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1.0 Critical Review of Professional Learning

1.1 The Onion

Eraut's (2000) conceptual framework categorises learning into two distinct categories: non-formal and formal learning. Formal learning is anything that is prescribed, planned, outcome based or formally taught by a designated individual e.g., a teacher. In contrast, non-formal learning is split into three categories: implicit, reactive, and deliberative to foster a degree of 'knowhow' i.e., tacit knowledge (Eraut, 2000). This framework builds on the binary model of Marsick & Watkins (1990), who scrutinise learning as solely informal or deliberative i.e., unintentional or intentional based on circumstance.

Accordingly, I have developed an 'onion' as reflected in figure 1 based on the principles of Eraut's (2000) framework. The rationale for an onion is to illustrate the layers of my character and resolve as a professional practitioner. Szewczak and Snodgrass (2002) outline that an onion communicates the layers of identification of self through innate internal communication channels and processes to digest, analyse, and learn from experiences.

The outermost shell reflects the most vivid characterisations of my attitude and traits shaped by my experiences (disciplinary knowledge). Each inner layer deepens how this is captured, developed, and shared with others to enhance my metacognitive awareness (transdisciplinary knowledge). These cohesively symbolise that my past experiences and traits are the source of my stimuli, allowing the development of tools and tacit knowledge bases to manage and reflect on my current experiences (Szewczak, Snodgrass, 2002). These layers culminate into my core which is fundamental to support the attainment of my future ambition of becoming a proactive, accountable, and competent construction project manager.

Non-Formal Learning in Workplace Onion Based on Eraut's Conceptual Framework

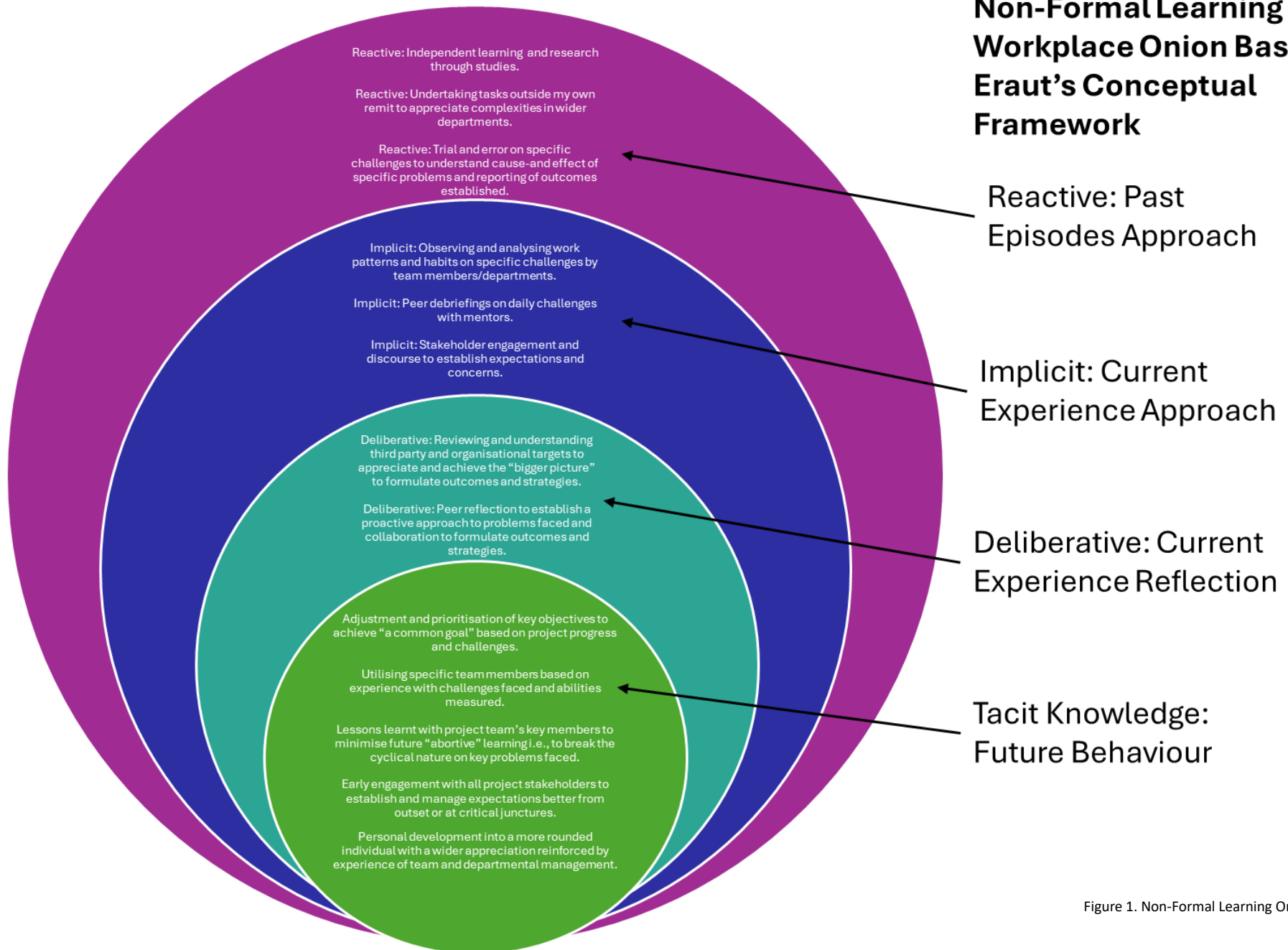


Figure 1. Non-Formal Learning Onion

1.2 Outer Layer – Reactive

The outer layer highlights my desire to learn, to try, and to appreciate my duties and the duties and roles of other disciplines and project stakeholders. These encompass key habits such as independent learning and self-sufficiency: achieved through interrogation of statutory literature and guidance, testing of approaches to understand causality and the de-facto nature of key practices, and undertaking key stakeholder duties outside my remit. This attitude enables continuous re-evaluation and adjustment of my approaches 'in-the-moment' through analysing the attitudes, reaction, and outcomes achieved with stakeholders. This layer is reactive due to the construction industry's reliance on static plans that are complicated by dynamic and unforeseen variables which test the ability of project teams in managing and performing their duties. Nonetheless, this facet of the industry provides significant exposure to wider project areas, promotes reflection-in-action, and necessitates the development of situational awareness in individuals. Reactive management represents the foundation of my disciplinary tacit knowledge base which is intrinsically tied to my persona (Eraut, 2000).

A prime example of this occurrence in my professional practice encircled an unforeseen technical concern raised in relation to how my development's design information fully satisfied regulatory requirements. The concern was raised by an independent specialist on behalf of the client in relation to a fire safety measure of a building post-completion. I decided to independently review this matter immediately based on the scheme's context and gathered my findings for consultation and agreement with my fire consultant and architect. It was highlighted through my research that the query referred to a future recommendation as opposed to a technical non-compliance that sat outside the scheme's regulatory remit. I formally closed out this issue through a brief call with the client team and thanked them for raising their concern whilst maintaining a clear position that this requirement did not apply to this scheme.

This example highlighted the importance of my situational awareness based on the potential severity of the concern i.e., high risk as fire safety related, and the importance to apply my intuition to disseminate the risk through detailed review in context (Eraut, 2000). My cognitive process was immediate but routine, 'like clockwork'; to address the query with self-efficacy to investigate the subject matter independently (Bandura, 1982). Furthermore, this example recognised the importance of maintaining and setting positive expectations in key professional relationships i.e., through prompt, consolidated, and technically robust responses to client teams on queries (Fenwick, 2001). Moreover, this example links to my doctoral interest encircling the new Building Safety Act and the failures exploited in the tragedy of Grenfell Tower in achieving of residential fire safety (Hackitt, 2018). I believe my experience and systematic routine developed demonstrates my technical ability to competently

evaluate a situation in a methodical manner on its merits before presenting this to stakeholders for consideration.

The causality of the above action impacted my ability to manage other workstreams such as my administrative duties, follow-ups, and key design reviews. This is because the construction industry has refined an innate heroism trait within me that thrives on constant firefighting and problem solving with the expectation of gratification from satisfying stakeholders. Eraut (2000) criticises this trait in practitioners as this runs the risk of quality reduction and reduced long-term situational awareness which can impact my ability to identify risks, adapt, and maintain job satisfaction. Billett (2002) endorses Eraut's view and draws caution to individuals who forego their primary duties in pursuit of gratification, making further knowledge acquisition a laborious task. This is a key aspect in my professional journey that requires significant challenge to allow me to grow into a proactive individual who relies on strategic management as the fore of my tacit knowledge.

1.3 Inner Layer – Implicit

A step further within the onion outlines my growth through observation of others' attitudes and beliefs, needs and wants, and a reflection of these traits against my own. Matthews (1999) describes this process as interpreting the learning potential of individuals to cultivate an environment that works towards a common goal i.e., project completions, project milestones, individual outcomes, and career ambitions. This allows me to establish procedures, approaches, and routines to achieve collaborative culture within my project team. This layer is implicit due to my role within the construction industry demanding engagement with specialists across multidisciplinary teams i.e., on-site contractors, off-site consultants, statutory bodies etc. This necessitates an analysis of patterns and trends across multiple workstreams to set out expectations in the form of scopes, roles and responsibilities, and project programmes to achieve delivery (Eraut, 2000). Consequently, holistic knowledge of a project's requirements, risks, and opportunities represents the transdisciplinary branch of my tacit knowledge base: supporting the dynamism of my reactive management style (Eraut, 2000).

A key example lies in a Microsoft TEAMS meeting I had chaired with a 3rd party ESCo provider (energy services company for heating & hot water management) on one project. The conversation entailed a chemical testing approach which deviated from their recognised standards which had been revoked on further review. This had led to a hostile atmosphere and impasse which prevented key project progress i.e., we were unable to secure heating and hot water in time for a particular building completion. I highlighted that all communication and agreements performed on-site verbally were followed up formally in written emails with documentation shared for client review and acceptance. However, the ESCo representatives remained adamant that the approach had not been agreed. To

manage this process, I drew from my experience of observing my line manager in exercising diplomacy over previous contentious challenges faced with the ESCo representatives. Hence, I suggested taking the discussion offline and contacted the ESCo technical representative separately to agree what aspect was key in satisfying them as an organisation. This permitted us to implement an agreed strategy to achieve heating and hot water within a revised agreeable timeframe.

This example demonstrated my ability to unconsciously channel and recall past experiences to overcome immediate hostility i.e., fight-or-flight responses, and exercise de-escalation to allow a temporary 'pause' on the matter. My approach was tactical and attained through shadowing of significant discourse between my team and the ESCo representatives previously. This moment enabled me to subconsciously analyse whether a solution was feasible amid the current forum or whether a temporary pause was necessary to re-evaluate. A pause allowed time to reflect on the attitudes expressed before acting. Accordingly, I recognise that this subconscious acquisition of knowledge has become a tool that activates as a part of my routine based on stakeholder emotions in a protracted atmosphere (Eraut, 2000).

The causality of this approach demands sacrificing my own emotions momentarily to sustain rational professional judgement. This provides contrast and equilibrium to my reactive management approach by instilling moments to pause and reflect as a part of my routine (Orasanu & Connolly, 1993). Furthermore, this cultivates my professional identity as a practitioner who understands that the 'truth' and 'being right' in a professional environment is dictated by a system of validation and ego which can inhibit progress. My decision to take the matter offline to plan and directly resolve with the ESCo technical representative achieved a way forward thus, attaining a form of gratification and success at the expense of my ego. This directly reflects Uekusa's (2025) notion of utilising autoethnographic awareness as a tool for professional empowerment and cultivation.

Hence, a key characteristic of my professional growth through my implicit learning is experiencing that not all parties can be appeased and satisfied, necessitating close management of their viewpoints and egos. This transdisciplinary knowledge base opposes my heroism trait and has led to new forms of gratification that have shaped my professional identity: one that is rooted in accountability and emotional intelligence.

1.4 Innermost Layer – Deliberative

My innermost layer provides direction and motivation and influences my learning goals and core values (Finegold et. al, 2005). This captures my desire to understand the bigger picture and plan my learning journey through strategic targets and goals. This layer is deliberative as it scrutinises my experiences and habits in the industry, exposing gaps, deficiencies, and lessons to increase individual knowledge

and self-efficacy. This provides a platform to exercise reflectivity over my conduct and professional identity. Consequently, this directly influences my future behaviour allowing growth through trial and error: akin to an iterative framework due to my natural propensity to rely on reactive processes (Bragança et. al, 2023).

A significant example of this is through collaborative reflection with my project team on all the teachings, failures, and challenges on a project nearing completion and discussing how these could be better managed in future projects at pre-construction stage. This allowed exploitation of key parameters that suffered over the scheme's lifetime e.g., design fee expenditure, health and safety expenditure, and poor project setup. Hence, this allowed the development of team-specific targets, refined pre-construction processes, and internal measurement tools to examine whether multidisciplinary teams can be better managed. This was reinforced by individual specific targets, such as my own ambitions and specific tools to acquire new domains of knowledge. The challenge faced was the acceptance of the suggestions presented by leadership team for a revised platform that supported constructive training and development of individuals and systematic overhaul of key processes to satisfy key performance indicators. This is because management approaches, procedures, and tools in construction organisations tend to be centralised and detached from the knowledge base below the chain of command. This is comparable to the hierarchical approaches and beliefs engendered by militaries given the strong cultural association and distinct professional qualities within both industries (Horvath et. al, 1996). However, this was necessary to be communicated to the leadership team to expose my professional identity and ambition, and to test the corporate climate and cultural reaction to requests above my position.

This example demonstrated my ability to interpret the challenges faced on a project and to devise collaborative strategies for consideration up the chain of command. Billett (2002) outlines that exposure of oneself to organisational hierarchy uncovers the organisational attitude towards career progression and performance, the available or planned learning opportunities, and level of support. Billett (2002) further argues that informal learning opportunities and growth are not mutually exclusive but rather are layered based on available levels of exposure to individuals. Hence, this builds on and contests the understanding of informal learning opportunities and growth defined by Eraut (2000) who stipulates that learning is unrestricted and independent. I believe Billett's view captures my experience of the constraints of a reductive culture and climate which exists within the industry due to a lack of clear support mechanisms for progression to achieve layers of knowledge.

The causality of this approach results in the neglect of individuals who either develop self-induced motivation to obtain further knowledge and job enrichment or decide to remain in line with the status

quo. This barrier inhibits my ability to meaningfully adjust my reactive tendencies into proactive tools and mechanisms for better project management. However, stringent adherence to my professional identity allows me to influence my project teams which creates a sense of freedom and trust between members, allowing the use of tools and processes developed to achieve organisational targets.

1.5 Reflection

The onion depiction of Eraut's (2000) framework has supported reflection on my core values, ambition, and abilities in managing and utilising my disciplinary and transdisciplinary knowledge bases within a complex and constrained environment. A defining trait of the industry and in my role has been that no two days have been the same, enforcing constant adaption to tackle challenges systematically and in order of importance. Importance is derived from my disciplinary tacit knowledge base through exposure to explicit processes, interactions, key milestones, and hurdles throughout my career thus far. This has shaped me into a reactive individual who finds difficulty in balancing workstreams efficiently due to my inherent desire to resolve key problems.

However, this is balanced through the incorporation of transdisciplinary knowledge bases i.e., societal awareness, memorable experiences on key matters, and the need to exercise pragmatism in interactions to achieve a common goal. These are subconsciously worked into my routines which support my ability to exercise professional judgement in contentious or unfamiliar atmospheres (Eraut, 2000). I have developed this balance through shadowing and being mentored by my line manager, peer reflection, stakeholder engagement and understanding of expectations, and by undertaking wider project team member's duties. This has engendered an expectation within me of a high standard of service required for clients and teams which reflects my professional identity (Manuti et. al, 2015).

I have refined my understanding of both my transdisciplinary and disciplinary knowledge bases through peer debriefings and reflective journaling to signpost me on future schemes on what is key to capture and to avoid, and what have I learnt when things go wrong. These have culminated into mitigation strategies that I have implemented through the development of new or pre-existing systems and frameworks e.g., early engagement with stakeholders, setting up of trackers to manage tasks and to capture key risks and opportunities, procedural form reviews and refinements, scope clarifications, and holistic design reviews at key junctures (RIBA, 2020).

Nonetheless, a key barrier I have identified, and face is the communication of the bigger picture and onboarding of leadership teams with the journey of changes that my team and I have presented. This has inhibited me from gaining exposure to greater layers of knowledge in my current domain (Billett, 2002). However, I believe that through autoethnographic awareness and commitment to my ideals and identity, I can successfully bring project team members on the excursion of change based on

shared lessons learnt from projects (Uekusa, 2025). Accordingly, I believe the onion conceptualises the layers to my professional identity: particularly how I seek, store, and share knowledge in my professional practice.

2.0 Conceptual Framework for Practice

2.1 Knowledge Map

Wenger & Synder's (2000) conceptual framework examines the interrelationships between individuals, cultures, and knowledge based on different forms of engagement i.e., communities, project teams, networking, and or formal departments. Forms of engagement provide structure to how knowledge is organised, codified and distributed. Accordingly, I have developed a knowledge map in figure 2 which categorises the codification of my knowledge. This is based on my experience and traits established from working within a project team working towards a common goal.

My knowledge map illustrates that the branches of my knowledge orbit around my central domain and experience of working on residential construction projects in a project team. The structure I have elected signifies the iterative cycle of knowledge sharing between the three codification forms: highlighting the development of departments, key individuals, and processes to achieve a common goal. This is evident through the example of my independent assessment of a technical fire safety concern which implements my routine in assessing a problem in its contextual application (explicit knowledge) before presenting this for negotiation and agreement with wider disciplines (tacit knowledge). The experience I gain from similar interactions and through regular implementation of my explicit knowledge allows me to reflect and enhance its application through tacit execution (Eraut, 2000).

This is reinforced by the composition of construction project teams which consist of specialists and disciplines working closely together that can change and evolve over time. This supports Billett's (2002) perspective of knowledge in that it is a system established and challenged by a variety of individuals in which different knowledge types can be formed, exchanged, and constructed from. The central positioning of my domain indicates that these processes and people have shaped my professional identity of self-sufficiency, independence, and heroism as highlighted in figure 1.

Furthermore, my knowledge map highlights how explicit knowledge (such as statutory guidance and regulation), tacit knowledge (such as professional judgement), and organisational knowledge (such as culture, norms, and processes) are represented statically but interact dynamically. This is often evident in the reactive and hostile environment that construction commands, enforcing tacit forms of knowledge to take precedence over others through in-the-moment decision-making. This is evident in

my example when chairing a TEAMS meeting over a contentious aspect with an ESCo provider, and how my professional judgement decided to remind me of my tacit awareness that a resolution at present could not be achieved through explicit justification. This resulted in de-escalation of the hostile environment. Hence, my knowledge map advises that practical experiences inform my reflexivity and understanding of the 'need' to improve frameworks for attainment of institutional policies and targets. This indicates that I view knowledge as tool to refine through practice rather than as prescriptive and finite. This has led to the development of key workplace habits and layers within my onion to reactively address issues based on feedback loops from challenges faced.

The codification of my knowledge advocates my professional learning by providing clarity on the processes, links and connections to my reactive, implicit, and deliberative practices as reflected in figure 1. My explicit and organisational knowledge provide policy and direction which guide the tools and methods I utilise to achieve client and organisational expectations. This framework allows my knowledge to be more layered and transferrable as I become exposed to greater responsibilities and remits in my profession (Billett, 2002). Consequently, my tacit awareness is moulded from this process to allow deeper reflection and improvement to support my own practice and wider project team. This echoes Matthew's (1999) understanding that an environment's framework allows the development of transferable skills which can be refined through iteration and is evident in my experience and growth. This is further reinforced by Coetzer's (2007) viewpoint of knowledge being an infrastructure for growth, attained through exposure to a variety of environments.

Nonetheless, the codification of my knowledge into a single illustration is difficult to represent and confines my ability to effectively communicate my professional learning. Eraut (2000) and Horvath et al (1996) outline that tacit knowledge forms such as managing complex situations, multiple workstreams, or navigating team dynamics cannot be definitively documented and explained. These are habits instilled through exposure of events and experiences which create subconscious knowledge and reactions. Accordingly, a key concern of codifying my knowledge is that it complicates my ability to understand and overcome habits such as my reactivity and firefighting approach to task management. This is because these are methods which serve me in my current systematic approach.

Furthermore, my codification of knowledge does not assess whether these knowledge forms will still serve me in part or full throughout my transition into project management. However, it is my intention to utilise these tools as a basis to learn new responsibilities (Matthew, 1999). I believe this will embody a journey of discovery to understand the hardships of wider remits, a trait that I have actively utilised in my current capacity to support and manage technical project delivery (Wenger, Snyder, 2000).

Through this process, I will be able to assess and reflect on my professional growth into a project management function.



Figure 2. Knowledge Map

2.2 Node & Branch Detailed Breakdown

Central Node: Residential Construction Project Management in a Project Team

Branch 1: Explicit Knowledge

- Sub-branches:
 - Statutory guidance and regulations for construction, design & management e.g., building regulations, British standards, notional standards, supplementary guidance etc.
 - Local byelaws and requirements for community needs and demands e.g., sectional agreements, highway improvements, community outreach programmes, renovation funding etc.
 - Continuous professional development training through professional bodies.
 - Cost benchmarking based on available construction data e.g., BCIS.
 - Professional bodies tools and frameworks for effective project management of key duties e.g., trackers, design and construction hold-points, discipline scopes and responsibility matrices etc.
 - Consultant and subcontractor performance monitoring and assessment against key performance indicators (KPIs).

Branch 2: Tacit Knowledge

- Sub-branches:
 - Negotiating & managing internal and third-party expectations & remit of involvement.
 - Managing team dynamics under pressure and assessing individual performance.
 - Mentoring and teaching of junior staff of key duties and expectations.
 - Prioritising based on project stage and importance over cost/time/quality based on leadership direction.
 - Lessons learned from project challenges faced and formation of mitigation measures.
 - Peer debriefings to absorb, plan, and manage critical situations.
 - Identifying key site constraints, opportunities, and challenges early on through risk management.
 - Interpreting stakeholder emotions before implementation of a plan.

Branch 3: Organisational Knowledge

- Sub-branches:
 - Cultural norms (i.e., decision-making hierarchy).
 - Informal communication channels.
 - Historical delivery and expenditure outcomes for benchmarking.
 - Historical knowledge i.e., lessons learnt and communicated from key personnel to key decision makers.
 - Employer's Requirements i.e., design & quality expectations.
 - Procedural forms and manuals for compliance with ISO standards of operation.
 - Corporate governance targets which satisfy broadly politicised incentives and industry targets whilst informing KPIs.
 - Standardised details, drawings, and designer specifications for project baseline costing and technical compliance.

2.3 Branch Relationship Analysis

The following section analyses the relationships between tacit, explicit and organisational knowledge, highlighting dependencies and conflicts between different the forms of knowledge. This reveals the tacit insight and considerations I weigh to ensure I conduct myself effectively, reliably, and honestly in the professional environment. This culminates into approaches that support the growth of my team, project culture, and the layers of my knowledge (Billett, 2002).

Benchmarking of prior developments is performed on the reported expenditure and final durations against available global construction data of similar sized and geographically located projects. This can lead to better financial planning and reliable commercial assessments on project feasibility. However, commercial assessments do not tend to capture key industry changes, individual site conditions, and tacit insights of key players based on recent experiences. Thus, these assessments require substantiation to determine the appropriateness of budgets formed based on specific analysis of a project's site conditions. Accordingly, my approach in this regard enforces reviews with project team members of site risks and opportunities. This highlights from pre-construction stage the key barriers or constraints which need to be managed and proactively resolved throughout the design and construction process.

Consultant and Subcontractor assessments are performed via industry framework tools to measure performance against organisational targets. This allows communication of concerns in management, oversight, quality and responsibilities at a senior level. This is achieved through formally documented consultation with consultant and subcontractor leads to decide mitigation measures for performance improvement. However, this process is often complicated due to the relationships between consultants and subcontractors with the leadership team and an interest in remaining harmonious to maintain competitiveness and secure future work. This can influence the reliability of scoring matrixes and results recorded. Thus, I ensure that my project teams inform me of performance concerns transparently to facilitate an informal discussion for resolution prior to any formal notification of concerns. This allows relationships to be managed gentler at project level and builds trust and confidence between myself, my team and senior leads within consultant and subcontractor organisations.

Project lessons learnt are recorded through peer reflections and debriefings before communication in a formal report to the organisation. This is then assessed by the organisation's quality assurance team to determine business impact, particularly to risk profiles, before communication to the wider business. This is achieved through bulletins, internal guidance publications, ISO procedural updates to organisational processes, new standard documents and forms, and revised benchmarking.

Nonetheless, this process is constrained due to feedback loops between project teams and leaderships teams often becoming frustrated due to proposals conflicting with organisational key performance indicators or wider politicised incentives. Hence, I ensure that my team communicate their proposals in debriefings in a manner that considers wider organisational implications i.e., impact to performance, costs, brand image etc. This induces greater focus in debriefings and improves individual awareness of the bigger picture.

Standardised details, layouts and requirements set a baseline for project pricing and delivery and are communicated by the business to regions and project teams. However, stringent review of site and technical appropriateness, buildability, and validity of use in the current climate are fundamental to ensure robust technical compliance prior to construction. I ensure that project considerations are communicated up the chain for wider agreement of a standardised approach within the region. This allows a singular and agreed approach with key third parties on elements which could otherwise be challenged due to poor communication of the intended objectives, appropriateness and validity, and regulatory compliance.

Cultural norms and attitudes can often conflict with stakeholder expectations due to an established precedent set through experience and growth (Coetzer, 2007). This can often impact the onboarding of new stakeholders and staff due to a lack of understanding and appreciation of tacit value and experience, leading often to an innate loss or reduction in individual value. My approach ensures that project team member's ambitions and stakeholder expectations are provided a degree of flexibility but are privy to the standards and expectations of the business. This supports growth and relationship building as stakeholders and staff do not remain constrained in performing their duties provided they follow protocol and achieve results. The intention is to foster individuals with specific skills that have an appreciation of wider disciplines and duties: thus, creating a well-versed, adaptable, and balanced team.

3.0 Strategic Learning & Development Plan

3.1 Goals & Ambition

In my professional practice, I have entered the construction industry through a 5-year degree-management trainee scheme in the capacity of a trainee technical co-ordinator. From this journey, I have grown into an established senior technical co-ordinator with 8 ½ years of experience on multi-phased, high-rise, and complicated residential buildings. This has entailed exposure to site-based and wider business departments and roles, shaping me into a well-versed individual with a critical understanding of the demands of pacing, institutional culture, and stakeholder expectations. My

journey has cemented my interest in attaining an overarching responsibility of projects in the capacity of a construction project manager. This role embodies a figure who supports and manages production, technical, and commercial project teams, is responsible and accountable for overall project risk and delivery, unlocks key problems, and provides valuable mentorship and tacit insight (HM Government, 2015). These qualities and expectations resonate with the layers defined in my 'onion' within figure 1.

To facilitate my learning and understanding of the wider demands of project management, I have independently pursued a master's degree in construction project management. This has awarded me with explicit knowledge on resource planning, cost consultancy, and technical design which I have utilised and refined within my professional practice. A prime example of this is the adaptation of construction programmes and sequences and the embedding of design programmes within these to agree manufacturing lead times, design durations, and design scopes and remits. This has achieved better commercial procurement of key packages and supported lean-production and material management through preparation and planning.

My organisation and line management staff have supported the opportunity for me to be exposed to intricate production and commercial processes to reinforce greater technical understanding. This has enabled deeper layers of technical knowledge to be generated and stored that consider the wider implications of business risk and opportunities (Billett, 2002). These layers have allowed me to develop self-efficacy in advising team members on key actions, duties and expectations to achieve project delivery as well as to form a collaborative culture (Bandura, 1982). Moreover, I am thankful for the growth infrastructure my line management staff and supporting project leads have put in place to identify knowledge gaps and stepping stones to become a competent construction project manager (Coetzer, 2007).

Furthermore, my doctoral journey stems from my bachelors and master's dissertations encircling the ramifications of the new Building Safety Act following the tragedy of Grenfell Tower and the stringent changes to fire safety regulations over the past 8 years. This intrigue has stemmed from the minute I had entered the construction industry due to the tragedy of Grenfell Tower taking place a few days prior to my first ever interview. The journey in my professional practice has exposed me to the changes in attitudes, beliefs, and processes implemented in the professional environment with an aim to make buildings safer and fit for the future. This has allowed me to present more informed criticism of key industry and organisational changes and present key achievements, case studies, and lessons learnt for leadership consideration on new projects that are privy to the new Building Safety Act. This has been endorsed by independent research into the Grenfell inquiry, assessment and production of

Building Safety Regulator forms and processes, and disclosure of key legislative and competency gaps that still are prevalent within the industry.

Accordingly, I have had the opportunity to gain experience of the new Building Safety Act framework across two projects that I am actively involved in a production and technical support capacity as well as sole technical ownership of a project that remains on the old framework. This has allowed me to compare the processes, attitudes, and management styles implemented across multiple schemes and in different roles. My aim is to implement lessons learnt, reflective practices, and support the growth of key players I have identified as highlighted within the core of my onion as shown in figure 1.

My overall ambition is to demonstrate and communicate a 'better way' of construction, design, and project management that can be expanded to wider projects and business areas through continuous professional development. This would be endorsed by detailed doctoral research, inquiry and legislative critique of the Building Safety Act and associated changes which seek to challenge the current culture within the industry. To achieve this, a career pathway assessment accompanied by a learning and development plan is fundamental to identify key gaps in knowledge required to support my transition. This is reinforced by targets and aims to develop teams formed of individuals that are proactive, accountable, considerate, and collaborative (Coetzer, 2007). This enables my succession and growth to a higher chain of command supported by key individuals who express the foundations of knowledge that has been fostered by me through close teamwork (Bandura, 1982).

3.2 Career Progression & Doctoral Journey

I have developed a timeline that is supplemented by a detailed review to capture the steps required to refine my competency, experience and professionalism within the construction industry. The timeline has been captured in figure 3 which communicates my awareness of level of responsibility and remit needed to support multiple workstreams whilst working towards my ambition of becoming a project manager. These workstreams are pivotal steps to support my academic interest encircling the Building Safety Act. I believe that this will be supported through transitional exposure to wider aspects of management and project delivery within the residential construction industry.

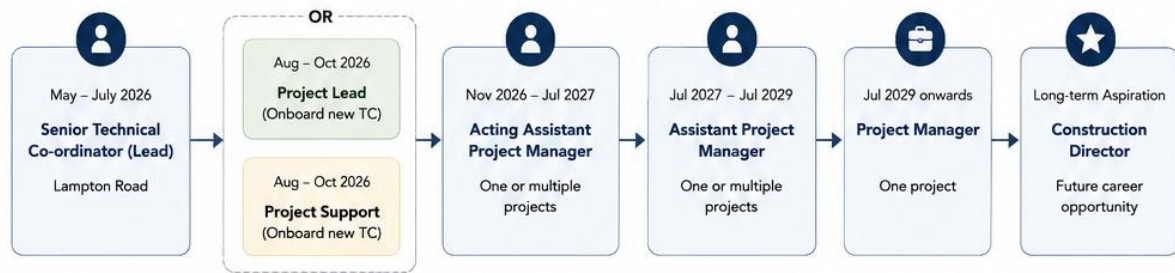
The management of Lampton Road which remains on the old regulatory framework against the support required on Dollis Hill and Wembley Park, which are on the new Building Safety Act regulatory framework, will provide for meaningful comparison for my doctoral study. I will be able to directly interpret and judge the interactions, pressures, and management styles implemented to achieve project delivery. Thus, my professional experience will provide criticism and tacit insight into the feasibility, hardships, and assessment of the objectives of the Building Safety Act. This is pivotal to

expose whether inbred patterns remain prevalent within the industry despite enactment of the Building Safety Act which seeks to challenge the “*race to the bottom*” culture (Hackitt, 2018).

Furthermore, my transition into Project Management and proposed learning objectives will expose me to the duties required of a Principal Contractor. Principal Contractor’s are responsible for the overall health and safety, project delivery, and project management function during the construction phase (HM Government, 2015). In my current role, I have undertaken the duties of a Principal Designer to support project delivery during the design phase and co-ordinated elements with the Principal Contractor. This will enable a deeper appreciation of the duties and responsibilities of a Principal Contractor, with tacit awareness already on how Principal Designers can aid me in achieving key milestones. Moreover, I will be able to monitor the interactions between construction and design and critically assess whether competence, transparency, and accountability are sustained throughout the project’s lifecycle: all key objectives of the new Building Safety Act (Hackitt, 2018). This may reveal a deeper layer to the line of inquiry and exploration within my doctoral journey.

My particular interest in themes such as individual and organisational competency, accountability, and growth infrastructure will lead me into a journey of discovery. I intend to question and challenge my own competence and beliefs through the training and mentoring of staff within my current role and in my transitional phase. This will provide an insight into the transferability of my tacit knowledge, traits, and skills, whilst achieving simultaneous acquisition of new knowledge (Matthew, 1999). This journey will allow assessment of the evolution of my character, judgement, and traits as I become a more well-versed and experienced professional (Eraut, 2000). This discovery may uncover further abstract layers to themes such as competency and responsibility, highlighting the complex demands of professionalism and integrity as the industry evolves throughout my career and doctoral investigation (Billett, 2002).

CAREER PATHWAY & REMIT OVERVIEW



PROJECT ALLOCATION SUMMARY



DUTIES & LEARNING GOALS ROADMAP



KEY PRINCIPLES THROUGHOUT THE JOURNEY



Figure 3. Career Pathway & Remit

3.3 Learning & Development Strategy

Accordingly, the following breakdown highlights key areas that require addressing through a detailed training needs analysis matrix to achieve both my doctoral and professional ambitions throughout this time period:

- Time management of profession & doctorate
 - Working simultaneously on multiple projects can strain ability to manage growth.
 - Balancing demands and ambition of doctoral study, familial and social commitments, and anticipated workload for professional growth.
- Involvement on projects & relationship with doctoral journey
 - Exposure to Building Safety Act from a Principal Designer & Principal Contractor perspective.
 - Interpreting the impact to project programmes and decision making alongside individual changes in attitudes and beliefs.
 - Measuring organisational performance in delivering projects under the new Building Safety Act.
 - Monitoring growth or decline in individual competency in delivering key dutyholder roles.
 - Reporting on findings from project outcomes and developing lessons learnt for thesis expansion.
 - Creating focus groups and presenting at seminars findings to promote discourse over concerns and tactical solutions for industry improvement.
 - Presenting findings and discovery to organisation and implementing pilot tests to monitor changes in performance and delivery across projects.
- Learning and undertaking duties of a Principal Contractor
 - Health & safety mandatory training on key expectations supplemented by site inspections and daily exposure to duties.
 - Client and third-party interaction in a project management and operational capacity.
 - Site inspections & routine quality control hold points to satisfy third-party and client approval.
 - Shadowing project managers and directors to understand and interpret management styles and approaches.
 - Implementing key dutyholder processes within the Building Safety Act by a Principal Contractor i.e., mandatory occurrence reporting, construction control plans, partial completion strategies & change control management.

- Supporting Principal Designer function in discharging joint dutyholder responsibilities under the Building Safety Act i.e., gateway 1, 2 & 3 approval frameworks.
- Project and leadership team reporting and involvement in key decision making in an operational capacity.
- Developing key team members and onboarding of new staff
 - Measurement of performance through task assignment to establish strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities.
 - Mentoring to aid team members in professional understanding through sharing of tacit knowledge.
 - Performance reviews and support of professional development through scheduled catchups, debriefings, presentations, and exposure to key duties to address weaknesses and opportunities.
 - Development of formal training needs matrixes to aid in professional development.
 - Monitoring of training and development over time to allocate future promotion opportunities and further delegation.

Hence, to achieve the above elements, a training needs analysis matrix has been developed in figure 4 which captures my goals, a gap analysis, training and development needs and specific individuals who will support and measure my performance, and the prioritisation of each goal to ensure this transition can be achieved within a 12-month period.

A training needs analysis matrix provides structure to communicate and measure my intended trajectory (Gibson, Bartram, 1997). This is pivotal to demonstrate the intensity and demands of the role I am aiming to transition into whilst allowing assessment of its feasibility when considering the existing duties and remit that I have in my current professional role as displayed in figure 3.

Thus, the primary focus to allow this transition are the organisational frameworks in place to support my advancement and long-term professional and academic growth. These are tools that will support, motivate, and direct me into the professional and academic bounds that I aim to explore. On deeper reflection, figure 4 highlights that I am aware of key gaps in my understanding and experience in meeting the duties of a Principal Contractor i.e., a project manager. However, my baseline experience from being a site-based individual with core departments who appreciate my value, working on similar scale and types of residential developments, and researching in and around the Building Safety Act provides confidence that I can successfully achieve my professional and academic ambitions (Bandura, 1982).

TRAINING NEEDS ANALYSIS MATRIX

From Senior Technical Co-ordinator to Project Manager / Assistant Project Manager

AREA / GOAL	CURRENT POSITION & GAP	REQUIRED COMPETENCY	TRAINING / DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY	KEY STAKEHOLDERS SUPPORTING DEVELOPMENT	MEASUREMENT / KPI	TIMESCALE / PRIORITY
 1. HEALTH & SAFETY (H&S) CREDENTIALS & COMPETENCY	Limited operational Principal Contractor H&S exposure under the new Building Safety Act framework. Need stronger site-based compliance and leadership capability.	Demonstrate operational H&S competency, regulatory awareness, and site leadership aligned with Principal Contractor duties.	• SMSTS / CSCS CITB H&S Training • Fire Marshal Training • First Aid Training • Asbestos Awareness • Temporary Works Co-ordinator Training • Scaffold Awareness Training • Conduct site H&S inspections • Shadow independent H&S inspections • Learn and implement compliance forms/processes	 Managing Director  Technical Manager  Project Director  Site Teams  External H&S Inspectors	 H&S KPI scores, inspection outcomes, reduction in non-conformances, improved audit performance over 12 months.	 IMMEDIATE HIGH PRIORITY
 2. FINANCIAL PLANNING & RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMPETENCY	Limited exposure to commercial management, forecasting, and operational resource planning responsibilities expected of a PM/APM role.	Understand cost-value reconciliation, project prelims, staffing/resource allocation, and financial reporting processes.	• Shadow commercial reviews • Learn CVR reporting processes • Review plant, labour, and management costs • Participate in resource planning meetings • Support staff development planning and performance reviews	 Commercial Teams  Managing Director  Project Managers  Technical Teams	 Documented staff development plans, improved commercial awareness, contribution to resource planning decisions.	 SHORT-MEDIUM TERM HIGH PRIORITY
 3. PROJECT PROGRAMMING & PLANNING COMPETENCY	Limited experience producing and controlling live construction programmes within a Principal Contractor environment.	Ability to programme, sequence, monitor, and recover project delivery against operational milestones.	• ASTA PowerProject Training • Shadow PMs and Directors • Assist with sequencing and build planning • Weekly reporting and progress tracking • Develop mitigation strategies for delays, defects, and incidents • Integrate technical/commercial milestones into programmes	 Project Director  Project Managers  Site Teams  Clients	 Programme accuracy, project KPI reporting, reduced delays, improved progress reporting over 12 months.	 IMMEDIATE-MEDIUM TERM HIGH PRIORITY
 4. OPERATIONAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE BUILDING SAFETY ACT (BSA)	Experience primarily from Principal Designer perspective rather than Principal Contractor operational delivery.	Understand operational duties, compliance obligations, and collaboration requirements under the BSA.	• Mentorship from Project Director • Attendance at BSA compliance meetings • Review gateway and HRB procedures • Study Principal Contractor obligations and interfaces with Principal Designers	 Managing Director  Project Director  Regulatory Third Parties	 Demonstrated understanding in project meetings and compliance processes.	 IMMEDIATE HIGH PRIORITY
 5. CLIENT & STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT	Need greater confidence acting as operational point of contact across technical, commercial, and production matters.	Develop communication, reporting, escalation, and relationship management skills.	• Attend client meetings • Lead sections of project reporting • Prepare risk and progress updates • Observe senior stakeholder management approaches	 Clients  Project Teams  Leadership Team	 Positive stakeholder feedback, increased responsibility in meetings and reporting.	 MEDIUM TERM
 6. LEADERSHIP & TEAM DEVELOPMENT	Transitioning from technical co-ordination into leadership and supervision responsibilities.	Ability to supervise teams, support junior staff, and contribute to operational leadership.	• Mentor junior staff • Conduct performance review participation • Shadow leadership decision-making • Participate in management and supervision activities	 Technical Manager  Project Director  Project Teams	 Increased delegation responsibilities and successful supervision feedback.	 MEDIUM TERM
 7. RISK MANAGEMENT & DECISION-MAKING	Limited direct accountability for operational project risk and business-critical decisions.	Ability to identify, profile, escalate, and mitigate project and business risks proactively.	• Participate in risk workshops • Produce risk registers • Review mitigation reporting • Learn escalation thresholds and governance processes	 Leadership Team  Commercial Leads  Clients	 Improved risk reporting quality and proactive mitigation measures.	 MEDIUM-LONG TERM
 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & ACCREDITATION	No formal residential construction professional body accreditation currently identified.	Establish recognised professional development pathway with structured CPD.	• Identify relevant professional body membership • Develop CPD plan • Attend industry seminars and workshops • Engage with doctoral and industry research networks	 Doctoral Professors  Professional Bodies  Managing Director	 CPD completion, accreditation progress, reflective development records.	 LONG TERM
ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT SUMMARY						
 MANAGING DIRECTOR Strategic support, leadership exposure, identification of growth opportunities.	 TECHNICAL MANAGER Operational support opportunities and supervision responsibilities.	 PROJECT DIRECTOR Mentorship, project leadership exposure, assistant PM transition support.	 PROJECT TEAMS Practical collaboration and clarity of responsibilities.	 CLIENTS & REGULATORY BODIES External expectations and professional standards insight.	 DOCTORAL PROFESSORS Academic and professional development guidance.	 DOCTORAL STUDENTS Cross-industry perspectives and transferable learning opportunities.

Figure 4. Training Needs Analysis Matrix

4.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, I believe this assignment has provoked critical reflexivity of my knowledge bases and how these have shaped my character and experiences over my professional and academic journey thus far. The layering of my informal learning traits in the form of an onion has enabled dissection of key habits, traits and beliefs I exhibit in the professional environment. This is further dismantled through understanding key sources within each knowledge base, providing evaluation of the interconnectivity and conflict between my tacit, explicit, and organisational pressures.

From this, my understanding of key conflicts in expectations ensures that I act concurrent with the traits defined within my onion of heroism, accountability, and honesty. The challenge remains in ensuring that my approaches and suggestions satisfy organisational and societal expectations and targets which remain a key barrier to change in the construction industry. This is further expressed by me through direct communication with leadership teams on key lessons learnt to develop proactive solution that support project teams and achieve project delivery. These qualities and conduct harmonise into my ambition for greater responsibility and leadership within the construction industry.

Thus, this has directly influenced my desire to move into project management to achieve greater responsibility and provide wider project support. This ambition has been cemented from observing individuals in this capacity who have supported and guided me across multiple projects and teams throughout my career. These people have resonated with me due to their ambition and conduct as professionals who lead by example. I believe that my ambition can be achieved through a feasible and defined remit which supports organisational needs and the identification of training needs which can be actioned simultaneously. Nonetheless, I am mindful that performance reviews, peer debriefings, and re-evaluations of my progress and core values are essential to achieve meaningful results. These aspects are essential tools to ensure that I recognise the evolution of my core values and layers. This enables me to record my professional development and provide meaningful discovery for use, critique and expansion in my academic pursuits.

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