Setting Standards for Professionals

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COMPETENCY AND STANDARDS

COMPETENCY

- Qualification, standards, and competency are often used interchangeably
- Definition
  - The ability to perform the activities within an occupation to the standard expected for employment (Lenard 2000, Stewart and Hamlin 1992), which are transferable to new situations (Holmes and Joyce 1993)
- Wisher (1994): Competencies provide a common cultural thread, a language for success, and a framework for thinking about excellence

Role of Professional Institutions

- Qualification, standards, and competency are often used interchangeably
- Historically, professional organizations: (Hughes W., 2003)
  - Acted as a barrier to entry to the profession
  - Maintain a high ethical standard as a requirement for membership
  - Provided business insurance
  - Membership (certification) was a mark of distinction
  - Created legitimacy of the profession

Role of Professional Institutions

- Modern professional organizations:
  - Serve as qualifying bodies
  - Provide training
  - Publish standardized methodologies
  - Develop technical products
  - Enable continuing education
  - Fund and conduct research
  - Maintain a knowledge base
  - Form a community with shared identity
  - Hold conferences and other events
  - Publish technical materials authored by members

Professional Institutions

- Professional organizations also create, maintain, and market a consistent image, representing the profession to:
  - Members
  - Other professional organizations
  - Companies
  - Governments
  - The general public
  - … and more

DEMONSTRATING COMPETENCY

Formal Education:

- The primary path to Quantity Surveyor qualification is a QS university degree in a Commonwealth country
  - Coursework accredited by RICS, CIOB, ISM, NZIQS, HKIS, IQSSL, ASAQS, AIQS
- Undergraduate and post-graduate degrees are available in Project Management, worldwide
  - Certification in Project Management is available through professional associations

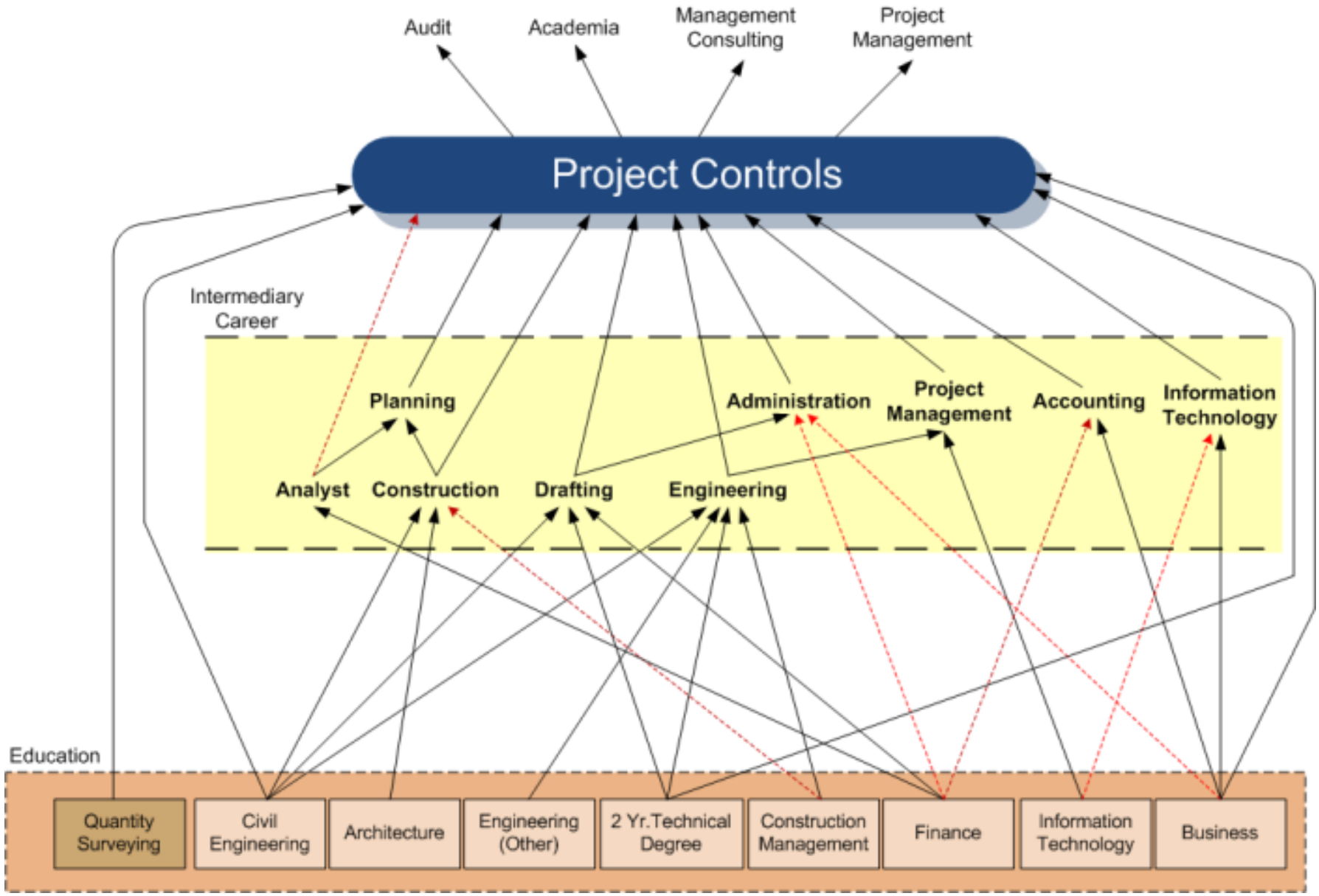
Formal Education:

- The profession of Cost Engineering suffers from a lack of formal training programs at universities
  - Certification is available through professional associations
  - Some companies have internal certification programs
- Individuals may acquire additional competencies through further formal education, continuing professional development, or in-house training and work experience (Lenard 2000)
  - Model masters degree program (AACE, 1990)

Career Path (Research):

- Cost Engineering journal has published over 47 member profile articles
  - No two members featured in the articles perform exactly the same role in CE, QS, or PM
- Once formal education has concluded, each individual's career path is unique, even unpredictable, and specialization occurs often
  - Asking these individuals 'what they do' opens Pandora's box

Dynamic Career Paths



Professional Institutions:

- Demonstrating competency through testing
  - Certification by exam or assessment panel is used to validate skills & knowledge
    - IPMA, PMI, other PM associations
    - AACE International
    - RICS, and other QS associations
- Accreditation of certification exams
  - AACE certifications accredited by CESB
    - Rigorous process considers the resources of the organization, program structure, independence, **nonprofit**, and more
  - PMI and others are self-accredited

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CAREER PROGRESSION

Professional Service Firms

- Core competencies
  - Basic through advanced
  - Soft skills are becoming more important
- Differentiating between job descriptions
  - Not just different jobs, but increasing levels of responsibility per organizational role
- Motivating employees / encouraging certification
  - Certification is universal and portable
  - Bonuses
  - Difficult to quantify benefit

Professional Service Firms

- A competency model helps employees understand the skills and performance required for each position in alternate career paths and allows them to proactively participate in managing their career development.
- Using models, supervisors can more effectively lead and manage staff performance in a way that links to overall company strategies and supports improved organizational effectiveness (Hollmann & Elliott 2006)

Professional Service Firms

- (Lepsinger and Lucia, 1999): A competency model is a descriptive tool that identifies the skills, knowledge, personal characteristics, and behaviors needed to effectively perform a role in the organization and help the business meet its strategic objectives.
  - The model not only identifies skills and knowledge needed for a job, but defines expected levels of performance
  - The model should tie skills and knowledge to organizational roles, and tie everything back to business objectives and strategies

EVOLVING THE PROFESSION

Professional Service Firms

- Companies who hire project controls and quantity surveying professionals are evolving [(Perera, Pearson, & Dodds, 2010), (Connaughton & Meikle, 2013), and (Nkado, 2000)]
  - Growth through acquisition
  - Diversification of services and sectors
  - Global expansion
- This is occurring in response to
  - Differing and changing client needs
  - Mitigate fluctuating demand for services
  - Commercial objectives to create value
  - Innovation to develop strategic differentiators

Professional Service Firms

- Practitioners must also attempt to understand their clients and their commercial objectives and explore innovative ways to deliver value (Cartlidge, 2002; Smith, 2004; Harun & Abdullah, 2006; Davis et al, 2007)
  - Cost managers must constantly scan their business landscape to discern and adapt to imminent changes in their professional practice (Mbachu and Nkado, 2006)

Research Methodology

- Built on research conducted in 2010
  - 14 bodies of knowledge in CE, QS, and PM
- (2014) Reviewed top 10 quantity surveying professional firms
  - Services provided
  - Sectors served
  - Global locations
  - Language used to describe the firm
- (2014) Reviewed six professional institutions in CE & QS
  - Body of Knowledge
  - Language used to describe the professional association

Research Results

- Professional associations are adding specialty certifications to supplement their core certifications
  - AACE
    - Planning & Scheduling Professional (2004)
    - Earned Value Professional (2005)
    - Certified Forensic Claims Consultant (2007)
    - Certified Estimating Professional (2008)
    - Decision & Risk Management Professional (2013)
  - RICS
    - Project Management (2006 / 2012)
    - Building Information Modeling (2013)

Research Results

- Professional association Bodies of Knowledge are expanding
  - AACE 11R-88

	11R-88 1988	11R-88 2006
SECTION I - SUPPORTING SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE		
1.1 ELEMENTS OF COST		
Cost		X
Cost dimensions		X
Cost classifications		X
Cost types		X
Pricing		X
1.2 ELEMENTS OF ANALYSIS		
Statistics & probabilities	X	X
Economics and financial analysis	X	X
Optimization and models	X	X
Physical measurement	X	X
1.3 ENABLING KNOWLEDGE		
Enterprise in society		X
People in organizations and enterprises	X	X
Information management		X
Quality management		X
Value management		X
Environmental, health & safety		X

	11R-88 1988	11R-88 2006
SECTION 2 - PROCESS & FUNCTIONAL SKILLS & KNOWLEDGI		
2.1 TCM FRAMEWORK		
Overall TCM process and terminology	X	X
Strategic and asset management process		X
Project control process	X	X
2.2 PLANNING		
Requirements elicitation and analysis		X
Scope and execution strategy development		X
Schedule planning and development	X	X
Cost estimating and budgeting	X	X
Resource management		X
Value analysis and engineering	X	X
Risk management		X
Procurement and contract management	X	X
Investment decision making		X
2.3 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION		
Project implementation		X
Project control implementation		X
Plan validation		X
2.4 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT		
Cost accounting		X
Project performance measurement	X	X
Asset performance measurement		X
2.5 PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT		
Project performance assessment		X
Asset performance assessment		X
Forecasting	X	X
Project change management		X
Asset change / configuration management		X
Historical database management		X
Forensic performance assessment		X

Research Results

- Some Body of Knowledge gaps have already been identified.
  - Audit
  - BIM
  - Business assurance
  - Investment decision-making
  - Lifecycle cost analysis
  - Owner representation
  - Performance management
  - Project monitoring
- These may become future specialty certifications.

Research Implications

- In order to remain relevant and continuously improve, professional institutions must invest in and balance: (Bordass & Leaman, 2013)
  - Research, Education, and Practice
- Members of professional institutions must mentor and champion the next generation of professionals
- Research and practice must be used to push the barriers to the profession's Body of Knowledge
  - Lead the profession, do not lag it
  - Close the technical information gap

Questions and Answers

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