webpages.

Information, data and media literacies are strong with the exception of running advanced internet searches, copyright law, survey design and the use of online survey tools, and reacting to being 'hacked'.

Practitioners want training on fundamental design skills for producing eye catching, engaging and effective information products such as infographics, presentation slides, posters and leaflets.

Strengths and areas for development

Digital learning and development skills were less strong generally, although there were some strengths in the use of digital applications to support own learning.

Practitioners are less confident in using technology to support the development of digital materials and the delivery of learning activities.

Strengths and areas for development

- This has had an implication for all of those delivering programmes of careers education.
- Social media groups are full of requests for materials which can be adapted for online or virtual delivery.
- These do not tackle the issue of developing effective approaches to digital pedagogy.
- The current crisis has shown this to be a an important area for development

Strengths and areas for development

Digital identity and wellbeing skills are strong

Practitioners want practitioners are under confident in managing their own online identity and in challenging unacceptable behaviours of others in the use of digital applications.

Implications for training and development

- There are implications for practitioners in terms of the applications which they use but also in how to adapt their practice.

- Each of us have some responsibility under the CDI code of ethics. How can you audit your digital skills?

- The CDI has recently appointed a policy associate to lead on digital learning, which will include a new and innovative training programme 'digital bytes'

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