



# Cultivating growth:

Improving your CPD from the ground up

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# Cultivating growth: Improving your CPD from the ground up

At their root, **Continuous Professional Development (CPD) sessions are designed to change audience behaviour.** When done well, they're a great opportunity to share experiences, practices, and expertise.

CPD sessions are often squeezed in between other work projects or hosted during lunch breaks and Lunch & Learn events. With such a short timeframe for success, these sessions need to be engaging, persuasive, and memorable.

Not all CPD makes the cut. Confusing structure, lacklustre engagement strategies, dodgy design and poor accessibility means that sessions can **fail to make an impact.**

As a presentation agency, at [BrightCarbon](#) we know a thing or two about keeping audiences engaged with effective storytelling and eye-catching design.

This guide provides a few pointers to help your CPD blossom and get your audience buzzing!

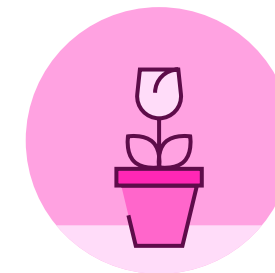
CPD can look like:



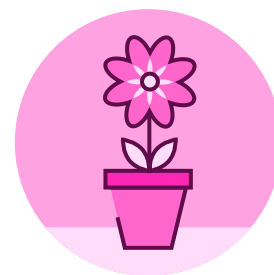
Presentations



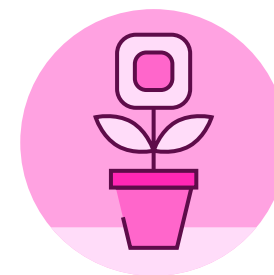
Seminars



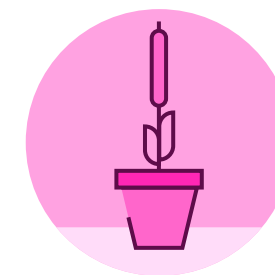
Workshops



eLearning



Webinars

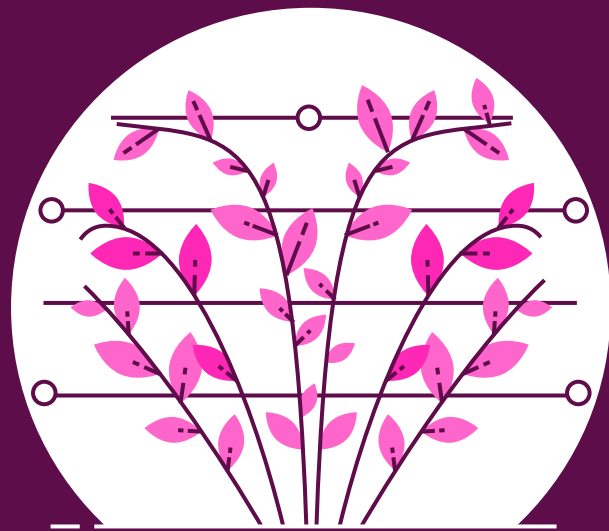


Videos

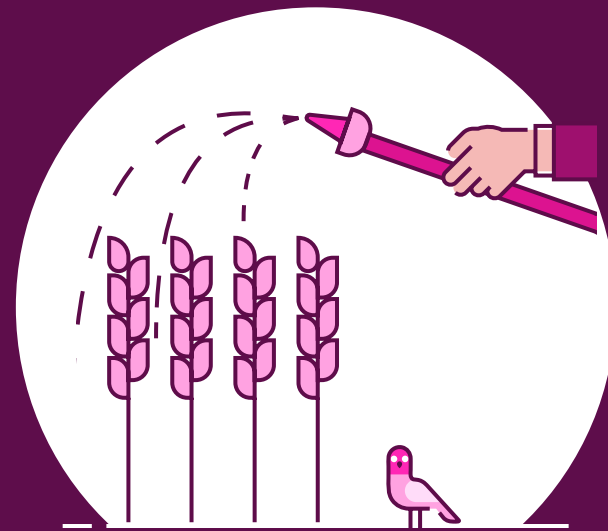
**Our top tips work for all shapes and sizes of CPD!  
Now, let's get our hands dirty and get started!**

# Contents

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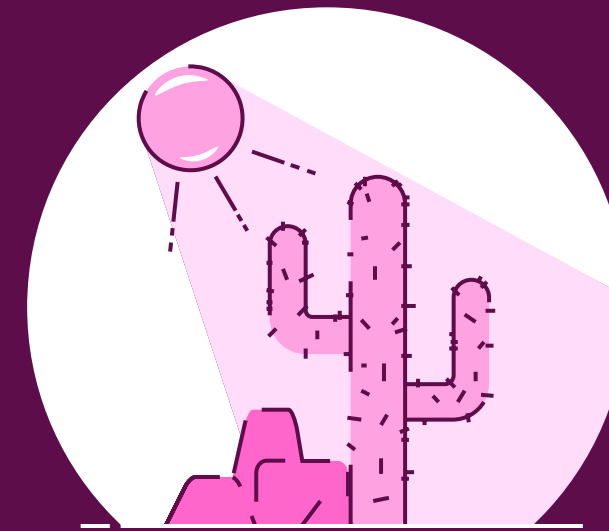
1 | Structure



2 | Engagement



3 | Accessibility

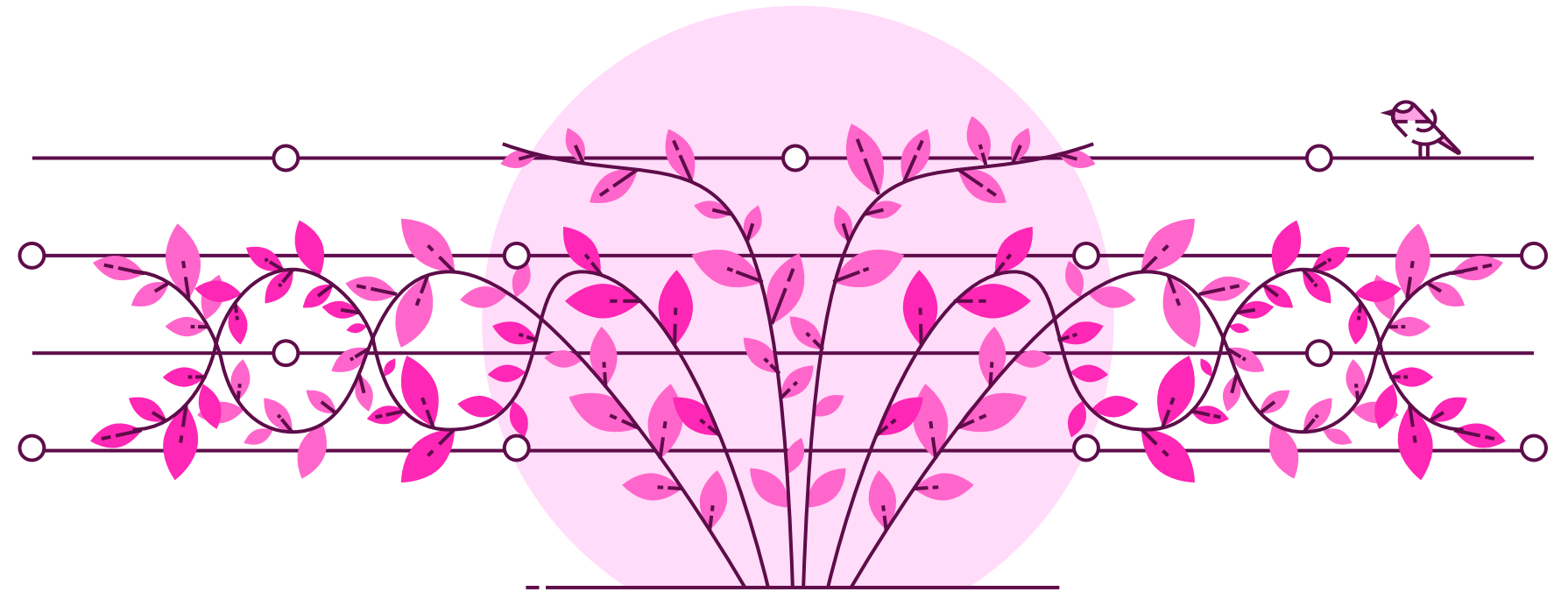


4 | Design

# 1 Structure

Creating a CPD lesson can be tough. It's tempting to throw as much information as possible at your audience and hope some of it sticks. Starting with an info dump or leap frogging between topics can leave audiences confused and unsure of your overall message.

Content with a clear structure can help you deliver a lot of information very quickly. Think of it as providing a guide for plants to grow – you're making it easier for your audience by giving your training materials direction and purpose.



## How to add structure to your CPD training:

### Get your audience hooked:

It's important to engage your audience from the start as it will be difficult to get their attention back once you've lost it! Skip the corporate spiel and start by setting out why your audience should be listening and what it will help them achieve.

### Provide an outline:

You want make it as easy as possible for your audience to follow your content. One way to do this is include a learning objectives or agenda slide near the beginning of the deck and return to it as you move through your content. That way your audience know where they are and where they are going next.

### Refine and trim content:

You haven't got long to get your point across, so be ruthless! Take a hard look at every slide and decide if it supports the aim of the CPD. If it doesn't, cut it out!

## 2 Engagement

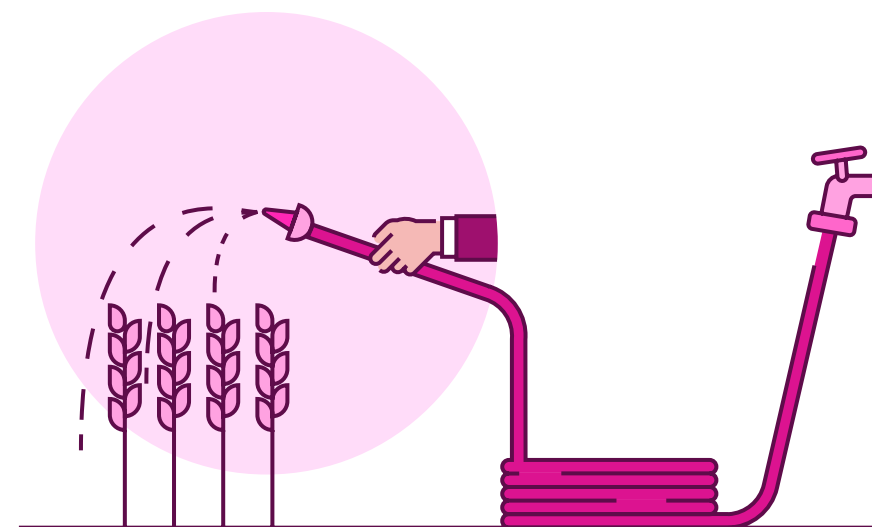
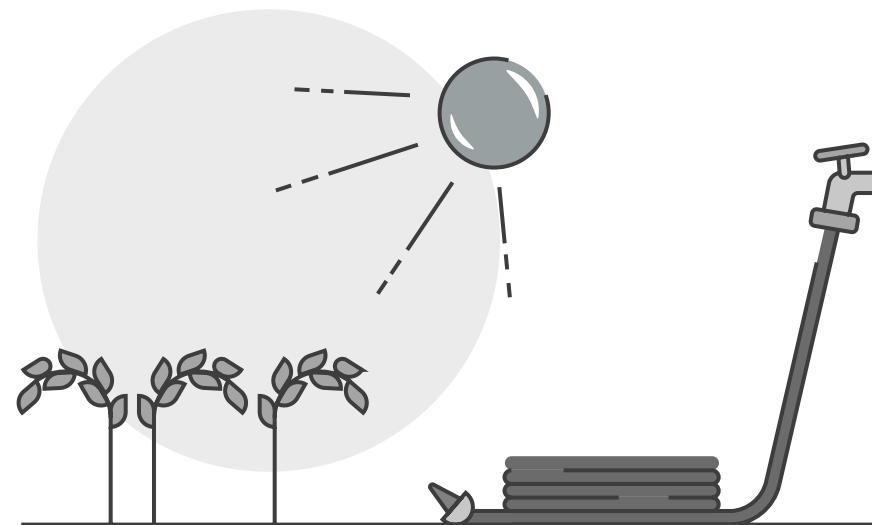
So, your story is well-structured, but people are still losing interest?  
It's easy to disengage your audience by talking at them about yourself.

Avoid focusing too much on “we” and not enough on “you.” Otherwise, your audience will feel disconnected from the material and will have no reason to stay focused. Your audience’s attention will wither and die if the content doesn’t feel relevant or engaging.

**To engage your audience, shift focus to them**  
Encourage interaction and questions, highlight the benefits that this new information can bring.

**Keep content relevant**  
Customize your materials for the audience by adjusting to their specific needs, like their skill level or how many people are in the room.

**Don't be afraid to break the mould**  
and step away from the typical appearance of a run-of-the-mill training.



### How to promote engagement in your CPD training:

#### Reduce egocentric language:

Focus on the audience by addressing their problems, providing solutions and highlighting the benefits of making a change.

#### Encourage audience interaction:

Allocate time for small group discussions or Q&A sessions to break the presenter-audience barrier and encourage the audience to switch their brains on!

#### Explore different formats:

Add variety by using quizzes, scenarios, props or participant stories to cater to different preferences and enhance engagement.

## 3 Accessibility

When delivering CPD, accessible and inclusive design is essential. **A beautifully written script is meaningless to those with hearing impairments. Eye-catching slides are irrelevant to the sight impaired.**

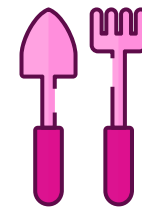
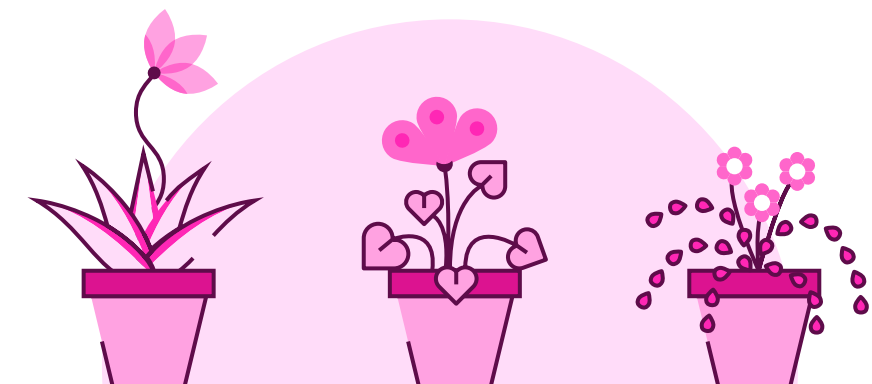
To make sure everyone can participate, it's important to incorporate accessibility considerations from the very start.

Luckily, it's now easier than ever to make your content accessible.

Use meeting platforms with built-in closed captioning and add alternative text to any digital materials you're sharing with your audience.

Make sure your materials have good colour contrast and a sensible combination of colours as this can help people with dyslexia or colour blindness access content more easily. There's plenty of [free tools available](#) to help you do this.

This article has more tips on [improving the accessibility of your content](#).



### Accessibility tools explained

#### Closed captions:

A bit like subtitles in a movie, closed captions are a way of converting spoken word to written text. Some meeting platforms can now do this at the click of a button, so make sure this feature is enabled. They can struggle with acronyms or unusual company or product names, so it's always best to also show any important words on screen too.

#### Colour contrast:

Some colour combinations can be very difficult to tell apart for those with colour blindness. People with dyslexia will also often find reading certain colour combinations easier than others.

#### Alternative text:

Screen readers are used by some people with visual impairments to narrate on screen content. Add Alt text to any digital materials you're leaving with your audience. All text should be descriptive enough that someone who can't see the image knows the important points.

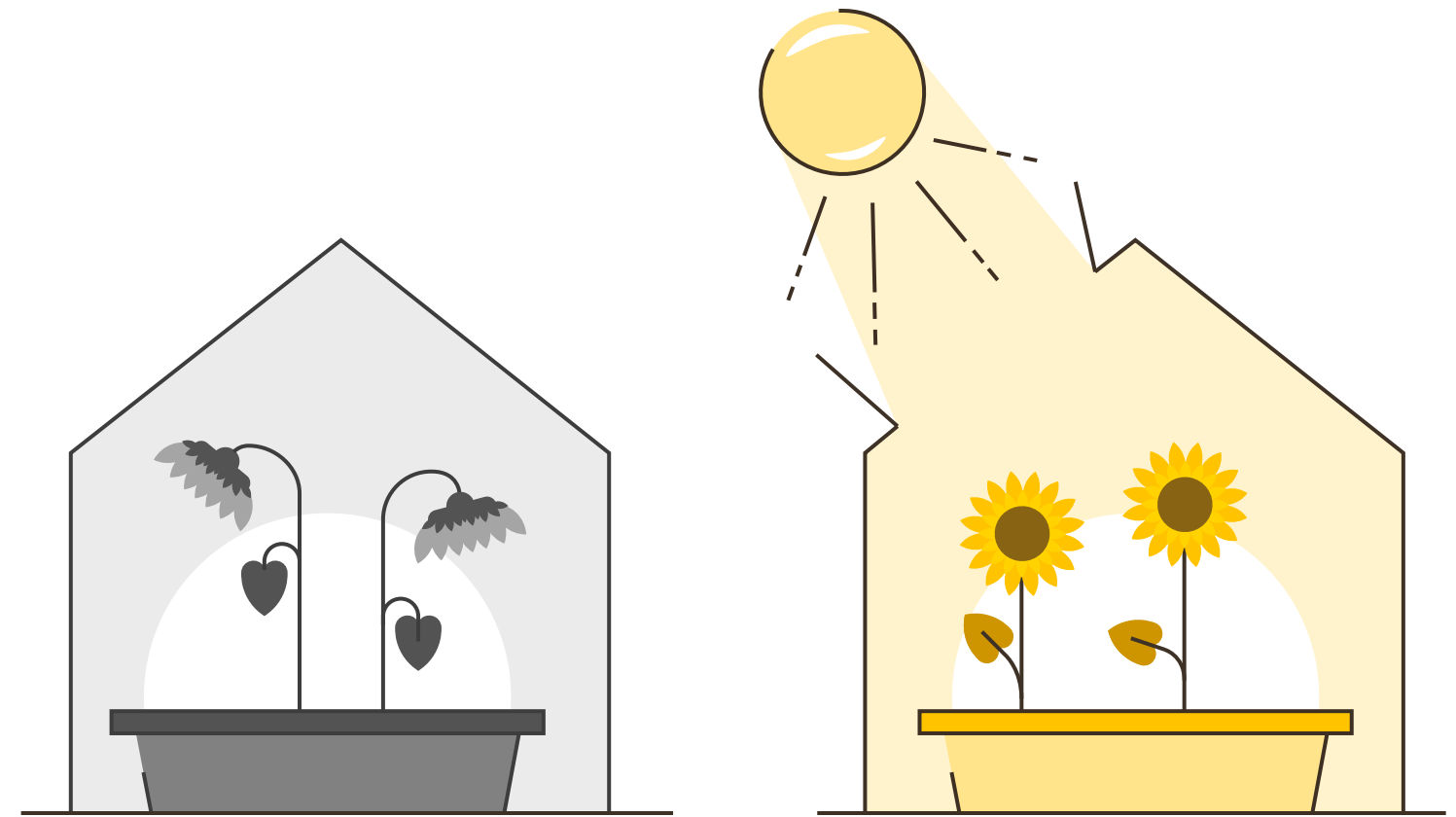
#### Sign language interpreter:

If possible, it can be extremely helpful to have BSL/ASL interpretation available for spoken content, particularly in person when closed captions are unavailable.

## 4 Design

It's pretty simple - people do not want to look at ugly things. Trust us, no one wants to look at purple Comic Sans on a bright yellow background. Even groundbreaking research loses credibility when presented in rainbow WordArt. At the other end of the spectrum, dull, text-heavy slides dampen audience enthusiasm and can make you look unprofessional.

Use the power of human nature to your advantage by creating visually appealing designs. On-brand colours, clear layouts, and dynamic animation can help presenters direct the audience's attention and make information easier to digest.



### Tips for designing your CPD:

#### Keep it simple:

Avoid cluttered designs and opt for a clean look. Sometimes less is more!

#### Stick with a theme:

Choose a consistent colour palette, font and design style to create a cohesive and visually pleasing presentation.

#### Consider outsourcing:

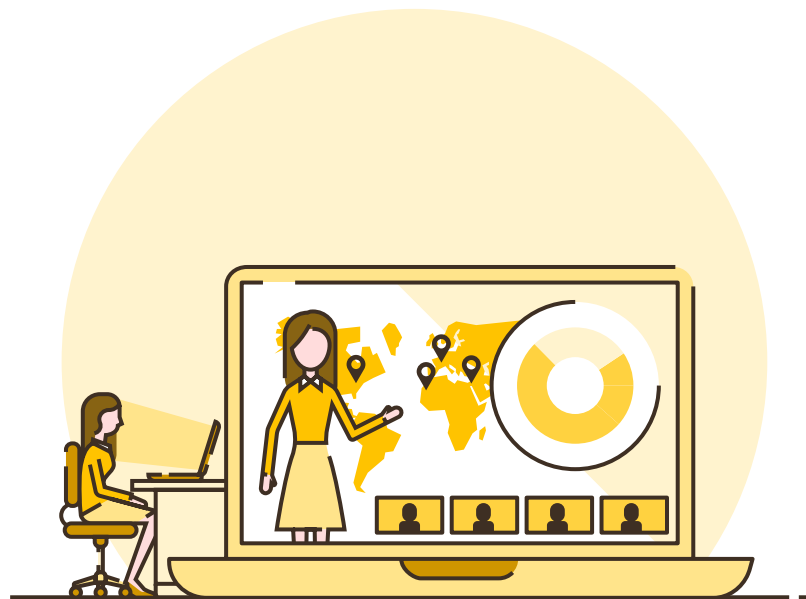
If design isn't your thing, get some help! [Presentation design agencies](#) are experts at making presentations look great.

#### Use animation wisely:

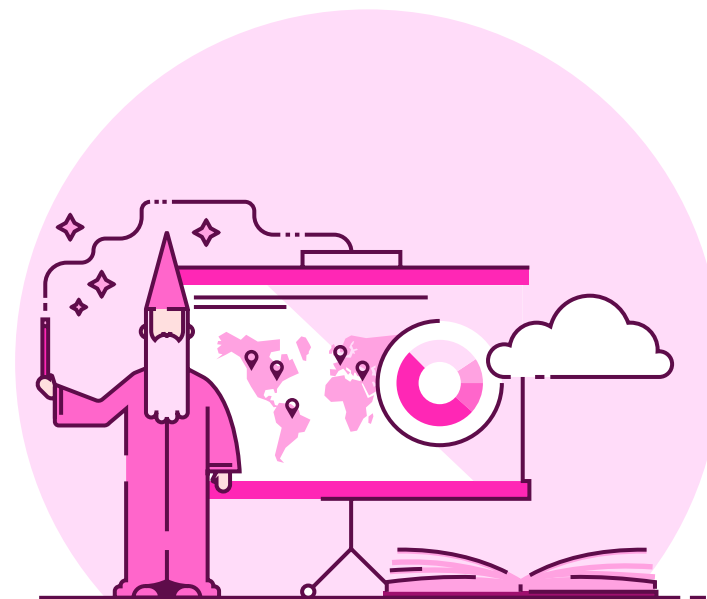
Animation can help you pace your content by controlling what information is on the screen when. Stay away from dated animations and keep everything sleek by ensuring no single animation lasts longer than 1.5 seconds.

## Don't have a green thumb?

BrightCarbon is a presentation design agency. We design clear, compelling, and persuasive presentations and eLearning and we'd love to chat about how we can help make your CPD bloom!



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[Presentation Creation](#)



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