

I LOVE MY JOB!

John Hayles, Pre-Construction Manager, Kier Construction Eastern



- **Where did you go to school?** Whitley Bay, just outside Newcastle upon Tyne on the NE coast
- **What path did you take to get to your current position?** I qualified as an architect but took a year out working on a construction site in the USA. On returning to the UK I always envied people who worked on real projects rather than drawing them. I started working in the design department of a large contractor then progressed to design management, then project management. When I joined Kier contractors were starting to do more and more design work and I progressed from design management to bid management, then pre-construction management.
- **What subjects did you study?** Maths, Physics and Art at A-level, At University I studied architecture.
- **How many jobs have you had, and can you name them?** Early days – bar staff, car park attendant, tea boy on site, shop assistant/shelf filler. Professional -Site Engineer, Architect, Project Manager, Design Manager, Head of Design Management, Bid Manager, Pre-Construction Manager
- **What school subjects link to your career?** Maths, Physics and Art link the artistic and technical sides of architecture
- **A typical day in your current role looks like:** 8am arrive in the office. Check with our Design Manager on the progress of our consultants who may be doing design work for us. Also check with other in-house people to see how work on bids is progressing, Estimators and Planners in particular. Present new project opportunities to our Directors and chair meetings to discuss new projects and agree our actions and strategy to win tenders and deliver successful designs, costs and programmes. Some days visit sites and clients to gather information about projects. Also, sometimes I lead our teams in meetings with clients to develop designs and proposals for new buildings.
- **What skills do you use daily, that you learnt at school?** Basic maths and writing skills. Also, some of my physics comes in handy because it helps me understand the technical side of how building work. My art is also useful because we sketch things all the time, such as building designs, site layouts and even things like how a crane will be located on a site.

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- **What is the number #1 piece of advice you've been given that helped you with your career choice?** When I was not accepted for RAF pilot training my Dad saw I needed a boost. He told me I should get a job where I could afford my own plane and since I was good at art, maths and physics and loved drawings and making things I could be an architect because they combined art and technology. I don't think I could afford a plane but he was right with everything else he said.
- **Where do you see yourself in 5 years?** Retired and doing more painting (art, not decorating)
- **What is the average salary for this role?** Difficult to say because my role is quite rare. But more than I would be earning if I was still an architect.
- **If you could have done anything differently on your career journey, what would it be?** Nothing. I'm pretty happy with my journey. I've worked in some interesting places, lived in Barcelona for a while working on an Olympics project, spent a year in the USA on site and done my fair share of projects I can be proud of.



Why do you love your job?

I'm bidding and hopefully winning a few contracts that will help keep my colleagues in work and Kier profitable. Our industry is filled with people who have a 'can do' attitude, and I love that. I often work with architects and designers who are very creative and hard working and I admire them hugely, sitting in a design team meeting solving problems and coming up with something that solves a problem is very rewarding. At the end of a days work I have contributed to a new school that will help educate our children, a hospital that will save lives, a cinema that will show great movies or even a shop to buy our food. I'm not curing cancer but I really feel I'm doing something worthwhile.