



Faculty of Engineering
Department of Architecture

Professional Practice

5th year – 1st Semester

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Room No. 313

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Ethics and Professional Practice



Course Reading List and References:

- **The Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice**
by R. L. Hayes, Ph.D., AIA Editor-in-Chief

Employment

- ▶ **Finding employment**
- ▶ **Self-assessment**
- ▶ Whether the architect is newly qualified looking for a first appointment or an experienced architect seeking a change, obtaining employment is not easy.
- ▶ It is relatively easy to get a job (depending on the current economic climate), but it is not easy to get the right job.
- ▶ The art of finding employment is very much the art of self-presentation.
- ▶ Sadly, it has nothing to do with how well the person can do the job.



Just as a salesperson cannot market a product effectively unless they know all about it, architects cannot market themselves unless they know their strengths And weaknesses.

- ▶ Architects should be adept at the art of selling.
- ▶ After all they are regularly called upon to make presentations of schemes to clients.
- ▶ It is a good idea to do it in note form following the headings below:
- ▶ **Formal qualifications.** This should be easy: degrees, diplomas, certificates and memberships of professional bodies.



Experience. It does not pay to be vague. If qualification is recent, experience will be slim, but the most should be made of it. It is useful to put down experience as follows:

- ▶ — most recent appointments (say, during the last five years).
- ▶ — duties in each post. This is not nearly so important as achievements
- ▶ — achievements. It is an important selling point. Architects should consider whether they have played a significant part in a 'really good' building or brought a contract back from the brink of disaster or introduced a system which made the office more cost effective.



Talents. These are the things that the individual architect does best. To identify talents it is necessary to look at what one most and least likes doing. We all tend to enjoy doing the things at which we are most talented.

► **Personality.** Relationships with colleagues, persons in authority and team members are important as is the way in which an architect deals with contractors, manufacturer's representatives and officials of public bodies.



Career objectives. The next step is for the architect to decide what he or she really requires from a career. Presumably, an architect chose the profession in the first place, because of a desire to participate in the creation and maintenance of a delightful, satisfying and sustainable environment for the benefit of everyone who will inhabit or pass through it.





- Job satisfaction: Most architects want this, but it means different things to different architects.
- What kind of architectural work is wanted? Very large or very small projects ,mainly designing, contract administration, technology, new work or refurbishment? It is important to try to define one's ideal post.



- Pay: Consideration should be given to how much money will be needed to justify a move. Sometimes an architect will be prepared to accept the same salary, or less, in order to secure just the right job.
- ▶ — Advancement. An architect must consider whether it really matters.
- ▶ Most people have a desire to progress, but not all. Usually, something must be relinquished to secure promotion.
- ▶ For example, an architect may have to stop active design work in order to concentrate on an exclusively managerial role.



Professional activities

- ▶ ***Continuing professional development***
- ▶ Every employee should be allowed some time each year to go on courses either in or out of the office.
- ▶ Employers vary considerably regarding whether they are prepared to continue paying salary during days off for this purpose.

► **Examinations**

- Architect employers must allow attendance at examinations, they should allow attendance at appropriate short courses, but pure study time is probably best left to the student to organise.
- ***Sabbaticals and study trips***
- Sabbatical leave is recognised as an important constituent of some posts, particularly in education. It refreshes the mind and generates ideas.
- Above all, it plays an important part in the development of the employee. Study trips also assist the employee to develop a particular interest.



Professional subscriptions

- ▶ It is relatively unusual for an employer to reimburse an employee's subscription to a professional body. This kind of provision is generally regarded as a benefit for architects of high status such as associates.
- ▶ ***Journal subscriptions***
- ▶ It is even rarer for an employer to reimburse professional journal subscriptions, but virtually all offices subscribe to a range of journals for the benefit of staff as a whole.

► Types of Practice

- **Sole principal**
- When a person engages in business for profit and does not create a partnership or incorporate as a company then he or she operates as a sole principal.
- The business and the individual are inseparable; there is no legal distinction between the individual and the business.



Practicing as a sole principal does not mean you are working alone, it simply means that you are solely responsible for the business.

- ▶ The employees could be both secretarial support and technical staff, e.g. another architect.
- ▶ Choosing to start a business as a sole principal may look daunting and carry a significant degree of risk but it does have certain advantages. The principal can set their own working hours and schedules as well as conducting affairs as they like.



They maintain full control of the profits of the practice.

- ▶ There is no set salary for the principal and at times there may be a lack of cover due to an unexpected emergency and illness. It may prove difficult when the principal wants to go on holiday and there are looming deadlines or they have a project on site.

Partnerships

► Partnership

- Partnership is defined by 'the relationship which subsists between two or more persons carrying on business in common with a view to profit'.
- A partnership usually has a written partnership agreement. Although it is not strictly necessary, it can save disputes about trivial things getting out of hand.



The advantages of a partnership are as follows.

- ▶ When the business expands beyond a certain point (which will vary depending on the architect concerned), a sole principal will not have full knowledge of every project nor the ability to give proper supervision.
- ▶ Economy in expenditure can be effected by the pooling of accommodation, equipment, or staff by partners. Whereas one principal might not have enough work to employ three assistants, two jointly might be able to do so.



Two or more partners should be able to generate more ideas and attract more work together than the sum of such ideas and work if operating separately.

- ▶ There may be more capital available for expansion.
- ▶ A partner establishes a **goodwill** value to a business. If an architect is in practice alone, there may be virtually no goodwill value, because if such an architect dies or retires, existing clients are little more likely to continue with a totally new architect who may take over the business than they are to go to another architect's practice.



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