

The role of the professional within the construction industry

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1.0 - Professionalism & Ethics

1.1 - Professionalism

Professionalism is an umbrella term which defines generally the concept and interpretation of how one appears in a professional situation. There are many factors which contribute to professionalism and how your approach to working life can vary in order to suit the requirements and match the expectations of a professional in your area. For example, professionalism is the same in any industry of work and can refer to dialect, approach, appearance and mindset. These aspects get monitored and watched everyday with or without knowing. The way you handle yourself in the environment can affect any relationships and/ or your reputation in the workplace or industry. In the construction sector there are a lot of specific terms, the employees in this area will be expected to know them and understand the meaning. As well as knowing the terminology of the construction sector, speaking in an appropriate manner and using professional dialect for example using proper English is necessary, as using slang or inappropriate language will come across unprofessional and impolite. The approach is going to be based off how you will deal with your tasks and jobs in the workplace, if you approach it with a positive mindset and that you want to complete your job to the best of your abilities then you come across as a good employee with an excellent mindset for your job and a good approach (*Workplace professionalism, 2020*). An appearance is looked to be one of the most important factors when considering professionalism, as this is the first thing people will get from you. There are many theories to prove that someone only has to have seven seconds to create an impression of you, this can either be good or bad. One's first impression is often judged based on your appearance, this includes good hygiene, a professional approach to how you may dress or even how confident you come across (*Impressions, 2018*).

There are multiple reasons why professionalism is important, for a company it will increase their image. If everyone is well present and speaks in the proper manner then the company will come across more respectable, which can help build trust between the client and the association. Having trust with the company will lead to more reoccurring clients, as they have already built the relationship and know the standard of work that is produced by them. Having returning clients can help increase the company's respect, as if new potential clients see that other people are returning and using the same company multiple times it portrays positive connotations. If a client is returning multiple times then their experiences are most likely to have been positive, over time, if the client base built is consistent and we have regular returning clients, the company name will be strengthened (*Company and Professionalism, 2015*).

For an employee, professionalism will affect your reputation within the industry. As in every workplace the work teams will have to find boundaries, as in the workplace it is very important to discover a personal and work life balance. The balance will help keep the aim of what you are required to do and complete in work, the employee would also come across unprofessional and would be seen inappropriate to discuss personal matters with a client. Another big part of professionalism for the employee would be ownership, as if something went wrong they would need to be able to hold their hands up and admit that it was their doing and that they will correct it, the company will respect the employee more for admitting the fault than letting the blame be passed around (*Importance of Professionalism, 2019*).

1.2 - Ethics

Ethics are the principles that govern the behaviour or an activity within an organisation and ensure that the workings of such are fair. Having good ethics within a workplace can refer to any aspect in work such as your hiring process, fairness in the workplace, treatment of your employees and good practice of the laws and legislations that have been set by the government. A company's ethics will help to guide a fair and equal working environment for both the employees and the clients. Ethics covers many elements of work especially the functioning of tasks on site, in the office and also the inclusivity and accessibility of this operation. Ethical workings follow guidelines which allow the project to run smoothly and include each member by ensuring that safety, confidentiality and care are included in the project plan. For example, an ethical guideline in construction could incorporate the involvement of women on an equal basis, this allows women

to be included ethically in any proceedings that the company may partake in. Whether something is ethical or not also hinders its success. For example, if a medical study is conducted but it lacks to incorporate ethical treatment to participants, to what extent can we say that the study is successful? In construction ethics may operate differently to other professions as there are more risks involved. A highly monitored ethical guideline is the safety of employees and the people on site, their health and safety will be monitored and assessed through ethical guidelines such as protection schemes, the extent to which machinery could hinder someones health and safety and also how that employee feels when working on a site. Another factor of ethics that we must consider is the extent to which one is left liable for a possible failure or altercation in the process of a project. A company must provide a certain indemnity for employees in order to protect their financial situation in case of a mishap which may result in a loss for the company and not that individual specifically. The aspect of liability closely links with mental health in the work place due to the fact that one may feel liable for an unexpected occurrence during a project which may extend the completion time, or make it more difficult to complete and hence involve other employees. This fact allows employees to feel supported and appreciated in their roles in a manageable and respectful way. The more an employee feels respected and supported, it is likely that they will produce a higher standard of work and also elicit a higher level of positivity during their working days (*Ethics in the Workplace, 2021*).

Both professionalism and ethics will be big factors when making decisions, whether these be new, extensions or fixing mistakes. One project that would have needed to be done very professionally and ethically would have been the Grenfell Tower disaster, back in 2017 a faulty fridge cable caused the building to go up in flames due to the type of cladding used. After look at a report that was conducted, many test results on the cladding showed that it had failed a fire test in 2001, but they continued to use the cladding which was “Reynobond 55 cladding panels with a polyethylene (PE) core” (Grenfell Report, 2019). The report also states that it had breached the “regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005”, this order shows the framework of fire safety within non-domestic properties in England and Wales (Grenfell Report, 2019). It is also stated that the Government failed to complete a fire safety review before the fire took place in 2017, even though the renovations were completed in 2016 and that there had been concerns raised about the fire safety of the building (*Grenfell Tower Fire, 2022*). Overall the company who were known as Alcoa at the time, has come across to the public as very unprofessional and unethical to the public. This is due to the fact, that there were multiple concerns over the cladding which they neglected and put multiple people at risk and also taking 72 lives. Ethically they should have had the morals to report that the cladding wasn’t fit for use and should have changed the material, the safety of the clients/ home owners should be the first priority to any company in the construction sector. The unprofessional side from this disaster falls down to very important reports not being completed which could have potentially prevent the fire and saved lives of multiple people.

1.3 - Measuring professionalism in the construction industry

There are multiple ways to measuring professionalism, these can be monitored by regular employee meetings, process reports, project results, company overall satisfaction from clients and/ or employees, relationships with other companies and employees personal development. Each of these methods will vary depending what you are trying to monitor. Most employees will keep their own personal development plan, as a high percentage of people in the construction industry is charted with an association they require that a certain amount of development hours are completed. The company are going to monitor their professionalism different to employees would, rather than having a development plan they are going to have to monitor through previous projects, this could be looking how the team managed working with the client, client complaints or the employees filling the reports/ documents out to a high standard. The professionalism within a company and employees should always be monitored. As the company is going to be growing and expanding with new or existing projects, they will want to ensure that they keep the high professional level through it and their employees continue to grow with the company.

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2.0 - Professional Development

2.1 - Curriculum Vitae

C U R R I C U L U M V I T A E

Personal Details:

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Education:

2012 - 2017 Penyrheol Comprehensive School, Gorseinon, Swansea.
2017 - 2020 Gower College, Gorseinon
2020 - Present University of Trinity Saint David Wales

I am currently a full time student in my second year of studying Quantity Surveying.

Qualifications:

BTEC Grades

2020	Business Studies	Distinction*Distinction*
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AS level grades:

2018	Accounting	AS	D
2018	Health and Social Care	AS	E
2018	Business Studies	AS	E
2019	Photography	AS	D

Gcse grades

2017	Mathematics	GCSE	A
2016	Science	GCSE	B
2016	Numeracy	GCSE	B
2017	Science (Double Award)	GCSE	B
2017	ICT	GCSE	B
2017	Physical Education	GCSE	B
2017	Art & Design	GCSE	C
2017	Welsh	GCSE	C
2017	Business Studies	GCSE	D
2017	English Language	GCSE	D

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2017	English Literature	GCSE	D
2017	Welsh Baccalaureate	PASS	

AS level grades:

2018	Accounting	AS	D
2018	Health and Social Care	AS	E
2018	Business Studies	AS	E
2019	Photography	AS	D

Work History:

Summer 2016 - Work experience at Costa Coffee, Fforestfach

2017 - Present - Working for Costa Coffee Fforestfach as a part-time Barista Maestro

Other Details:

Since joining Costa after a few weeks of work experience, I have worked my way up from a Barista to become a Barista Maestro. On joining Costa as a Barista I learned the importance of working and growing as part of a team, while learning health and safety rules and of course leaning to make the wide variety of drinks. After a few years employment I have been appointed as a Barista Maestro and during my shift I am in charge of running the store and taking responsibility for everyone hitting targets and providing a safe and joyful service to customers. With this role I have also gained the responsibility of monitoring the financial side of the store by ordering store stock and maintaining a store rota while keeping the staffing levels to an appropriate level while also keeping within the allocated staffing budget.

I consider myself confident, and enjoy talking to new people. I am a very trustworthy person and enjoy any new challenges that come my way and I also act well in unexpected situations.

Being in the second year of a Quantity Surveying Degree I am now ready and eager to start a career in this field. I am really looking forward to gaining a training position to transfer my classroom learning into a work based situation where I can enhance my skills to move forward towards my career goal of becoming a Quantity Surveyor,

Hobbies & Interests:

Spending 7 years at the Centurion Lifesaving Club I gained training in first aid and competed in many competitions, which I won many titles. During training I learned pool and dry land rescue situation and recovery, and through the summer I would take part in beach training. During this time I learned many valuable traits that I will appreciate for the rest of my life, it helped me expand out of my comfort zone and help develop me as a person.

When I was in Penyrheol Comprehensive School I liked to take part in the schools sports teams including netball, athletics, swimming and rounders team. During my school time I also took part in the drama productions the school put on 4 out of the 5 years I was there for. After leaving school I want to keep the active lifestyle I had for many years and continue to go to the gym at least four times a week.

Additional Information

I am very eager to learn and expand my knowledge with quantity surveying, I am currently completing my HND qualification but would love to get experience before finishing the degree. During my 2 years I haven't been able to get any work experience or training positions mainly due to the fact of the coronavirus pandemic, this has slowed down my career path and I would love to get back on track with this. Ideally I would like to get some more knowledge and experience in this field before completing my degree, as this would allow me to write more mature and achieve the desired degree result level I would like.

2.2 - Organisational Behaviour Benefitting your Personal Development

Over the years organisational behaviour has become a bigger study and has proven to be beneficial to companies and employees. The organisational behaviour study focuses on the employees to help shows what encourages the best work, this could include the environment around them or the way the management team will motivate and encourage the employees, it also helps the organisation to understand what makes their staff have more of a positive outlook of their job. The study also shows the employees how they should act and preform in the workplace, leaving the management team satisfied with the work they are producing and will build trust and a better reputation for the employee. The behaviour can be split into different areas to monitor these are, performance, leadership and environment. Having staff with a positive mindset helps improve the work motivation as well as the performance level, every company aims to increase the performance level to achieve a faster results and more jobs being completed to the deadline dates. The behaviour monitoring helps companies understand the employees more, it allows the management teams to make connections with what helps to motivate and make the employees feel happy about their job and have a positive look of what they do and feel good about it. When the management makes these connections it allows them to encourage their teams in ways that will help and benefit them, this also helps the management team to hit the targets they have been given by their boss which allows the company to keep running smoothly and cost effectively. The motivation for each individual may vary due to the fact of employee experience and knowledge of jobs they are completing, some employees may need more encouragement and guidance if they lack the experience or confidence on a task (*Organisational Behaviour, 2021*).

The behaviour doesn't just look about the employees and what encourages them to work better. It also looks into the process of management, The management process may change and adapt often, this would look at the planning, organisation, staff, the direction and control. Each of these factors will affect how the project will run, for example the planning will ensure that the team will have all the necessary information to start the project, all the information will then need to be organised so each department has the relevant documents. The staff will be monitored and assigned what they will need to do to ensure the project is complete to the highest level of satisfaction possible, the manager will be the one who will direct the team to the projects completion within the time boundary given and will have the final say on team members work, this gives the full control to the manager. Each of the factors link into each other and if not completed correctly will cause the project to be completed slower or fail all together (*Prof. Sumanth Kumar Kunda, 2020, section 2.2 Functions of Management*).

Having an understanding of organisational behaviour will help my development as I will know how to behave in a professional workplace and understand the expectations that will be expected of me from higher up the management system. This will benefit me most if I am able to move into a management position, as I can not only demonstrate good behaviour but also grow even further as I will be surrounded by others who have the same approach and may be even better and so can help me to improve myself. The behaviours would also benefit as I would understand why and how others work in terms of their cognitive and functional behaviours. A team of employees function well, when they understand each other in their working roles and are accepting of the fact that a team consists of people coming together to join their strengths in order to generate a higher standard of work. Understanding different behaviours also gives the understanding that people learn and work in different ways, for a manager to work well they with the employees they will need to be able to adapt their teaching and conversation to fit the employees needs.

3.0 - Leadership

The key approach in leadership is treating everyone on the team as equals, personally I believe that no one should have less of a say than someone else. In many team situations this can cause conflict between the team and leader when you want everyone to work cohesively, conflicts within teams can cause many issues such as delays or arguments which is very unprofessional in any industry. In all work environments team success will fall on the managements level of expertise, if the manager is lacking in training or knowledge then the whole team will suffer from this. All leaders need to have certain characteristics, they need to be driven, good communication, strong motivators, skilful and knowledgeable.

I believe that my leadership style is a mix between laissez-faire and democratic. Laissez-faire style trusts peoples skills and knowledge in the tasks they are doing, you will assign tasks that fit peoples strengths to get the best outcome of each task. This helps increase the trust between the leader and team members. The style will encourage and help make the team feel involved, can also improve the ideas as more opinions will be shared and also helps empower the team as they feel like a valuable member. Some of the downfalls of the style include that some leaders struggle as they feel like they are losing power, this method also wouldn't work with untrained/ unskilled members of the team (*Leadership styles, 2021*). The democratic leadership is very involved with the team, they like to motivate and encourage the team to do better. This democratic and laissez-faire causes authority confusion within the team, this is due to the fact that they get to share their opinions and take part in decision making. This can cause team members to share their opinions even in situations that aren't appropriate, but in the democratic the final decision is still held with the team leader (*Leadership styles, 2021*).

Leadership is a key aspect of any role we may take on in the working world, one may possess a role whereby their day to day job does not possess a main leadership role, however once in a while you may be required to exert some experience and opinions to others in a professional manner. To be a leader you must be able to listen, adapt, incorporate everybody's ideas despite their content levels. This is because it also includes an element of ethical coherence. The acceptance that ones opinion may not be as relevant or important in terms of content is important because some may not be able to generate such ideas, yet their opinions need to be maximised and respected in order to generate higher work productivity levels in that individual. Leading a team also takes patience which I have developed through my work in Costa. I have been a prominent member of this team for four and a half years. This time allowed me to develop good relationships with my peers and has earned me a level of respect which resonates through the team when I am put in a position of leadership.

4.0 - Teamwork

I find that I work better in practical hands on situations and math based areas, after completing a test on 123 Test based on team roles, it chosen based from my answers that I am high percentage fit for the innovator role. This role usually means they are the creative member of the team, they have a strong imagination and approaches jobs in more of a scientific manner, they take the problem solver tasks and work well with them. The next best position is the driver, this is the team member who is very ambitious and lively. They are good motivators but are very impulsive of decision making, they hold a large part of the team moving forward and succeeding (*Team roles, 2022*). If I had to fit this role into one of the Belbin roles it would be the plant, as out of the nine Belbin roles this is the creative one. One of the disadvantages of the plant role is they lack good group communication skills, as they get very preoccupied on the hands on task that they forget they are work as part of a team. During teamwork communication is a large part of having an affective team, lack of communication can cause arguments, work overlap or having incomplete tasks. They thrive in difficult situations, they normally complete their tasks in an

unusual way but love to be challenged in what they do. The plant can also come across very forgetful (*Belbin Team Roles*, 2022).

My teamwork has been significantly improved throughout my experiences in education, the working world and in social situations. Working in a high paced environment in Costa as a Barista helped me to work with others well whilst under pressure. I can remain calm and keep a positive mindset in such situations which inevitably helps others to remain concentrated and supported in the group task. My team work journey has also been improved through my studies, last year I completed a group assignment on Japanese Knotweed, this group project allowed each of us to fit into our roles well and progress as individuals while working together to succeed. We were assigned parts of the project to complete and supported one another by adding each of our own attributes and strengths to help one another complete our sections as best as possible. I think team work is essential to every day proceedings, it's not only apparent in the work place but also in social activities such as sports. My friend plays rugby for her university team and I recently went to watch her play her first game. I witnessed the kind of team work that ensures everybody is supported despite the fact that their roles in the game are very different. This applies to wider team work in the sense that each role is different and you help those around you by inputting your strengths that others may lack.

5.0 - Conclusion

Leadership - After researching the different styles of leadership and what it takes to be a good leader, I have discovered how to improve my skills to accommodate my team and what attributes I need to improve on to be successful. Improving these skills will be high up on my progression list as eventually I would like to make my way up the hierarchy ladder to be a senior quantity surveyor in a company.

Teamwork - I have found that I need to improve my team skills, with the point I am at in my life I don't have the opportunities to practice teamwork as much as I did when I was younger as I would take part in sports teams. I would like to improve my teamwork skill by connecting back with my netball team and continue to improve in my work environment team.

Professionalism - This has benefitted my knowledge to office work based professionalism, as I have never work in this environment and lack the experience some others may already have. It has also contributed to my knowledge of how to present myself in an interview to any company, with appearance and my mannerisms.

Overall I have found this research has been beneficial to my knowledge of working in the construction industry and to my personal development program, after this I am going to continue to improve my professionalism and work skills in this sector.

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