

My name is Dave Brown and I am currently working as a Senior Electrical Engineer Team Leader. I have recently arrived back to the UK after working in the Philippines as a Principal Electrical Engineer within Hyder Consulting Middle East Ltd Global Design Centre. With over 25-30 years' experience from training as an electrician in the contracting industry, I have worked my way through the industry working as electrical installation contractor, electrical maintenance and test engineer, electrical facilities supervisor and eventually moving into building services as a building services design engineer.

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

After completing my electrical installation apprenticeship, I qualified as an approved JIB electrician and continued working as an electrical installations contractor for 6 years. However I had the desire to move beyond the installation side and wanted to be more involved with the design side of the jobs that I was working on. I started to make the transition from working as an electrical installation contractor into building services in 1992, putting myself through 7 years of part-time college and eventually university where I gained my Bsc (Hons) degree in Electrical Engineering at Coventry University.

During this time I also completed my C&G 730-7 Further & Adult Education Teachers' Certificate Stage 1 & 2 and became a qualified lecturer where I spent a number of years teaching part-time on electrical installation courses at Mathew Bolton College, now Birmingham Metropolitan College. This was originally part of my back-up plan just in case I never made it into the building services industry. I continued teaching for

a few years, whilst working as a design engineer, but eventually phased it out so that I could focus on my career.

In my first couple of years working as a design engineer I contacted what was then the Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) regarding the process to becoming a member. I followed the application process as instructed and was made an associate member (AMIEE). My membership was then upgraded by the IEE to a full member (MIEE). To date, I am still a full member of the IEE, now called the IET.

To become MCIBSE, I had to follow the alternative route as my BSc degree was not accredited for CEng registration* and I did not start out studying to become a building services engineer.

WHAT IS THE MOST ENJOYABLE ASPECT OF YOUR JOB?

Having worked as an electrician responsible for installing the systems for various projects, I now enjoy being the one responsible for designing the systems for others to install as opposed to installing it myself. There is a sense of satisfaction and pride to see your design being installed and then handed over to become fully operational. I enjoy bringing my practical hands-on experience to the table, which enhances my designing abilities. This I find extremely beneficial not just to me but to my colleagues. Being able to explain how a proposed design can work from a practical perspective to design engineers who have never worked on site before is a joy. I am imparting my knowledge and experience to help develop their designing abilities.



BUILDING SERVICES IS AN EXCITING INDUSTRY TO WORK IN WITH VARYING PROJECTS THAT CHALLENGE YOUR THOUGHT PROCESS AND HELP DEVELOP YOUR PERSPECTIVES ON LIFE AND LIVING. WHEN YOU STEP BACK FROM THE BUILDING PROJECTS YOU ARE ABLE TO WORK ON AND SEE THE FINISHED PRODUCT, IT IS REALLY SATISFYING.



*The academic requirement for CEng post 1999 is an accredited BEng Hons + MSc or an MEng

WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT TO DATE?

To date my greatest professional accomplishment was making the transition from being an electrical installation engineer to becoming a building services design engineer. I say this because at the time when I decided to make the change, I was advised that I had waited too long to do this and should continue as an electrician. This advice did not discourage me but only served to inspire me to prove those who didn't believe in me wrong. It also proved to me that if I put my mind to it and the time and effort into it I could do it, and I did.

Building services is an exciting industry to work in with varying projects that challenge your thought process and help develop your perspectives on life and living. When you step back from the building projects you are able to work on and see the finished product, it is really satisfying.

WHY DID YOU BECOME MCIBSE?

Having been a member of the IET for a number of years, I always felt that CIBSE was somehow out of my range. It was only when I went to work in the Philippines as Principal Electrical Engineer, looking after the young engineers in Hyder Consulting Middle East Limited, that my interest in becoming MCIBSE was really encouraged. Working alongside other MCIBSE engineers I began to feel like I needed to become MCIBSE and began to look into it. My Technical Director Hugh Goodlet was very encouraging to me and made it clear that he would support my application. So I started the process and before I knew it I had completed the application process, submitted my documents, had the interview and was successful. I felt like my career had been given a boost and began to encourage the young engineers to pursue their CIBSE registration.

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

The application process to become MCIBSE was not as difficult as I had originally thought it would be especially with the

sample applications available on the CIBSE website, very helpful! Anyone considering the grade should spend some time looking at the different sample applications to understand the different types of format you can present. This is very helpful and encouraging and takes away a lot of the fear factor that exists and doubt you may have. Just go for it, there is more to gain than to lose.

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

I find the CIBSE Journal very informative and interesting and makes you feel like you are really part of the industry. MCIBSE definitely boosts your confidence as a building services engineer and is recognisable worldwide and I feel this is a great asset.

BUILDING SERVICES IS GREAT BECAUSE....?

Being a building services engineer is great, enabling me to get involved with innovative designs from different parts of the world. The challenges are always coming from different angles but being able to apply design engineering principles to each project enables you to deal with them and produce quality and workable designs. The industry is still evolving and it will be interesting to see where it will be in the next 10 years or so. ■



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

I often use my experience to encourage young engineers to push for their goals and not to quit no matter what unless they decide it is not for them. In fact I use my experience to encourage young people in general, regardless of whether it is engineering or another profession, but to put their mind to what they want to achieve and put the time and effort in that is required and they will achieve it. Anyone thinking of becoming a building services engineer should have the same mind-set.