

Self-Development, Professional Practice and the Management of Construction  
Personnel - The role of the professional within the Construction Industry

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## 1. Professionalism and ethics

When discussing professionalism and ethics in the construction industry there are many factors to consider. The main factor of ensuring these elements are implemented in the construction industry is to make working on site as safe as possible. That can be seen as a broad statement as health and safety in the construction industry can span between many elements, one of these is setting health and safety regulations throughout your company, an example of this would be to ensure that on all sites hi vis vests, construction helmets and work boots are mandatory to wear before stepping foot on any construction project. Following on from the above article, it is crucial that building regulations are met within the construction industry, this is to ensure safety to the constructors building the project and the residents/users of the building after handover.

**“Most man-made disasters do not happen because one single thing goes wrong, but rather as a result of the gradual accumulation of faults, errors and vulnerabilities that a healthy “safety imagination” can prevent. Reflecting on the impact of previous disasters in other sectors, from the Flixborough chemical plant blast of 1974 to the San Bruno pipeline explosion of 2010, this article charts how Grenfell Tower must now take its place in the roll of deadly but avoidable failures that, too late, sparked systemic overhauls in safety consciousness” – Jan Hayes – 29<sup>th</sup> Aug 2017 (This is from assignment brief)**

The article in the assignment brief discusses the Grenfell tower incident where outdated building regulations were used with the use of combustible cladding which can be highly flammable. In the result of the use of this cladding amongst other elements of work a large fire broke out resulting in the deaths of 72 people. This was a great tragedy across the United Kingdom and woke up the construction industry to improve upon contractors moral and professional obligations towards building regulations in the construction industry. The incident could have been easily avoided if the selected contractor (A E Symes) were made aware of the dangers of using combustible cladding they could have turned to a safer alternative, instead this was over looked and something as simple as a malfunctioning fridge freezer on the forth floor catching fire soon spread throughout the building. The gap between the cladding and the external wall insulation allowed the fire to stack and become more deadly. This gap should have been identified by either the contractor or the client but nothing was mentioned between both parties, this may have been laziness or a lack of an ethical thought process, it is these sorts of mindsets that allow such tragedies to happen and they will continue to happen if changes within the construction industry are not made. To avoid any future incidents like this the most up to date and relevant building regulations must be met on every construction project no matter how big or small the project is, just that sentence alone will probably make most older clients wince as most clients want work done as fast and as cheap as possible, but going forward clients should have the mentality of safety before financial gain.

Health and safety is the most important element to ensure is implemented on every construction project, legally and ethically everyone from carpenters to clients have

responsibilities to instruct and complete works in a safe and proper manner, this is why having building regulations to work towards is so useful, they are a guide on how structures should be constructed in safest way possible, all site managers, project managers and clients should be keeping up to date with what is in the current building regulations for the related works that are on site. If all sites ensure this happens then incidents and tragedies like Grenfell will be heavily avoided in the future and more people will be safe in new build properties.

Decisions throughout a construction project are key though the entire ladder, for example if the contractor is not a design and build contractor, the client usually assigns an architect to display drawings to the contractor to build off of. This architect consultant must be competent and aware of the most up to date building regulations, this means that before the enabling works begin these consultants have taken full responsibility of the methods of construction and how they are implemented. In terms of ways we can measure professionalism within the construction industry there are many methods, these are as follows.

- Relevant Course Checks – Within the construction industry there various amounts of courses workers on site can and should be completing annually is necessary, these can include asbestos awareness, cyber virus awareness and newly covid awareness courses, the appropriate person on site whether it is the contracts manager or the site manager should make sure that all workers on site have completed these courses, especially ones relevant to the project they are working on. These courses can be really helpful for all workers, new workers on site can learn the basics in these courses, whereas more experienced workers can learn the new methods and ways of health and safety within the construction industry.
- Weekly check lists on site – these can vary from many aspects on site, fire extinguisher checks are a good example of this, a nominated member of the workforce will go around site checking that all fire extinguishers are in the correct locations in relation to what possible hazards are in that area, also to check that they are in date. Another check list that is commonly used is a weekly safety checklist, in this checklist can include items to tick off in and around site, making sure scaffolding has been certified, making sure all relevant PPE is available to everyone on site and possible visitors to site and much more.
- Site inductions – site inductions within my company are mandatory for everyone that steps foot into site, whether it be electricians or clients. A site induction is when a person who is first coming onto site is given information about the project and is also run through the health and safety regulations within our company, the person is told where the fire exists are, where the toilets are and also where the first aid kits are placed on site, these inductions should be carried out by the site manager.

The above listed elements of checks on site should be the very basic checks that should be used on every construction site in the world let alone just the United Kingdom. A common occurrence that happens on most sites is that the site manager can be caught up in so much

work that they may not have any time on his hands to complete these checks, now even though I feel like this is not a valid enough excuse as health and safety should be the main priority, these situations still occur, this is why the site manager should have a nominated responsible person to carry out these checks if they are not available to carry them out themselves.

In conclusion to what I have written above, professionalism and ethics within the construction industry should be held as the main priority on all construction sites, money may be a massive factor to most clients but it is the safety of the workforce and the persons who use the buildings after construction that is the most important element in the entirety of the construction industry, I feel there is still a stubborn and old fashioned approach to certain health and safety elements on work, it is this type of mindset that caused Grenfell to happen so the sooner this mindset is wiped out of construction, the better.

## 2. Professional Development

Name – Jake Robert Bevan

Role – Trainee Quantity Surveyor

Career Summary - I joined my company in late 2019 after successfully completing my Construction Management course in College. I was offered an opportunity through CITB to become one of the first entrants on to their new Higher Apprenticeship Schemes where I could work and learn in tandem and which in time would lead to an Honours Degree in Quantity Surveying from the University of Trinity St David. I have consistently achieved highly in university where I still attend one day a week whilst working the remaining four days between the office in Ammanford and from site as appropriate to workload and learning. I am being mentored by both the Senior Project Management and Senior Quantity Surveying Team. I have already assisted the teams on a wide range of aspects in the delivery of projects noted below.

Key Project Responsibilities - Assist and support the Project Manager, Project Commercial Manager and Site Management Team in the delivery of the Employers Requirements.

Qualifications & Training ;

- Construction Management HNC
- HNC Quantity Surveying
- Currently studying on the CITB Higher Apprenticeship in Quantity Surveying (on-going completion of HND aspect 2021)
- Fire Warden
- Up to date CPD including, Sound, Asbestos Awareness, Project Bank Accounts, GDPR, COVID-19

Key Skills ;

- Excellent Communicator able to liaise well with people at all levels
- High level of commitment and drive to Delivering on Set Targets
- Always looking to Provide Added Value and experienced in working with Community Benefits Team
- Flexible to change

- Fluent in Written and Spoken English

### **Relevant Previous Project Experience**

#### **Bay Studios Emergency Hospital – Fabian Way, Skewen**

Value: Circa. £9.3 million

I assisted in keeping on site records and supply chain procurement including but to limited to the measurement of materials to be procured under the direction and control of our Senior Project Quantity Surveyor on this design and build project of an emergency COVID-19 field hospital which housed over 2,500 beds. Shortly after the construction of this hospital it has been converted into a vaccine centre, alongside with this conversion two car parks were also constructed.



#### **Carmarthenshire County Council Void Properties**

Value: Circa. £2.6 Million (as of 21/02/2022)

Within the Carmarthenshire county council there are multiple void properties that have had refurbishments carried out by ourselves. I have assisted in restoring over fifty of these properties in the last year. I have raised orders, made various payments and have submitted valuations and final accounts for these properties.



## 2.1 - Organisational Behaviour

I have been asked to discuss organisational behaviour and how it can add to my personal development. First let's discuss what organisational behaviour is, this is the measure of how people interact in certain groups within the workplace, the purpose of measuring organizational behaviour is to attempt to make construction or any company operate better on all levels. Now in terms of the history of organisational behaviour, studies of this were first started in the 1920's, a company called "Western Electric Company" formed a study on its workers viewing and analysing their behaviour. The researchers involved with the company were very motivated to try and find out if workers can be more efficient and productive if their surroundings were upgrades in certain elements for example the lighting or the layout of their workspace. After analysis came through they discovered that improvements on their workspace did not improve their incentive but social interactions actually helped improve instead, for example something as small as a compliment by their boss on works they had completed. A few examples of good organisational behaviour can include showing Leadership, this element of work is discussed more in depth further on in this assignment but in short for this section leadership behaviour should include forms of being a range of things, focused, broad or centralized.

Next I will be discussing the actual importance of organisational behaviour, the study of this behaviour shows how workers communicate with each other within the workplace. It is these small and sometimes subtle conversations that can shape how well a company is doing, the use of this behaviour is very important as it can help improve efficiency and promote new innovative ideas that could subsequently give said company an advantage on other construction companies that are not aware of the use of this behaviour. This behaviour can help resolve problems such as addressing certain problems or concerns from consultants, if these concerns are brought up as early as possible that means that these said possible problems can be resolved faster, the faster these are solved means it decreases the chances of there being any delays on the project.

The bigger and more complex projects are generally becoming in the construction industry the need for organisational behaviour is becoming more and more important. Organisational behaviour can help define authority over workers in the workplace. Workers usually either use their power of influence with new ideas or methods or they can start to become more accepting of being told what to do by someone in more of a leading role, it is with these mindsets that organisational behaviour can have most of its benefits. It is conversations between site managers and their workforce that can help the site manager understand how people on work are behaving and how they are progressing with their works. It is with this understanding that possible future conflicts can be avoided between workers. Conflicts on site are very common, this can stem from two people on site having a disagreement on site or having a rich history of disagreements in the past, if the site manager is aware of this he can either have one of the persons sent to another site or have them work on separate areas within the construction project.

**“As a generally established fact, construction projects are very volatile and complex in nature when compared with other kinds of projects. The volatility and complexity of construction projects can easily be attributed to the large number of multi-disciplined staffs needed to successfully complete individual projects. Since construction projects require a large number of workers, there is a need to examine the personal traits of each worker that will promote project success” - Clinton Aigbavboa Mar 2020 -**

**[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340647488\\_Organisational\\_Behaviour\\_and\\_Success\\_of\\_Construction\\_Projects](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340647488_Organisational_Behaviour_and_Success_of_Construction_Projects)**

There are many benefits organisational behaviour can have towards my personal development. Listening to others within the workplace and just overall communication is one of the most important factors. A lack of communication can result in drastic circumstances. For example if a site manager had been asked by the client directly to build a boundary wall outside of an ongoing contract and the site manager carried on with these works without informing the quantity surveyor on these works, the company could possibly lose money on these works as costs did not get agreed with the client before works commenced, also depending on where this wall is meant to be a structural report may have been required to complete these works, so not only are the works not going to be paid for they may also result in having an unsafe structure which the contractor is then responsible for if anything bad happens.

In conclusion to the above organisational behaviour being recorded within the construction industry isn't only beneficial to the client but beneficial to the contractor in terms of growing as a company and getting a better understanding of the workforce and how they feel about certain elements of their every day works. As mentioned above creating a bridge for communication between contractors and clients is very important, not only to work better but to form better relationships with clients creating future opportunities for more works with them. Hopefully going forward in the construction industry organisational behaviour is studied more and is more influenced in sites across the united kingdom.

### 3. Leadership

Leadership within the construction industry is a huge factor of having a successful project, in a financial and quality perspective. The core form of leadership on a construction site will often come from the site manager, this member of the workforce has the responsibility of making sure everything runs smoothly on site at all times. It is crucial for there to be multiple leaders on site so there is a better route of coordination and quality. Being a leader can mean many things, one of which is that a leader can be someone who can take responsibility for certain decisions and instruct other around them to undertake certain roles for the benefit of the project. One of the most important aspects of a construction project is forms of leadership. A main issue over the years with certain leaders on site is a difference in opinion on different elements of work like solutions to on site problems that may occur. For example, say for instance on site there is heavy rain fall and the ongoing groundworks have large amounts of water built up inside of them, on bigger construction projects there will be more the one site manager, a solution to the build up in the trenches can be made in many ways, these way could be conflicted between both of the site managers. It is this type of confliction that could cause delay of works on site, this is why it is important to hold weekly or monthly site meeting with the entire project team to find a mutual solution to these problems.

An experience that I had witnessed on a construction project I am currently working on in Morryston hospital, involved a situation where we have had a drawing change late on into the project where worktops had been omitted in several room of the hospital, the problem arises because our site manager who was ready and raring to finish off these rooms as soon as possible had already ordered these worktops, which was the correct action to make as the client was pushing all members of the project to get the project finished on time with the programme. In financial terms we had already paid the kitchen suppliers for these worktops which were clinical so they were quite expensive. The client then refused to pay for what costs we had in for the supply and installation of these worktops as they had changed on the plan but as this change was so late on, our site manager requested that a site meeting was to be held to discuss this matter even further with the appropriate persons present. It was in this meeting that we discussed the above mentioned problem, because of this meeting it helped the client get a better understanding of the situation that we were in and we were then later pai for these worktops in that months application, because of the leadership skills showed by our site manager we had a very healthy financial gain whereas if he did not show these qualities we would have had a noticeable loss in terms of these works. If I was the site manager in this scenario I would have dealt with the situation differently, firstly I would have informed the quantity surveyor after ordering the kitchen items so they are made aware that the kitchen elements of the project have been settled, secondly I would have asked the client if there were any potential changes coming up in the latest construction issue drawings, if this question was to be asked then the entire situation would have been avoided. But also on the other hand a heads up by the client that this change would be made would have also been highly useful.

Another scenario which I have experienced in one of my construction projects, this project also being in Morryston hospital. This particular project was run by the health trust and had many project manager instructions throughout the project, hence there being quite a few

financial changes whether it be a saving for them or a gain for my company. Around halfway through the project in late November, there was a proposal from the client for there to be a bridge built between ward to ward. Now for the design of this bridge there was site meeting held to discuss who this responsibility should be given too, in the end we had agreed to give this responsibility to a third party company who specialised into these sorts of works. Three months had passed after this meeting and an e-mail was sent from this third party company displaying that they were not comfortable taking responsibility of a design of a bridge within an A&E department. So three months of waiting had resulted in nothing, in a result of the client and our company trying to pass responsibility to a third party we had lost 3 months on what was an already intense programme, since the incident my company have now designed and built the bridge ourselves as we are a design and build contractor. If as a contractor we showed an initiative of being responsible and leading the way in the construction of this bridge we would have saved that 3 months wasted on the programme, personally I would have suggested in this meeting that as a design and build contractor it would be much quicker and easier in terms of communication for us to design this bridge. It is in situations like this where foresight should be used more often to ensure that all possible delays within the programme are avoided. This situation was begging for someone within my company to show leadership skills and get the project moving but that did not happen.

A more recent example of where leadership is useful is with the recent COVID-19 pandemic, with the spread of this virus, construction sites more now than ever have to be responsible in terms of health and safety rules and regulations. Leaders on site should ensure that all members of the workforce are two meters apart where applicable and are wearing face masks also where applicable, also they are to keep an eye on the workforce to see if any of them are showing any symptoms of COVID-19, and if symptoms are seen they are to suggest to that member of the workforce to have a COVID-19 test for the betterment of everyone else on site.

Leadership around apprentice tradespeople can really help shape the future of the construction industry. It is important that all apprentices on site have a leader to shadow and work with. For example an apprentice carpenter could have just started on their first construction site, they would need a leader to help teach them how to first fix items of work, without a leader to show that apprentice what to do mistakes could be made in the carpentry elements of that job, these mistakes could lead to financial implications and can also lead to delays in the project, it is these types of delays that can frustrate the client. Frustration amongst clients is what can hinder possible future works with them, therefore hindering the financial gain of the company. This example shows how far the importance of leadership spans throughout the construction industry.

**“Leadership is important in all fields of human endeavour. Features of the construction process and construction projects render leadership even more essential. Construction projects are expensive and technically demanding and the project teams are large and diverse. The process is long and involves a large number of discrete and interrelated tasks. Because constructed products influence long-term socioeconomic development in developing countries, poor performance on projects can have severe implications for the nation and its citizens” - Ofori, George 2022**

<https://web.s.ebscohost.com/abstract?direct=true&profile=ehost&scope=site&authtype=crawler&jrnl=18236499&AN=88053759&h=8b8pAMG8QRUYQKoHdemQUI3GyOue8drTWj4lh6gZCdXx187qfD0w%2bzmEUcmZXuEBuxuHYwvl8iLNEslufmvk%2bA%3d%3d&crl=c&resultNs=AdminWebAuth&resultLocal=ErrCrlNotAuth&crlhashurl=login.aspx%3fdirect%3dtrue%26profile%3dehost%26scope%3dsite%26authtype%3dcrawler%26jrnl%3d18236499%26AN%3d88053759>

I have been asked to write a personal statement about my leadership style, philosophy and key approaches. My leadership style imposes an element of listening and understanding someone before making a decision, in the construction industry it is still very common for experienced member of a workforce to be quite stubborn to their approaches in certain situations. As a younger member of my construction company I feel like I have the advantage of being able to accept and learn new methods and resolutions of works. It is with this more open mindset that solutions to certain problems can be found not only quicker but more effectively. My philosophy with leadership is to make sure that all decisions made by myself are made with much thought and have a great amount of evidential back up. Again I am still new to the construction industry so whilst implementing my opinions and thoughts I always listen to other more experienced members of the project teams I work with so all possible solutions to problems and ideas for new methods of works are thought of. In my opinion the sooner the overall of the construction industry has a brighter mindset of new and competitive ideas for construction projects the better the industry will be because of it.

So in conclusion I feel like i have highlighted why leadership is important quite well and have covered almost all aspects of work that it affects. Without leadership in the construction industry most members of the project team would be lost and unsure what to do in certain situations. It is crucial that there is multiple people within the team to take responsibility for the crucial elements of work.

## 4.Teamwork

In this section of the assignment I have been asked what I bring to the team in terms of the workforce at my company. As a trainee quantity surveyor I bring an open and motivated mindset, I am always willing to learn any and all aspects of works within the construction industry. My teamwork journey has consisted of ups and downs but I am now fully confident in what I can bring to the team. The company I work for is a design and build company, we had a project on an extension for a school in Pontardulais, in this project we had responsibility for the design on the timber framed roof on the extension, after picking this up in the contract data given to us at tender stage, I conducted a meeting with the senior quantity surveyor appointed to this job and the head architect on this project. In this meeting we discussed all different types of options regarding the roof but we eventually came to a conclusion that was very cost effective for everyone involved, I have also raised similar meetings for these scenarios in other projects, this can be related back to the leadership elements of this module for this year, they have really helped me get a better understanding on when to assert my opinions and when it is appropriate of me to take certain responsibilities. Within my company there is a great sense of togetherness and everything is done as a hard working team. Over the last 3 years I have worked at my company I have covered a wide range of works including sub contractor payments, valuations, final accounts, cost value reports, sending enquiries, putting together and submitting tenders and managing all financial elements on over 20 projects so far.

**“Teamwork creates a synergistic effect that can propel members to finish a project more effectively and efficiently. Good collaboration among the members of a construction team is essential, no matter how big or small a project is” - Diversified Interiors -**  
<https://diversifiedinteriors.com/the-importance-of-teamwork-in-construction/>

Another example of how I can work in a team efficiently is because of a project I am currently on at the moment within Morriston Hospital, because of the size of this project there are two quantity surveyors working on it, one of them being myself. The more senior quantity surveyor has been dealing with cost changes within the project manager instructions we have received which is currently over 32 of them. I myself have been assigned to deal with everything in relation to items that need to be ordered/cancelled due to the changes set out by the project manager, I liaise these changes to our site manager and also print out the most up to date drawings for him, we have been working as a three man team and so far the project has been brilliant and everything has been running smoothly.

So in conclusion I work well with a team and I am aware of my roles and responsibilities within said team, in this module I have learned so much about teamwork and how it can heavily improve efficiency of work, quick and informative communication between a team can help avoid any delays on site. Having a hard working cohesive team with great communication skills can be highly beneficial, it creates less chances for conflicts and disagreements on site and it also gives everyone involved in said team an important responsibility to stick towards.

## 5.0 Conclusion

Lastly I have been asked on this part of the assignment to give an overall conclusion of the module in a form of personal learning points, some of these points include the following;

- Professionalism and ethics – in this module I have learned a great amount of information regarding this topic, I have learned more about the tragedy of Grenfell which in return has given me a much better understanding on how to avoid such tragedies on future projects, I feel it is important for this sort of information to be more well known within the construction industry.
- Professional Development – in regards to this topic I have discovered organisational behaviour and what it can do to benefit not only myself but the construction industry as whole in terms of communication and other elements of social interactions within the workplace.
- Leadership – for this topic I have learnt about the importance of taking responsibility and having the right judgement in making certain decisions on site, having leadership is a crucial trait to have whilst working in the construction industry.
- Teamwork – lastly in this topic I have broadened my knowledge throughout this module, I have learned about different roles and what responsibilities those roles have within a team. A team working together and for each other will always produce a better quality of work and will also work at faster speeds.

## 6.0 Reference Page

- [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340647488\\_Organisational\\_Behaviour\\_and\\_Success\\_of\\_Construction\\_Projects](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340647488_Organisational_Behaviour_and_Success_of_Construction_Projects)
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