

My name is David Holmes and I have been in the lighting industry since 1979, starting as a commercial representative with Thorn Lighting. I am proud to say that I am a Chartered Engineer, a registered European Engineer with FEANI (Euring), a corporate member of CIBSE and a Fellow of the Society of Light & Lighting (SLL). My current position is that of Lighting Applications Manager for Hilclare Lighting in Manchester. Whilst in a previous employment as UK Technical Manager for Havells Sylvania I decided that I should join the SLL and CIBSE.



WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO BECOME A BUILDING SERVICES ENGINEER AND WHAT PATH DID YOU TAKE TO ACHIEVE THIS?

I had no intention of becoming a building services engineer. From a humble beginning as a sales rep I fell in love with lighting engineering and wanted to learn all that I could. In order for me to join the SLL I had to join CIBSE, and in order for me to achieve CEng I had to become a MCIBSE. My determination drove me onto accomplish my goals.

WHAT IS THE MOST ENJOYABLE ASPECT OF YOUR JOB?

I enjoy meeting people and discussing all aspects of lighting. I also enjoy passing on my knowledge and experience to younger colleagues.

WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT TO DATE?

Achieving Chartered Engineer registration and receiving the SLL National Lighting Award 2012. Receiving the award is special. It is given by my colleagues and peers in the SLL to someone who has dedicated his or her career to the lighting industry. It is similar to the 'Lifetime Achievement

Awards' given to actors in the OSCARs, or musicians in the GRAMMY awards. It reminds me of all the years of hard work I have done to try and improve our industry. It also makes me humble when I see previous recipients who are legends within the lighting community. The feeling one gets when receiving such an award as this is greater than the feeling one has when a client is over the moon with a project you have designed, and you can see the finished installation working perfectly. Only just though! I still get excited when I see a finished scheme with a happy contractor and client. I must say that it makes the profession of a lighting engineer most enjoyable.

WHAT ONE PIECE OF ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE THINKING ABOUT BECOMING A BUILDING SERVICES ENGINEER?

I became a 'building services engineer' by accident. I joined Thorn Lighting in the late 1970s as a commercial representative, took a liking to the technical side of lighting engineering, completed the lighting courses and eventually became a lighting engineer. Just before I finished my courses the old Illuminating Engineering Society was amalgamated with what was then the CIBS. 'Lighters' and 'Heaters' were worlds apart and didn't communicate very well. The CIBS then became CIBSE and the building services engineer was created which covers anyone qualified within their own speciality. Whereas a building services engineer may be considered similar to a general practitioner I personally decided to specialise within the lighting field. Go for it. You will enjoy every minute.



I WOULD THEREFORE RECOMMEND TO ANYONE WISHING TO FURTHER THEIR CAREER, TO LOOK AT THE PROCESS AND MOVE FORWARD. I CAN ONLY SAY THAT IN MY EXPERIENCE I FOUND THE WHOLE PROCESS ENJOYABLE.



WHY DID YOU BECOME MCIBSE CENG?

It has given me confidence to discuss with others the many aspects of lighting. Someone with CEng MCIBSE after their name must be taken seriously.

HOW DID YOU FIND THE APPLICATION PROCESS TO BECOME MCIBSE AND WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHERS CONSIDERING THIS GRADE?

I looked at the status of full member and embarked upon filling out the form, creating a Development Action Plan, an Engineering Practice Report, creating an Organisational Chart and bringing my CV up to date. This took me a couple of weeks to prepare working on them during the evenings. It is very straightforward. If you know your subject and are able to put your time, knowledge and experience into writing, then it is well worth doing. I then attended an interview in Birmingham and was duly made a full Member (MCIBSE).

HOW DID YOU FIND THE APPLICATION PROCESS TO BECOME CENG VIA THE TECHNICAL REPORT ROUTE AND WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHERS CONSIDERING THIS ROLE TO REGISTRATION.

I looked at the requirements to become a Chartered Engineer via the Technical Report Route and it looked straightforward. Don't be afraid of the Technical Report. I just started writing and everything fell into place. I wrote a dissertation on "A Study into the Accuracy of Computerised Lighting Design" based on my knowledge and experience over many years. This took about 8 weeks to create working in an evening. I then updated my Engineering Practice Report and sent all the papers to Balham. A few weeks later I attended a formal interview at Balham and found that the process was again straightforward, and the interviewers made me feel at ease. Shortly afterwards I was informed that I had been successful and received my documents from the Engineering Council. The entire process was pleasurable and not to be afraid of. It wasn't easy as easy goes, you have to put the work into it, but it wasn't frightening or invasive. I am so glad that

I did it and it encouraged me to go on and write Lighting Guides as part of the Technical & Publications Committee of the SLL. I would therefore recommend to anyone wishing to further their career, to look at the process and move forward. I can only say that in my experience I found the whole process enjoyable.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE BENEFITS OF CIBSE MEMBERSHIP? AND WHY?

The main benefit to me personally is that I am a valued member of a very large team of engineers, all with the same interest and goal. Namely, to bring building services as a profession to the forefront. CEng registration is especially useful when discussing projects with engineers from other disciplines.

BUILDING SERVICES IS GREAT BECAUSE....?

It enables you to specialise in a particular field, whilst still belonging to a bigger institution. Also, with the new advances in technical equipment we are entering the most energetic and vibrant time where we need young engineers to meet the challenges facing us. ■

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