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Developing the
Young Workforce

INNOVATION IN CONSTRUCTION

EXPLORING CAREERS WITHIN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

CAREER PROFILES PACK



NoWrongPath

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CAREER PROFILE ACTIVITIES



These tasks are suggestions of activities you can insert into the classroom using the Build Your Future Careers Profile Pack.



1

Task students to select a profile that they are interested in and identify the skills that the individual uses within their role.

2

Encourage students to choose a profile that they have not considered as a career path, ask them to identify something that surprises them about the information and feedback to the class.



3

Thinking about some of the advice these individuals share within their profiles, encourage young people to consider how they would use the advice to develop themselves in future.



4

Ask students to imagine that they have already begun to advance in their career and they have been asked to complete the profile. Encourage them to think creatively about what they would like to have achieved and the skills they wish to develop and write their own personal profile.



5

Ask students to select the individual they identify with most from their profile. Ask them to feedback why they feel drawn to this individual's profile. Is it because they are interested in similar subjects and pathways or is it something to do with the personality and characteristics portrayed through their profile?



BUILD YOUR FUTURE

Exploring careers within the Built Environment

KIRSTY DUNCAN



SKILLS COORDINATOR,
CONSTRUCTION SCOTLAND INNOVATION CENTRE

WHEN DID YOU DECIDE THAT YOU WANTED TO WORK WITHIN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND WHAT INFLUENCED THAT DECISION?

My role within the future skills team allows me to work with a variety of likeminded people. I have always been passionate about living more sustainably and playing my part to help support the movement towards net zero. I wanted a role where I could continue to contribute to creating positive environmental change and the role at CSIC allowed me to combine environmental change and skills/training programming.

WHAT DID YOUR CAREER PATH LOOK LIKE?

I struggled at school with being dyslexic and identifying my strengths. In my 5th year I finally figured out my style of learning after 4 previous years of failing tests/exams.

University/College were the only two paths highlighted when I was leaving school, so I chose to study Event Management straight from school. I thoroughly enjoyed my course and chose it because I worked in hospitality on the weekends while at school and liked organising events.

After University I worked for a large hotel chain within sales and continued to do so for 2 years. I quickly discovered that sales were not for me but appreciated the experience and knowledge I gained. I moved into operation management where I gained huge amounts of experience from, people management, operational logistics and budget control. After a few years within this role, I needed a new challenge and found the aspects I enjoyed most about my role was the development/training of my team. I was looking for a role which offered the chance to make a difference. The Future skills coordinator position offered both.

FAVOURITE SUBJECTS AT SCHOOL?

PE, Classical Studies, Modern Studies, and History

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE ARE NECESSARY FOR YOUR ROLE?

- Qualification in business, skills, or training
- Experience was more needed, coordinating and delivery of projects, budget management, procuring and managing suppliers and contractors
- Enthusiasm to make a change

DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR WORKING LIFE...

The role is very varied and fast paced. Looking for new innovative ways to develop the future workforce and add value to the industry through skills/training. The team and I work on a variety of projects using problem solving skills and team work to come up with the best possible plan. Another exciting part of my role is content development, this consists of designing game-like programmes to help educate students and workers in different areas of construction. This could be anything from video creation to game design. The final part of my role is organising and delivering training to schools/trainers and workers. I enjoy working with a variety of different people and it is great to see the impact some of the training brings to people and organisations.

WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS SURPRISED YOU ABOUT YOUR JOB IN PARTICULAR?

- The diversity of job roles available
- The different opportunities available into your ideal job, it might just be a different path to others
- The wealth of training available
- The amount of well-paid jobs

WHAT ARE THE BEST PARTS OF YOUR ROLE?

I am very lucky that I have found a company that support me in my career progression as I am back studying digital learning design, part time, to support the work I do.

I enjoy the mixture of office work and skills/training programmes we run, meaning no day is the same and a complete mixture of desk work and working around Scotland. Personally, having a supportive and fun team makes for a great job and feels less like work, I am very lucky to have found this and know there are many other roles within the built environment that offer this friendly environment too.



WHAT ADVICE IN GENERAL WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR 15-YEAR-OLD SELF ABOUT HOW TO SUCCEED IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT?

- Don't think you aren't able to achieve a goal/role, there are many pathways into every job, it is about discovering the best one for you
- What you choose to do straight after school doesn't have to be your job for the rest of your life, it is just a stepping stone
- Take advantage of every opportunity that comes your way and always try your best

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MATTHEW PATON



TECHNICAL SPECIALIST - DIGITAL,
CONSTRUCTION SCOTLAND INNOVATION CENTRE

FAVOURITE SUBJECTS AT SCHOOL?

Graphic Communication, Technical, Physics

WHEN DID YOU DECIDE THAT YOU WANTED TO WORK WITHIN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND WHAT INFLUENCED THAT DECISION?

I have always had an interest in the built environment. Lego was always a part of my childhood - I would build structures and create my own designs. I enjoyed technical drawing and the methodical processes involved in 3D modelling at school. I had a pretty clear vision in my head and wanted to become an Architect.

WHAT DID YOUR CAREER PATH LOOK LIKE?

Studying Architecture at Uni had a clear job at the end so I had planned to go straight into the work force. I graduated during the recession and there were 0 jobs available and

people were getting laid off so I volunteered at a local Maker-Space. I was lucky that this Space had heavier industrial machines capable of making large structures and proving my worth and potential led to a job and promotion, also allowing me to be involved in key Built Environment projects and communities.

Looking for new challenges, I returned to Architecture to finish my professional studies. I was involved in diverse projects across the UK, gaining a host of experience. Whilst invaluable and teaching my fantastic skills, I was disillusioned by my idolised profession. Paper-work and bureaucracy made up 95% of my day.

The newly formed CSIC provided a fantastic opportunity to mix design, creative thinking, technical skills and experience in my current role.

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE ARE NECESSARY FOR YOUR ROLE?

My role has diverse responsibilities and covers everything from robotic programming to 3D printing and even carpentry and traditional skills. Flexibility is important and a desire to learn new skills. Knowledge and experience of a breadth of software, CAD and CAM packages is of great advantage. This will include design software as well as manufacturing software.

A knowledge of the construction industry is also key. University courses including Architecture, engineering, programming and robotics would all lend themselves well to my role.

DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR WORKING LIFE...

A typical day for me is split between deskwork and factory work. I can be involved in sketch designs for a new construction method, drawing ideas on paper or on a computer. I might then join a workshop developing and exploring new solutions for an energy efficient house. Next up, programming an industrial robot to pick up a window and install it into a house wall. Firing nail guns and cutting with a saw included!

The afternoon might find me working in a team to build a house module within the factory – this will involve lifting heavy wood to feed machinery, driving a forklift and climbing scaffolding.



WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS SURPRISED YOU ABOUT YOUR JOB IN PARTICULAR?

There is a lot more to the built environment than first assumed. Its not just shovels of mud in the rain. There are already jobs for Programming, Drone Operators, Games Designers and Virtual Environment Creators.

The traditional industries are mixing and manufacturing, design, digital and manual are all overlapping and creating new and exciting job opportunities.

WHAT ARE THE BEST PARTS OF YOUR ROLE?

My job is great because there are rarely 2 days the same. Everything is new and exciting. There is great potential to learn new skills and working with new innovative projects leads to gain deeper insights and knowledge of things that most people have only heard of.

I am trusted with personal responsibility to manage my own time and projects. The company I work for are also really flexible. They accommodate a wide variety of working patterns and allow us the freedom to operate as required.

Working across so many fields also allows me to focus in on what I enjoy and what I am good at. Allowing me to specialise in some areas, gain further training and pass on my own knowledge to others.

WHAT ADVICE IN GENERAL WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR 15-YEAR-OLD SELF ABOUT HOW TO SUCCEED IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT?

Don't be afraid to explore options. It takes time to find out what you want to do. If you are proactive and willing to put in some effort, then you can experience a lot, gain an understanding and choose wisely.

A job doesn't need to be for life. If you are always improving yourself then your Job options will always be improving with you.

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SOPHIA MIRASHRAFI



DIGITAL PROJECT OFFICER,
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE ARE NECESSARY FOR YOUR ROLE?

Typically someone in my role should hold an undergraduate degree in archaeology, digital heritage, game design or something similar. Ideally, a relevant masters doesn't hurt either but isn't necessary. Any practical experience in digital documentation is also ideal. My team comes from a diverse background of archaeologists, surveyors, and digital design.

FAVOURITE SUBJECTS AT SCHOOL?

History and Science.

WHEN DID YOU DECIDE THAT YOU WANTED TO WORK WITHIN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND WHAT INFLUENCED THAT DECISION?

I had particularly good role models in school and university, who helped give me opportunities to enter the built environment sphere. It wasn't until a few years into my undergraduate degree that I found that it was digital heritage that really sparked my interest. That only came from saying yes to many opportunities that I found interest in and trying things out!

WHAT DID YOUR CAREER PATH LOOK LIKE?

I got my MA in Medieval History and Archaeology from the University of St Andrews before moving on to receive an MSc in Digital Heritage from the University of York. In 2018, I got accepted to be an intern on the Digital Innovation team at Historic Environment Scotland, based at the Engine Shed in Stirling.

Currently, I am on the same team as a Digital Project Officer, jointly funded by the National Trust for Scotland, working to digitise the Hill House in Helensburgh.

DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR WORKING LIFE...

It's difficult to describe a single day as they tend to vary greatly. It could range from fieldwork scanning sites or artefacts from across the country, processing and uploading 3D models for the public to explore, giving talks and writing reports, putting together a 360 virtual tour, photo and video editing, and everything in between. It's a really fast-moving industry so it keeps me on my toes and always learning!



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WHAT ARE THE BEST PARTS OF YOUR ROLE?

My favourite aspect of my role is the people that I get to meet and work with. I enjoy being challenged everyday and given the opportunity to grow every day. There's a lot of time behind a computer, which I do enjoy - but there's also plenty of fieldwork around some of the most beautiful places in the country.

WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS SURPRISED YOU ABOUT YOUR JOB IN PARTICULAR?

I am always surprised at the way digital technologies can help tell new stories about old places. When used as a tool, it can bring new perspectives to traditional sites, enhancing our experience of them without replacing it.

WHAT ADVICE IN GENERAL WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR 15-YEAR-OLD SELF ABOUT HOW TO SUCCEED IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT?

Follow what interests you, seek out people that you admire and offer to help them out on projects. If you're approaching the things you are interested in with curiosity and an open mind, there is no such thing as an incorrect direction.



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SOPHIA MIRASHRAFI, DIGITAL PROJECT OFFICER, HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND

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PAUL CLARKE



HEAD OF IT,
ROBERTSON GROUP

FAVOURITE SUBJECTS AT SCHOOL?

PE and ICT.

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE ARE NECESSARY FOR YOUR ROLE?

Having a base qualification in IT is very important, that could be through College or University. I have been fortunate to gain a lot of experience working with good knowledgeable people where I have learned and developed my skillset. In my role it is very important to understand the business you are working for and be a good communicator speaking to people and understanding their challenges so you can help provide solutions.

WHEN DID YOU DECIDE THAT YOU WANTED TO WORK WITHIN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND WHAT INFLUENCED THAT DECISION?

I did not know I wanted to work in the built environment, because at the time I did not appreciate the different opportunities that were available within a business. I wanted a career in IT but thought that had to be with a technology company rather than a company that did infrastructure.

WHAT DID YOUR CAREER PATH LOOK LIKE?

When I left school, I went to college to study computing on a two year HND Computing course. After leaving college with my qualifications, I applied for various jobs mainly in the oil industry but also Robertson. I was very fortunate to get an IT Assistant role with Robertson which was the first step on the ladder. This position was working very close with the IT Manager at the time. I have been at Robertson for 20 years now and went from being an IT Support Assistant to Systems Administrator and then made the step up to IT Manager when my previous manager left the business four years ago.

DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR WORKING LIFE...

With a business of over 3000 employees almost 2400 of which are IT users with a computer, mobile phone or tablet it is a very challenging to work within Robertson IT. We operate an IT Service Desk that people make requests for help. A lot of the day is spent responding to emails or Microsoft Teams meetings, the new way of communicating! When you wake up in the morning you can have your day planned out however something else will come up that requires your input and throws what you have planned away. I also like to catch up with my team and see how things are going as we usually have a couple of projects ongoing as within IT you cannot stand still things need to be kept up to date and modern where you can, and budget allows.



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WHAT ARE THE BEST PARTS OF YOUR ROLE?

There are many different aspects I enjoy about my role, I think in the main part it is still helping people with their IT issues and making a difference to their working environment through the use of technology. Although I try not to get involved day to day with user's IT issues (not easy!) this can also be achieved in other ways in terms of leading on the IT Strategy for the business and bringing in new technologies or systems that make a difference through efficiencies in process.

Although with Covid-19 it has not been possible recently I have been able to travel and visit different sites and offices over the years working in my role. Lastly, I enjoy working as a team and helping younger team members develop and learn new skills.

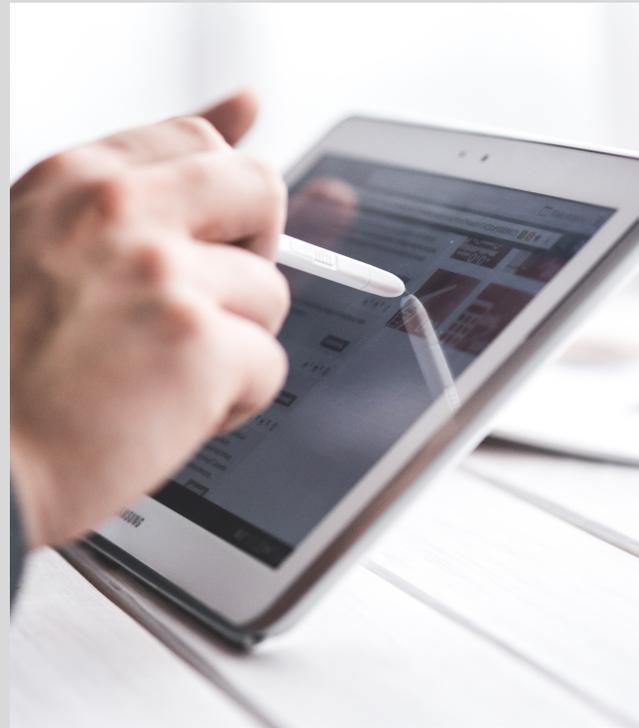
WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS SURPRISED YOU ABOUT YOUR JOB IN PARTICULAR?

Having working in IT nothing surprises me... In fact, I had something quite funny the other day when helping a user. I was connected remotely and talking to him over the phone. I was quite surprised when he said to me to hang on 5 minutes whilst he "opened the window to let the internet in".. very amusing. There are many opportunities within the Built Environment and especially a diverse Group of businesses such as Robertson.

From the outside I did not appreciate that as when you are young you do not think of all the staff and employees that work in head or regional offices of companies you just see the end product, that could mean a building or housing development in the case of Robertson.

WHAT ADVICE IN GENERAL WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR 15-YEAR-OLD SELF ABOUT HOW TO SUCCEED IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT?

My advice would be to at every opportunity learn about your particular job role and more importantly the wider business as this will provide more opportunities if you are driven and want to succeed.



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