

# Construction Management

## TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

I depend on a wide variety of strategy collaboration to structure an organized effective teaching methodology that has the flexibility to mold to the current workforce needs.

Taking the foundation of what I learned in my Master of Arts - Curriculum and Instruction, I use life experiences, knowledge in human design, and current industry trends to support the personal growth of the Construction Workforce. To accomplish this, I use essential educational principals that include contextual learning, cognitive functioning, planning, assessment and multiple levels of diversity comprehension. Our curriculum includes guidance in both professional & personal life balance application. Learning how to identify and manage your highest and best self contributes to a healthy employee and serves a company with increased longevity. No matter how pliable my education platform must be, there are a few stationary principals that serve as pillars to the constant shaping of my philosophy. We will never run out of the need for students who can perform at their highest level of productivity with respect, empathy, ethic and passion. I pride myself of not just teaching these in every course but showing the students, in my teaching and day to day life, how to live and practice these four fundamental baseline pillars.

As much as I love construction, in the classroom, students tend to retain information better if they can relate to it. The four pillars are universal but essential. If I can relate to students on this level and introduce aspects of construction management under this premise then I have now set a foundation that they can relate to . This invites commonality and more communication among the students in the classroom - which encourages relationships among the students in (support groups) - for students to become cheerleaders, monitors, mentors, and future connections/opportunities for each other.



The four pillars could easily be categorized as "soft skills". This is trendy terminology constantly thrown around in the construction industry due to the reputation of gruff, good o'le boys throwing their hard hat and finding it difficult to communicate with professional dialogue to "Owners", "End Users" and other professionals who are used to verbal communication in sit down meetings. In today's current market trend, we are willing to put up with these short, to the point, sometimes "truth hurts" kind of individuals because we know they work hard and get the job done. When it comes right down to it, their lack of soft skills is an attribute to those same qualities that we desire - they get straight to the point so they can get back to work. The need of "Soft Skills" today cannot be taught in a 1 Unit 8-week class. We are being exposed to students who need to learn how to be respectful, have empathy for those of whom they are managing, need to build work ethic and are prideful and passionate about their work. These principals need to be applied in the classroom in every aspect of the construction industry. Teaching principal pillars and construction in combination, results in a cause and effect that produces a positive reward for the student and industry partner, thus stimulating the need to reproduce this professional, respectful and productive work ethic.



Although soft skills are an important part of a student's success in an evolving construction management industry, having construction experience provides credibility to a student's ability to manage others who may have significantly more construction experience. The biggest complaint among the construction industry is that managers

- 1) Can't manage by learning from a textbook and
- 2) Must have empathy and respect for others performing work that may be more grueling than that of an air - conditioned office.

As we have already addressed empathy and respect, and recognize that these will be inclusive in all construction curriculum material, the next focus of my teaching philosophy falls into a strong belief for the need of scenario based, contextual teaching, learning, and experiencing.

Contextual teaching and learning needs to happen in the classroom, under close controlled, guided supervision and out on the jobsite, where a looser reign may prevail. As parents, we understand that failure is necessary for growth - the same applies for students. The opportunity to "see" what works and what doesn't under a "safe umbrella" of guided leadership from either myself or a trusted industry partner, allows a student to implement the cause-effect, consequence-reward teaching theory. This assists in an accelerated retention and comprehension of the material being learned in the classroom and applied out on the jobsite. As a teacher, I believe wholeheartedly in this philosophy and believe that, especially with our current workforce, it will be mandatory for both the advancement of student, betterment of our construction industry and success of construction management program completers. However, I recognize that there are significant challenges in my teaching philosophy that will require hard work, significant time investment and a healthy budget. The time involved in developing industry partner relationships, shadowing/ overseeing students through work scenarios, monitoring mentor/ internship programs, building interactive curriculum, fund raising for special projects, etc., are all challenges that will need to be addressed.

Although the needs of the student should always be at the forefront, reality requires that we accept that educational institutions are not meeting the needs of our learners. Students have had to extend beyond traditional learning programs and develop personal development paths that educate them into their life goals. Therefore, part of my teaching philosophy includes teaching in a manner that stimulates the student to remain engaged throughout their entire educational path by teaching them about themselves, as well as their profession. I do this by teaching current content, self-awareness, human design, effective communication, providing real life experiences, require engagement curriculum with scenario/ contextual teaching, guest speakers from the industry, developing close relationships with industry partners and keeping open communication about mentorship, internship and job opportunities. My intention is to develop a reputation for employee placement beneficial for our industry partners, the field of construction management and most importantly, our students.

It all comes down to teaching a subject that interjects real life application to historical textbook data and stimulates a desire of life long learning while be passionate, respectful and empathetic to those around you.

## **Teaching Philosophy: Learning To Live With Intention**