

## Lead 2 Change 2016/2017

**Name: Thomas Lamb**

**Company: Keepmoat**

**Position: Pre-Construction Coordinator**

**About me:** I am Keepmoat Regeneration's Pre-Construction Coordinator for the North East. I am responsible for coordinating all new build schemes and complex refurbishment schemes through the pre-construction phase. I work across the commercial, technical and production departments in order to efficiently progress schemes from tender award to starting on site. Efficiently starting on site is essential not just for our Clients but for the business as a whole. An accurate forecast of when a scheme can start on site allows turnover to be accurately projected; resources can also be planned efficiently across the departments. A part of my role has involved reforming existing processes and creating new processes in order to improve the efficiency of the pre-construction phase, which has historically been seen as a weak area of the business.

**If you could make one change for the better in the UK Construction Industry what would it be and why:**

**Culture Change within organisations:**

My role within Keepmoat is a new role. As such, I have been in the unique position to truly craft and shape this role. Although this has largely been positive, a large part of shaping this role has been developing strategies, both short and long term, in order to deal with culture change resistance. I discovered very quickly that a large amount of people are very resistant to change. Although people don't explicitly state this often, the opinion is very much "we don't normally do things like this". As my role is new and as I have been responsible for driving culture change for the benefit of the business, I have been forced to confront this stance amongst employees head on. I have outlined two tips below that have worked for me.

One way I have overcome a resistance to culture change has been to actively develop a good working relationship with as many people that I work with as I can. This takes time and it is something you consistently need to work on. Simply helping someone or showing a genuine interest in someone's ideas can help to get people "on your side". This is then invaluable when you are confronted with culture change in the future.

Following on from this, it is important to actively get to know your colleagues. It becomes very easy to simply deal with people when you have to, and not because you choose to. Learn how different people react to different changes or tasks. Find out how different people approach different tasks and then use that to your advantage. For example, if a Contracts Manager prefers a meeting to happen on site or in the office, then use this as your location if you're able to. It demonstrates you are willing and able to work with them, and also care about how they work. They are then more likely to work with you in the future as you are pursuing the culture change.

**Name: Sarah O'Connor**

**Company: Ryder Architecture**

**Position: Associate**

**About me:** I am an Associate Architect at Ryder Architecture and have experience in leading projects across many sectors including education, schools, universities and specialist police projects working from concept to completion. Our role is wide and varied from engaging with clients and stakeholders, to developing the design working alongside the design team and producing construction information as the project progresses.

**Adaptability:**

**'It is not the strongest species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the ones most responsive to change.'** Charles Darwin

In any business there will always be a degree of change occurring at any one time, within the construction industry this is even more prevalent with changes in procurement, products, legislation and technology to name but a few. Whether trying to encourage change or if you are party to an imposed change, the ability to be flexible and adapt to that change is paramount.

As architects we are trained to have an open mind so we can respond to client changes, changes to the design as it evolves and solving problems as they occur. In order to manage change we need the ability to respond quickly and often there is a need to be ahead of the curve in order to succeed. With experience, a mind-set of flexibility and adaptability is often developed and imbedded as part of our role. If you have the ability to respond quickly to change and spend time adjusting and readjusting through the process, it becomes a more sustainable change.

It is quite common for the subject of change to be met with opposition and reluctance. In our role as Architects we are often working with people who are not as used to dealing with change. Through client engagement we, at times, meet with end users who are set in their ways or used to a particular way of working. Part of our role is to guide them through the process of change by engaging with them, listening to their wants and fears and working together to achieve a solution. At times proposals are met with resistance and compromise is needed from both parties to move forward, but in our experience this will often produce a better solution.

The ability to adapt becomes more of an action than a response, continually looking inwards to improve a process or role and adjusting it allows you to be more prepared for change. The longer something remains unchanged the more resistance even the smallest change could bring about.

**Recommendations for adaptability:**

- Don't resist change, let go of how it used to be and move forward.
- Engagement and consistent communication and understand where the compromises are.
- Continually review and look for ways to improve allowing flexibility and openness to change.
- Focus on controlling the this you can, don't waste time worry about the things you can't change.
- Get an outside perspective, speak to people who have gone through the process and can give advice.
- Resilience, take any criticism on the chin and use it to adapt and move forward.

**Name: Philip Bates**

**Company: Bowmer & Kirkland Ltd**

**Position: Project Manager**

**About me:**

Lived in Ryton Tyne and Wear all my life. I graduated from Northumbria University with a first class Honours in Construction Management (BSc) in 2010 after a 5 year degree. During placement in my third year I was offered a full time position with Bowmer and Kirkland and finished my degree as a part time student. I have progressed from Site Engineer to Project Manager in 9.5 years with the company and moved to Edinburgh 2.5 years ago. As a main contractor's Project Manager I am responsible for the overall leadership and management of projects within the North East & Scotland region.

**If you could make one change for the better in the UK Construction Industry what would it be and why?:**

**Authority/Confidence**

Throughout my career I have challenged myself to manage authority using 'my method'. The construction industry is typically frowned upon as a macho industry where conflict and authority is the key to success. Within 'contracting' individuals appear to play a 'game' with each other fighting for authority and push boundaries where possible to find the easiest route for their day job. With inherent risks and hazards it is crucial to gain early authority on the project.

As a 22 year old undergraduate working in a managerial role alongside operatives and subcontract management with 20-40 years more experience I found it difficult to gain authority. However, now working in the industry for 9.5 years I have gained much experience of dealing with different personalities and from different backgrounds.

I have noticed one constant throughout; confidence allows you to gain authority. With experience I believe you gain more confidence and thus your approach to people and situations appears strong which in turn can lead to gaining authority over people and the project.

I have experienced situations where people take various approaches to gaining authority most of which take a macho approach. Sometimes I admit this is the only way to deal with certain individuals and you must judge each situation on its own merit.

I don't think this aspect of the industry will largely change as younger industry professionals are trained and tutored by the older more experienced professionals who believe in this macho approach. However, it would be great to change the way in which people can gain experience to which will provide them with this confidence that would in turn allow them to take more control and ownership of situations thus leading to greater levels of authority.

To gain this level of experience I spent 6 – 12 month in all departments within the company to get an understanding of the route cause and meaning behind each process. This is not a training programme that our organisation operates but something I requested personally in hope that it would provide benefit to my career; it has. Perhaps an industry wide training programme would provide greater levels of experience as a young industry professional and thus bring confidence and authority thereafter.

**Name: Natalie Keyes**

**Company: Watson Burton LLP**

Role: I am a solicitor in the Construction and Engineering Department at Watson Burton LLP. My role involves reviewing and drafting contracts, warranties and all associated documentation, advising on project management, advising on settlement of disputes, and undertaking adjudication, mediation and Court proceedings.

### **Your idea and doing the groundwork (Research)**

WHAT: An Idea can come from anywhere e.g. convoluted procedures that can be made more efficient, over-engineered procedures simplified, increasing knowledge in certain areas, identifying new markets etc. If you are reading this you have probably already identified something you would like to influence and improve but if not some of these questions might prompt that idea:

- What does your customer/client want/need?
- What do your superiors want/need?
- If you manage a team, what do members of your team want/need?
- Are there any activities you currently do which divert you from your core job role? Are these necessary? Could these be streamlined?

There are endless possibilities.

Your idea and inspiration is likely to be 'the easy part'. The difficult question is how to do something about it? The only way to answer this question is to invest some time in the groundwork, i.e. your research. In every case, there will be some fundamental questions to be asked:

WHY: What benefit will the change achieve? Can this be put in monetary terms? This will be key to your case for influencing a change without hierarchical power.

HOW: What changes would be needed to put this into effect e.g. internal policies/internal approval or reporting forms or procedures/computer software. Does the investment into instigating the change match the potential benefit to be achieved?

WHO: Who will be effecting/affected by the change? Speak to these individuals- do they think there is room for improvement as suggested or are they happy with the way things work? Do they have alternative suggestions? Has a similar change been tried previously? Was it successful? If not, why not? This is particularly important if your idea will have a direct impact on your clients and customers – perhaps they are very happy with the way things work currently and are

averse to change? What would convince any reluctant parties to consider your idea?

WHEN: What is the timeline/programme/plan to effect that change?

Asking yourself, your clients and customers and your colleagues these questions can act as a very useful first port of call for establishing opportunities for collaboration, establishing what permissions you might need (obtaining Authority), clarifying what action would be necessary to put your idea into action (your Plan and Strategy), identifying any potential hurdles and planning how to overcome these (such as avoiding conflict and remaining adaptable). L2C has considered these questions and produced pieces covering some of the likely relevant issues. We hope you enjoy reading them.

**Name: Marc Warren**

**Company: Bowmer and Kirkland** (formally Howarth Litchfield)

**Position:** BIM Manager

**About me:** By profession, I am a qualified Architectural Technologist, with 11 years' experience within the AEC(UK) industry. During the past 8 years I have developed my knowledge and tailored my skill set in utilising BIM (Building Information Modelling) through collaborative working, within a 3D environment, with the use of Autodesk Revit and other 3D collaboration tools.

This experience [and keen personal interest] in BIM has developed my role into the management of the BIM process and its implementation into practice.

Prior to joining Bowmer and Kirkland in February 2017, I was employed by Howarth Litchfield, where I undertook a similar role. This role of BIM Manager has allowed me to further my understanding of the BS1192 and PAS1192 [BIM] suite of standards and fulfil the compliance requirements. This includes the development of the required 'templates' (both documentation and model templates), share my knowledge and understanding of BIM to the entire business, manage the training and software development of all employees and manage the successful deployment of the PAS1192 standards, across all projects.

It is worth noting that whilst I am responsible for the managing of a 'process' and software/training needs across the organisation, I do not have any hierarchical power.

I am also a 'Core member' of the BIM4SME national organisation, providing support on the principles and findings of BIM to SME's (Small to Medium-sized Enterprises).

### **BE PREPARED! – Plan ... Plan ... Plan**

Unlike other industries, the construction industry can often be slow in adopting change and sparking innovation in methods in which information is produced, shared and executed. At least until recent years, where we now see an industry embarking on a new chapter, backed by the U.K. Government in April 2016, under the process of 'Building Information Modelling'.

This change of process [BIM] is not one that has occurred overnight, but one that has taken many years to plan and fine-tune, prior to its mandatory deployment into the construction industry. However, research has proven that there is still much reluctance to adopt from senior professionals, as opposed to the younger generation; such as the late-Generation X and early-Millennial generations. This proves challenging in itself, whereby senior professionals tend to be those with hierarchical power and are the ultimate decision makers.

How can a younger professional change the mind-set of his/her superior, with no hierarchical power, if they are opposed to change from the outset?

The key thing here is to PLAN.

From experience, if you are wanting to make a change into an organisation and believe it can significantly improve productivity, profitability and/or general welfare of the business and its employees, but don't have the hierarchical power, it is imperative to *plan* your idea, in a number of ways, prior to raising it with a director or board of directors (with hierarchical power).

### 1) Fine Tune Ideas

In order to 'sell' your idea, ensure you understand every aspect of what is involved. Certainty and clarity is essential to deliver a solid proposal. I know when I developed a proposal for new software to be purchased and implemented across the business, I was required to explore all of the options and discover how it would suit current business and industry needs. Once I was confident of the benefits, I would then compile a list of all pros and cons to enable me to come to a concise conclusion, which would only strengthen my proposal.

### 2.) Business Plan

After compiling a comprehensive list of advantages and disadvantage to the investment, the next stage of my proposal was to consider the cost implications; both capital cost and recurring maintenance costs associated with the new software. Would I need to factor in a training budget, to ensure all staff could utilise the software to the best of their ability and ensure productivity and efficiency?

It is vital that the business proposal covers every area of business, when requesting a corporate investment. Think of this as covering all bases and ensuring you have an informed answer to all of the challenging questions that will be ask during your presentation. This demonstrated that all areas have been explored and a succinct proposal has been produced.

One question that I recall being asked was "why would we move from a free piece of software that has been satisfactory for many years, for one with a monthly subscription that requires training?" This was raised when comparing MS Publisher against Adobe InDesign.

This is the type of question that I was expecting to receive, which is why I planned my proposal carefully to ensure that I had a strong enough case to back up my subjective opinion. It was important for me to ensure that it was a case for investment that would benefit the business as a whole and not a select number of individuals that wanted the latest software on the market.

### 3) Strategy

Is there a roll out strategy in place?

If a positive outcome is reached, how will this be implemented into a busy organisation?

Will there be any downtime in productivity from staff members, during periods of training and development of information in this new format?

Will training be delivered externally or internally?

These are the typical questions that business proposals of this nature with generally raise, which is why a solid business plan has a strong answer, built on factual evidence/information, for each.

Thankfully on this occasion, my proposal for investment was successful, largely down to the comprehensive research that went into the business plan, prior to the meeting with the board of directors, at Howarth Litchfield. This inevitably earned a level of self-confidence and appreciation from my peers that may well make the next proposal an easier, more efficient process.

**Name:**           **Giannis Koleniaris**

**Company:**       **Cundall**

**Position:**       Graduate Engineer

**About me:**

I have a dual citizenship, Albanian and Greek. I completed my MSc in Structural Engineering from Newcastle university, with first class honors two years ago and have lived in Newcastle upon Tyne during the last 3 years. I also hold a Bachelor's degree (BEng) on Civil Engineering from the University of Surrey. I completed my military services in the Greek army and worked in the construction industry as a Site Engineer on different countries, i.e. Greece and USA. As a Graduate Engineer within Cundall, I am responsible for the overall satisfaction on the design of small and medium sized projects, and am the second leader within a team of 5.

**If you could make one change for the better in the UK Construction Industry what would it be and why?**

**STRATEGY**

Different types of strategies have emerged within the UK Construction Industry in order to meet appropriate standards and market needs. Most of them are financial, operational and marketing strategies. Therefore, procurement strategies are employed on each project.

A significant number of factors affect any project, such as the client body, the type and size of the project, the availability of time, the cost and the responsibility for design. In order to avoid conflicts among these factors, the most suitable procurement strategy should be selected. The key factors I need to deal with on a daily basis are the availability of time, the costs and the responsibility for design.

Recently, a notable change of strategy occurred within my current role. A project was assigned to my company for a loyal client, with high responsibility of design but very limited time allowance for its completion. In order to meet the requirements, I had to follow strict deadlines.

While checking the work, I realized that alternations as previously discussed had not been applied as expected, due to lack of time. Consequently, more time had to be dedicated to correct the pieces of work, resulting in additional costs and construction risks.

I changed the way I worked with colleagues to achieve better time management and communication to reduce the waste of time.

Subsequently, a change of strategy was implemented in order to dedicate the appropriate time to projects, preventing serious mistakes from happening in the future with additional checks before the submission of the project.

This was an example of how small changes in strategy could impact the procurement choice of the project.

A strategy should be chosen and put into action at an early stage and if one strategy is failing, different options should be considered.

**Name: Eve Wilson**

**Company: Turner & Townsend**

**Position: Infrastructure Cost Manager**

**About me:**

I started working at Turner & Townsend in October 2014 on the Graduate Scheme. Since starting I have gained a lot of experience in the Water Sector working on key accounts and large value projects up to £31m. In my role I work alongside the client and contractor to ensure the contract is adhered to and all parties are working fairly and collaboratively. My main roles and responsibilities include checking contractor's tender returns against project briefs and then managing the costs throughout the contract until completion. In addition to my day to day role I am part of the Turner & Townsend Regional Branding Group. This group gives me an insight into the company's target and an input in how we can use our views to shape the company. I am also involved in the Generation 4 Change as the vice chair and am committed to changing the industry for the better for future generations.

**If you could make one change for the better in the UK Construction Industry what would it be and why:**

**Collaboration – Working Together.**

Within the construction industry we traditionally work as silos, this does not always mean the most efficient solution for all parties is taken. By working together with all parties; whether this be the use of Early Contractor Involvement or sharing an open book approach through the construction stages of a project, this could enable us to harness specific strengths from each team member.

Working closer with the supply chain enables the team to understand each other's constraints and pressures. Understanding these barriers can enable the project risks to be mitigated at earlier stages giving more cost and programme certainty.

Within my day to day role I work within a collaborative environment with contractors and clients working on a framework. Working within the NEC suite of contracts promotes mutual trust and cooperation which helps with the collaboration.

Efficiencies we have made so far are a streamlining the payment processes by having an open book approach. This removes the stigma around the auditing process and enables access to invoice information at all stages of construction. By carrying out monthly audits it enables more efficient payments and the agreement of final accounts are much quicker and more amicable.

Another benefit of this collaboration is the use of standard durations when pricing activity schedules and Compensation Events, this schedule was put together in conjunction with the contractor and client to enable swift checking of programme and assessing Compensation Events.

I believe working together within the infrastructure sector can be of great benefit and can overall promote successful delivery of large scale projects and programmes.

**Name: David Baines**

**Company: Turner & Townsend**

**Position: Project Manager**

**About me:** After 6<sup>th</sup> form college I studied Civil Engineering at Newcastle University. In the summer prior to starting my degree, I contacted some main contractors in the North East and asked for work experience opportunities. I was fortunate to be offered summer placements and sponsorship during my degree. After graduation I worked as a site engineer, responsible for setting out construction works, monitoring quality and maintaining health and safety standards. I progressed to become an assistant site manager and site manager where my responsibility was for the delivery of varied projects, from schools & colleges to student accommodation and hospitals.

I now work for Turner & Townsend, a construction and project management consultancy. We offer a wide range of services including programme, project and cost management. My day to day role includes the project management duty on infrastructure commissions, taking responsibility for many aspect of service delivery.

**If you could make one change for the better in the UK Construction Industry what would it be and why?:**

I would like to change the perception of the construction industry to young people and help them to realise the diverse opportunities that are available.

### **Innovation**

Innovation is a commonly used word, but is interpreted differently by different people. One definition of innovation could be "a new idea, device, or method". However, innovation is often also viewed as the application of better solutions that meet new requirements or existing market needs.

I have found that being innovative can come more easily for some people as some are naturally more creative than others. Being innovative is increasingly more sought after and recognised as a critical part of success. Leadership is often associated with change, and change will require new ways of things or a new "ideas, devices or methods".

In my professional life I have tried to be innovative in my thinking. I always question the methods used in completing tasks, looking for alternatives that can increase efficiency. Personally, I have implemented innovation with regard to construction site health, safety and environment. I have sought to make the best use of the resources available, for example, implementing a rainwater harvesting system that enables us to collect rainwater and reuse it for cleaning the site compound area.

I have also tried to consider new technologies and implement where possible. I have identified where traditional setting out practices have been used and upgraded the equipment using GPS location in order to vastly improve my efficiency on site.

I have been fortunate in these situations where I have had the support of my peers and superiors who appreciate the value in striving to improve through innovative thinking.

**Name: Andrew White**

**Company: Bowmer & Kirkland Ltd**

**Position: Senior Quantity Surveyor**

**About me:**

As a main contractor's senior quantity surveyor I am responsible for the commercial management of construction projects. I liaise direct with the client team in managing the client account as well as managing the procurement of sub-contractors. I am generally site based from day 1 of the project with a quantity surveying team, through to the completion of the project, ensuring closure of the client final account, and all domestic sub-contracts. A large part of my role includes training and development of junior members of staff.

**If you could make one change for the better in the UK Construction Industry what would it be and why?:**

**Avoiding conflict**

The construction industry is adversarial by nature. All business is driven by profit and companies are out to maximise profit. As a contractor's senior quantity surveyor, much of my time is assessing variation claims and entitlement to additional monies. This naturally can create conflict.

Much of the communication is by email, and emails can be construed in a number of different ways. If I had counted the number of emails trails I have had in the past, back and forth, "tit for tat" the time consumed would be staggering.

I now adopt a more personal method of ensuring I speak to people, before querying a claim or processing an interim payment, to explain our view of it and the reasons why we are "doing what we are doing" This is genuinely 90% more effective than email responses and does avoid much of the conflict. Of course, the other 10% of the time, people continue to question the decisions you make, at which point I suggest we meet in person to address each other's agenda / viewpoint.

I have this on a project we have completed recently, where I have settled 55 out of the 60 sub-contract accounts. The 55 settled sub-contract accounts are those people I can easily speak to on the phone (IE they answer and are available). The remaining contractors are those who never answer their phones and are never available to meet in person. This is no coincidence.

My experience suggests that the best way to avoid conflict is to speak to people before writing to people. Always request to meet in person. Also, the best way to deal with conflict is speed. Nip it in the bud and do not let it manifest.

We should all want to avoid conflict, but often it is unavoidable. Management of the subsequent conflict, can avoid further conflict, and this is where we can all try direct dialogue to avoid it worsening.

**Name: Andrew McIntyre**  
**Company: Church Lukas**  
**Position: Associate**

About me:

I have been an Architectural Technologist in practice for 20 years.

I started as a Junior Technician, completed my education and developed my role as a Technician then Senior Technician, eventually being made an Associate at the same Practice after 10 years. My role has developed over the years; my job entails most things from meeting the Client to assist with a brief through to final project completion.

My day to day role mainly involves Design Team liaison and producing technical drawings through Planning and Construction phases of the project.

If you could make one change for the better in the UK Construction Industry what would it be and why?:

Overcoming Resistance and Barriers

I have had many different reactions over the past 20 years specifically relating to change, minor change through to fundamental change.

There are many things which influence the way change is received by those above us on the ladder.

I would say without a doubt that Respect, Communication and Engagement are the most important factors. I believe the purpose of the change must be valid and hold water but the chances of those changes being considered is definitely related to the quality of the relationship with the people involved.

If you do not communicate there is no way of even getting to the resistance or barrier, never mind beyond...if the people involved are not engaged with each other then there is no way of getting on the same page...if there is no respect for either the point being made or the people involved (in both directions) then there is more likelihood there will be resistance or a barrier to the subject.

I've worked with many people where I have tried to influence something. Some things have been met with a brick wall. Some that get nods but in a 'I'll pay lip service then do what I want anyway'. Some changes offered are welcomed (some with a bit of convincing to do) in part or in full. The latter no, or less, resistance has been with people that I have full respect for and who are willing to communicate on all levels. This boosts enthusiasm, delivery of (and quality of) workload and product.

The construction industry has many pitfalls...lack of communication, engagement, some ulterior motives and pressures etc. The company you work for and the colleagues you work with (above and below you on the ladder) should be the place you are free to offer advice and change to with full communication and cooperation.