



ACBA – 5008: SELF DEVELOPMENT, PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND THE MANAGEMENT OF CONSTRUCTION PERSONNEL

The role of the professional within the construction
industry

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Professionalism and Ethics

Within the construction industry, professionalism and ethics is a key factor in decision making when constructing buildings for the occupier. Moreover, it is critical due to the significant impacts these decisions can have on safety and quality. Ethical decision making ensures that projects adhere to legal regulations, industry standards and community expectations whilst professionalism ensures that work is conducted with skill and competence. In addition, the following highlight the importance of professionalism and ethics:

- **Safety:** Ethical decisions prioritise the safety and wellbeing of workers and the public. Professional conduct ensures adherence to safety protocols and regulatory standards.
- **Quality:** Professionalism and ethics contribute to high quality work that meets or exceeds industry standards. This leads to durable, reliable structures that benefit all stakeholders.
- **Compliance:** Adhering to ethical practices and professional standards ensures compliance with legal requirements and building codes.
- **Trust and Reputation:** Demonstrating professionalism and ethical behaviour builds trust with clients, regulators and the community enhancing a firms reputation and long term success.
- **Conflict Resolution:** Ethical decision making aids in addressing conflicts fairly and transparency, promoting a positive working environment.
- **Risk Management:** Proper ethical practices help to identify and mitigate risks such as legal issues, project delays and cost overruns.

To measure professionalism in the construction industry the following should be taken into account:

- **Adherence to Codes & Regulations:** Compliance with building codes, safety standards and legal requirements is a clear measure of professionalism.
- **Certifications & Accreditations:** Such as the CIOB, they demonstrate the adherence to industry standards as well as a commitment to professional development within the workplace.
- **Project Outcomes:** The quality in the outcome of a project, such as meeting timelines, staying within budget and delivering durable structures reflect professionalism in the industry.
- **Client satisfaction:** Positive feedback from clients regarding communication, transparency and the overall project execution indicates professionalism.
- **Safety Records:** A low accident & incident record on a project is a measure of adherence to health & safety policies and professional conduct in construction.
- **Professional Conduct:** Observing consistent, respectful and fair treatment of colleagues, clients, subcontractors, suppliers and all other stakeholders indicate professionalism.

- **Transparency and Accountability:** Openness about the progress of a project, issues and resolutions as well as taking responsibility for project decisions and actions demonstrates professionalism.

By focusing on a high degree of professionalism and ethical decision making in the construction industry, can help achieve more successful project outcomes, adopt a positive buildable reputation whilst also ensuring the safety and satisfaction of all stakeholders.

An example of a lack of professionalism and ethical decision making would be The Grenfell Tower Disaster which occurred on 14th June 2017 in London, United Kingdom. This was a tragic incident in which a fire engulfed a 24-storey residential building that resulted in the loss of 71 residents and one unborn child which became marked as one of the deadliest residential fires in the United Kingdom since World War II. This resulted in the widespread scrutiny of building safety regulations and practices across the whole country. There was an initial failure in this disaster with the contractor using combustible cladding materials that did not meet fire safety standards (BBC News, 2017). Professionalism involves strict adherence to building regulations and standards and the adherence and enforcement of the existing regulations that were in place could have prevented such use of the highly flammable materials. Moreover, ethical decision making in the construction industry would involve prioritising the safety and wellbeing of the building end user and adhering to regulations and not making decisions purely on a 'value engineering basis to prioritise cost savings in the scheme. Throughout the case relating to Grenfell Tower, there were numerous reports of cost-cutting, otherwise known as value engineering during the refurbishment process that led to the use of combustible cladding material that did not adhere to the current building regulations and was not fit for purpose (The Guardian, 2018). A commitment to ethical practices would have ensured transparency in the correct material selection and compliance with safety standards and regulations. Professional conduct involves thorough quality assurance and inspection throughout a project. It demonstrates that the refurbishment of the Grenfell Tower lacked adequate Building Control checks to ensure that the appropriate materials and construction practices met the required standards (Booth, 2017). Professionalism entails taking responsibility for decisions and actions as well as being accountable for the safety of residents and workers. The Grenfell disaster highlighted the lack of accountability among various parties involved in the refurbishment project, including architects, main contractor, subcontractors and regulators (Holland, 2018). If there was professional accountability on this project it could have ensured that proper measures were taken to maintain safety of the end user of the building. In conclusion, The Grenfell Tower disaster was a preventable tragedy that exposed significant failings in professionalism, ethics and adherence to safety standards in the construction industry. By emphasising professional conduct, strict adherence to building regulations and ethical decision making, similar incidents should not occur in the future.

Professional Development

Understanding organisational behaviour is critical for personal development because it provides people with insights into how they function and integrate into group functions within the workplace. This knowledge can improve professional skills and enhance the ability to navigate and contribute effectively within the workplace. There are numerous key aspects to the understanding of organisational behaviour. Firstly, understanding how people interact and communicate within the industry can help develop more effective communication strategies which in turn leads to clearer discussions with colleagues to allow better collaboration and problem solving which is key in the construction industry. Also, by understanding different leadership styles and management techniques it can help guide you to adopting your own leadership approach which best suits your own personality to make you a more effective manager. Moreover, understanding organisational behaviours can help enhance teamwork and collaboration skills as this understanding moulds a more effective team member as they should be able to understand different roles, conflict resolution strategies and methods for gaining the trust from the team. Leading on from this, knowledge on conflict resolution helps to navigate and mediate (if necessary) disputes effectively which should reduce tension on the project, thus, improve productivity on site. A construction site is constantly changing so adaptability is a key organisational behaviour as it should allow you to anticipate changes and challenges that are forthcoming. If the challenges can be foreseen it makes it easier to adapt to new situations and to work with numerous different trades on a project collaboratively. To summarise, a good understanding of organisational behaviour can significantly advance your personal development by providing the skills and knowledge required to thrive in a professional environment in the construction industry. As a result, this should lead to better work relationships, effective leadership and successful career progression through management.

CV

Personal Professional Development Plan

Within the below table I have created my own Personal Professional Development Plan which details what I would like to achieve in the short and long term of my career, how I am going to achieve it and the anticipated date of achievement.

Date Set	Description	How this is Beneficial?	Learning Outcomes to achieve this	Target Type	Anticipated Deadlines for Target	Date Achieved
14/04/2021	Complete Level 3 (Diploma) in Construction in the Built Environment	This will help me progress onto my HNC/HND in University. It will help me gain a permanent position with Andrew Scott Ltd as a Trainee Quantity Surveyor. It will be a reflection of the experience I have gained in the last two years.	Pass all my remaining assignments	Short term	26/07/2021	01/07/2021
14/04/2021	Complete Level 3 NVQ Diploma in Construction Contracting Operations	It will demonstrate the level of work I produce and complete for my employer Andrew Scott Ltd.	Provide my Assessor with the required evidence and complete all my knowledge questions	Short term	26/07/2021	01/07/2021
14/04/2021	Considerate Constructors Best Practice Hub	As a member of the Site Management Team, it will teach me how to deal with any issues that our site staff or members of the community will come to me with.	Complete the modules on the Considerate Constructors website	Short term	30/08/2021	19/04/2021
14/04/2021	Microsoft Project	It should teach me how to use the software and from a Quantity Surveying point of view I will then be able to add	Complete the learning course	Short term	30/01/2025	

		costs and resources to the programme. This will help me develop more accurate Cost Forecasts.				
14/04/2021	Causeway	This course would give me a greater insight into the tools available on Causeway	Complete the online learning course	Short term	30/01/2025	
14/04/2021	NEC Contract Training	It will provide better knowledge on NEC Specific Contracts	Attend the Online Learning Courses	Short term	30/01/2022	30/01/2022
14/04/2021	HNC/HND In Quantity Surveying	These qualifications will help me continue to learn how to become a fully qualified Quantity Surveyor in the Construction Industry. Also, it will play a big part in helping me to progress into a Degree in Quantity Surveying	Attend University Lectures, Complete Assignments and gain my Qualifications	Long term	01/06/2024	
14/04/2021	£20million + Projects with Andrew Scott Ltd	Work as an Assistant Quantity Surveyor on a £20million + project and gain more experience in dealing with large projects and extremely contractual subcontractors	Earn the responsibility from my Commercial Manager to be trusted to work on a project of this size.	Long term	30/03/2022	30/01/2022
14/04/2021	Quantity Survey a Project with Andrew Scott Ltd	Using the experience I have gained on a much larger project as an Assistant, manage a project by myself	Show that I can be trusted to manage a project by myself	Long term	01/06/2024	

Leadership

Understanding leadership theories is crucial for a potential professional in the construction industry as it helps guide teams effectively through complex projects and ensures successful outcomes. The industry requires strong leadership to manage diverse groups of skilled

labour, adhere to safety protocols, and navigate challenges such as tight deadlines and budget constraints. Transformational leadership can inspire and motivate construction teams to perform at their best, fostering innovation and a commitment to quality. Transactional leadership, which emphasises clear exchanges of rewards for performance, is effective in managing structured operations and achieving project goals efficiently. Servant leadership prioritises the well-being and growth of team members, promoting a supportive environment that can improve team morale and productivity. Situational leadership is essential in the construction industry as it allows leaders to adapt their style based on the team's experience and the project's unique demands. Autocratic leadership grants autonomy to highly skilled and motivated workers, providing them with the freedom to take ownership of their tasks. However, in high-risk environments like construction, careful oversight is still necessary. Autocratic leadership involves making quick decisions and directing the team firmly, which can be beneficial in emergency situations or when decisive action is required. Democratic leadership promotes open communication and collaboration, enabling team members to contribute their expertise and ideas to the project. This can lead to innovative solutions and stronger team engagement. By understanding and applying these various leadership styles, professionals in the construction industry can navigate the complexities of their work more effectively and achieve better project outcomes.

Case Study: Discipline of Site Operatives and Leadership Styles

Background

A large construction project was underway to build a new office complex in a major city. The project was behind schedule due to various delays, including unforeseen complications and labour issues. The site manager, Alex, noticed a pattern of site operatives arriving late, taking extended breaks, and not following safety protocols. These issues were affecting productivity and raising safety concerns.

Leadership Challenge:

Alex faced the challenge of addressing the site operatives' performance issues while maintaining morale and ensuring the project stayed on track. He needed to choose the appropriate leadership style to handle the situation effectively.

Leadership Styles Evaluated:

Autocratic Leadership:

- Alex could take a strict approach by imposing immediate penalties for operatives who were late or not adhering to safety protocols.
- This style might quickly bring compliance, but it could also lead to resentment and lower morale among the operatives.

Transactional Leadership:

- Alex could establish clear expectations and consequences for performance issues, such as docking pay for tardiness or rewarding compliance with safety protocols.
- This approach offers structured feedback and incentives, but it might not address underlying motivational issues.

Transformational Leadership:

- Alex could inspire operatives by emphasising the importance of the project and their role in its success.
- By fostering a sense of purpose and pride in their work, he could potentially improve morale and productivity.

Servant Leadership:

- Alex could focus on supporting the operatives by understanding their needs and challenges, helping them find solutions to personal or work-related issues.
- This approach might take longer to see tangible results, but it could build stronger, more loyal relationships with the team.

Approach Taken:

Alex decided to combine elements of transactional and transformational leadership. He held a meeting with the site operatives, clearly outlining expectations for punctuality and safety and explaining the consequences of not meeting these standards. At the same time, he emphasised the importance of the project and their vital role in its success, aiming to inspire pride and a sense of responsibility.

Outcomes:

- After implementing the changes, Alex saw a noticeable improvement in punctuality and adherence to safety protocols.
- The operatives appreciated Alex's clear communication and his efforts to motivate them.
- The project's schedule improved, and safety incidents decreased.

Conclusion:

This case study highlights the importance of selecting the right leadership style for different situations within the construction industry. By blending transactional and transformational approaches, Alex was able to address performance issues effectively while maintaining a positive working environment. This balanced approach led to better outcomes for the project and the operatives involved.

Personal Statement

As an up and coming professional within the construction industry and being in my 5th working year with my respective employer, I have learnt from numerous different leadership styles and see how they are able to effect different people in different ways and also achieve different outcomes and results. Personally, having been fortunate to have worked with some extremely experienced individuals I believe that effective leadership involves a lot more than just managing tasks and meeting deadlines as it requires a harmonious and respectful relationships between members of the team to feel valued and motivated to contribute and work at their highest output.

My leadership philosophy begins with a foundation of integrity and ethical conduct. I hold myself and my team to the highest standards of honesty and transparency, ensuring that all decisions are made with fairness and respect for all parties involved. This includes clear communication about expectations, timelines, and responsibilities, as well as openly acknowledging and addressing any challenges or mistakes that may arise during a project. By modelling ethical behaviour, I aim to cultivate a culture of trust and accountability within my team.

Safety is paramount in the construction industry, and my leadership approach reflects this priority. I emphasise the importance of adhering to safety protocols and foster a culture of vigilance and proactive risk management. This involves regular safety training and assessments, as well as encouraging team members to speak up about potential hazards or concerns. By prioritising safety, I not only protect my team but also contribute to the overall success and reputation of the project.

Collaboration and inclusivity are central to my leadership style. I believe that diverse perspectives lead to stronger solutions and more innovative approaches to challenges. By creating an inclusive work environment where all team members feel valued and heard, I foster a sense of ownership and commitment to the project's success. I encourage open dialogue and actively seek input from all levels of the team, which helps build strong relationships and promotes a sense of camaraderie.

Adaptability and flexibility are key aspects of my leadership approach. The construction industry is dynamic and often presents unexpected challenges that require quick thinking and a willingness to adjust plans as needed. I strive to remain agile and responsive to changing circumstances, whether it involves shifting project timelines, reallocating resources, or adapting to new technologies and methods. By staying open to change and embracing a growth mindset, I can lead my team through challenges with resilience and confidence.

Another essential element of my leadership philosophy is a focus on continuous improvement and professional development. I encourage my team members to pursue ongoing learning opportunities and provide support for their career growth. By investing in the development of my team, I not only enhance their skills and knowledge but also contribute to a more capable and motivated workforce. This focus on growth extends to myself as well, as I believe that effective leaders must continually seek to expand their own expertise and adapt to industry advancements.

Clear and consistent communication is a cornerstone of my leadership style. I make it a priority to keep my team informed about project goals, progress, and any changes that may impact their work. This includes providing regular feedback and recognition for achievements, as well as offering guidance and support when needed. By maintaining open lines of communication, I can address concerns promptly and ensure that the team remains aligned and focused on achieving the project's objectives.

In terms of decision-making, I strive to strike a balance between data-driven analysis and intuition. While it is important to rely on evidence and facts when making decisions, I also

recognise the value of experience and gut instinct in navigating complex projects. I involve my team in the decision-making process when appropriate, seeking their input and perspectives to ensure that we arrive at the best possible solutions.

My leadership style also encompasses a strong emphasis on mentorship and coaching. I take an active interest in the development of my team members, offering guidance, advice, and opportunities for growth. By mentoring others, I aim to help them reach their full potential and prepare them for future leadership roles. This not only benefits the individuals but also contributes to the overall success of the organisation by building a pipeline of capable and skilled leaders.

In summary, my leadership style within the construction industry is characterised by a commitment to integrity, safety, collaboration, adaptability, and continuous improvement. I strive to create a positive and inclusive work environment where all team members feel empowered to contribute their best. By combining clear communication, data-driven decision-making, and a focus on mentorship, I aim to lead my team to success while fostering their professional growth and well-being. My goal is to inspire confidence and trust in my leadership, guiding projects to successful completion and contributing to the overall advancement of the construction industry.

Teamwork

As I reflect on my journey as a team member in the construction industry, I am proud of the skills and qualities I bring to the table, which have evolved over time through personal experiences and observations. These attributes not only enhance my ability to contribute meaningfully to team projects but also support the overall success of the team.

From the outset of my career, I recognised the importance of clear and open communication in team settings. I learned early on that misunderstandings and lack of information can lead to costly mistakes and delays. Therefore, I make it a priority to maintain open lines of communication with my team members, sharing updates, concerns, and insights as projects progress. By doing so, I foster a culture of transparency and trust within the team, which is crucial for collaboration and problem-solving.

Throughout my journey, I have also developed strong interpersonal skills, which enable me to build positive relationships with colleagues at all levels. These relationships facilitate effective teamwork and a sense of camaraderie, allowing us to work together harmoniously and efficiently. I strive to listen actively to my teammates' perspectives and ideas, valuing their contributions and fostering a sense of mutual respect.

One of the key strengths I bring to the team is my adaptability and flexibility. The construction industry is known for its dynamic and ever-changing environment, where unexpected challenges and changes can arise at any moment. My ability to remain agile and open to new approaches allows me to pivot quickly when needed, keeping projects on track and team morale high. This flexibility extends to my willingness to take on different roles and responsibilities as required, ensuring that I can support the team in various capacities.

As I have gained more experience, I have come to appreciate the importance of proactive problem-solving and taking the initiative to address issues before they escalate. I make it a point to identify potential obstacles early on and work with my team to find solutions that mitigate risks and keep projects moving forward. This proactive approach not only prevents delays but also demonstrates my commitment to the team's success.

Another aspect of my journey involves my dedication to continuous learning and improvement. The construction industry is constantly evolving, with new technologies, materials, and methods emerging regularly. I stay informed about industry trends and best practices, which allows me to contribute innovative ideas and approaches to my team. My commitment to learning extends to supporting my teammates' growth as well, sharing knowledge and resources to help them succeed.

Safety is a critical priority in the construction industry, and my experiences have reinforced the importance of promoting a culture of safety within the team. I lead by example, adhering to safety protocols and encouraging my teammates to do the same. By prioritising safety, I help create a work environment where everyone feels secure and confident in their ability to perform their tasks.

In addition to these qualities, I bring a strong work ethic and a dedication to achieving high-quality results. My commitment to excellence drives me to consistently deliver my best work and support my teammates in doing the same. This dedication is evident in my attention to detail and my insistence on meeting or exceeding project standards.

Throughout my journey, I have also learned the value of emotional intelligence and empathy in team settings. By understanding my own emotions and those of my teammates, I can navigate challenges and conflicts more effectively. This emotional awareness helps me maintain a positive and supportive work environment, where team members feel comfortable expressing their concerns and collaborating openly.

In terms of leadership potential, my journey has provided me with opportunities to guide and mentor others. I take pride in being able to share my experiences and insights with newer team members, helping them navigate the complexities of the industry and develop their skills. My goal is to inspire confidence and growth in others, contributing to the development of future leaders within the construction industry.

In conclusion, my journey as a team member in the construction industry has been one of growth, learning, and adaptation. The skills and qualities I bring to the team—including open communication, interpersonal skills, adaptability, proactive problem-solving, continuous learning, safety awareness, work ethic, emotional intelligence, and mentorship—contribute significantly to our collective success. I am grateful for the experiences and opportunities that have shaped my journey, and I look forward to continuing to learn and grow alongside my team in the future.

Personal Learning

Throughout this module, I have learned a lot about the different types of management techniques that can be used within the construction industry, and it really puts into perspective how different personalities react to different types of management out on site. I feel that this will benefit me greatly throughout the duration of my career within the industry. Furthermore, I hope that having gained such knowledge in this field, it will help me achieve further goals such as becoming a Quantity Surveyor as detailed within my Personal Professional Development Plan.

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