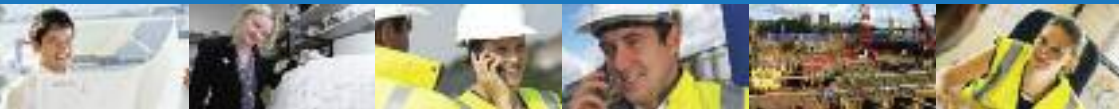




Training in Action Construction Case Studies



Contents

Introduction	1
EMPLOYER CASE STUDIES	
Case study 1 - Erne Concrete Pumping Ltd	2
Case study 2 - McCue Interior Fitout Solutions	4
Case study 3 - Gilbert Ash	6
Case study 4 - Ardis Building	8
Case study 5 - Quinn Piling	10
Case study 6 - Henry Brothers	12
Case study 7 - Fox Contracts	14
CAREERS CASE STUDIES	
Case study 8 - Martin McAlorum MMA Joinery Specialists Ltd	16
Case study 9 - Jimmy Girvan, Joseph Hughes Painting Contractors Ltd	18
Case study 10 - Neil Burns Gilbert Ash	20
Case study 11 - Paula McCloskey, Specialist Joinery Group	22
Case study 12 - Phillip Green, Self Employed	24
Case study 13 - Grant Robson, GRAHAM	26

Introduction

As a leading Sector Skills Council and Industry Training Board, CITB-ConstructionSkills NI understands the needs of employers and works to ensure a safe, professional and fully qualified workforce. We provide advice, guidance and grant aid for training to help improve construction businesses. Training is not only important it is essential for further growth in the industry and even during these hard economic times employers are to be commended for continuing to invest in developing their workforce to support their immediate business needs.

This booklet will focus on training in action highlighting employers in construction from an organisational point of view as well as illustrating case studies on personal construction career paths.

For further information log on to our website www.citbcsni.org.uk

Erne Concrete Pumping Ltd



Erne Concrete Pumping Ltd in Derrylin, Co Fermanagh is an example of a company taking a long-term approach to training and understands the benefits of training its staff.

A family owned and managed business Erne Concrete Pumping Ltd was set up in 1998 and has grown significantly from a single mobile concrete pump to operating eleven Schwing pumps, at its peak the largest fleet in Northern Ireland. With headquarters at Derrylin and machines strategically located throughout the whole of Ireland, they can provide a fast and efficient service.

The firm has welcomed the growth and commercial success of recent years but also felt it necessary to invest heavily in their people to maintain this success in the turbulent economic climate.

Collete McCahery from the company explains;

“We wanted to develop the company further and gain recognised qualifications that would enable us to secure business on a local and national level. The economic downturn will make the future difficult for all companies and only those that have a fully qualified workforce will be in a more competitive position to win contracts and retain clients. We believe training to be vital to our success to date, and believe it important for our future.”

Working with CITB-ConstructionSkills NI, the company has embraced training and development in their specialist area. They recently received grant assistance for the training and development of in house assessments through achievement of the assessors A1 award with local training provider Global Horizons. The firm are also continually investing in their people and they recently entered a candidate through the In-House Plant Instructors Course.

The firm supports the national standard qualification for Concrete Pumps, the Plant Operations NVQ Level 2 for Truck Mounted Boom Concrete Pumps and achievement of this will ensure that the workforce of Erne Concrete Pumping Ltd are assessed and competent.

CITB – ConstructionSkills NI encourages firms to continue training their employees even in the economic downturn. This will ensure a safe, professional and qualified workforce, is established now and for the future.



Peter Lunney, Erne Concrete Pumping receiving certification from Stephen Lynch Global Horizons.

McCue Interior Fit-out Solutions



When it comes to motivating staff during this current economic downturn there is no better way than by getting involved with the Investors In People standard.

The Investors In People standard provides a framework that helps organisations to improve performance and realise objectives through the effective management and development of staff, and above all move the organisation onto the road to success.

One company who has reaped the benefits of the Investors In People Standards is Carrickfergus based McCue Interior Fit-out Solutions. With almost 60 years experience in the fitout industry they offer a wide range of specialist services to clients across all commercial sectors: retail; hospitality and leisure; café bistro/fast food; corporate and financial.

McCue recognise the importance of a competent and motivated workforce and saw a real opportunity in implementing the principles and practices of the Investors In People standard. With a commitment to developing its people they felt that this would assist them in working towards their overall company aims and objectives. It also helped them to address issues such as staff communication, which in turn helped to provide direction for the organisation.



Les McCracken from McCue's commented;

🗨️ Investors In People has made a real difference to McCue especially through the downturn. It is helping us to motivate employees and build a good reputation in this highly competitive sector, enabling us to attract good candidates and more contracts.🗨️

Christine Adlington from McCue's added;

🗨️ The benefits from being involved in Investors In People have a huge impact on our business. We experienced higher levels of productivity, lower staff turn over and better time management.🗨️

McCue have always been committed to training their staff and making them feel very much part of the organisation. To that end they have developed a programme, which ensures the development and training of their people. Through appraisals and a Skills Development Plan, skills gaps are identified and training requirements addressed. Their ongoing commitment to training has been recognised at the Carrickfergus Borough Council Business Awards.

McCue were awarded Investors In People in May 2008, received a grant of £1000 from CITB-ConstructionSkills NI and have continued to implement and develop the Investors in People standards resulting in their re-accreditation in August 2011.

Gilbert-Ash



Gilbert-Ash (GA) has been in business for more than 100 years and in that time has grown to become one of the largest construction companies operating in Northern Ireland.

The company's business opportunities are currently migrating from Northern Ireland to the English and Scottish market and in response to this GA has opened satellite offices in Peterborough and Edinburgh.

GA operates across all sectors of the industry and with a current turnover in excess of £100m, it is renowned for its ability to construct the most difficult and complex projects in a non-adversarial and flexible manner, in keeping with its vision of *"providing a consistently good experience for all our customers."*

Recently completed projects include The Lyric Theatre Belfast and a master film store for the British Film Institute in Birmingham. Some of the company's current projects include the construction of a new visitors centre at the Giant's Causeway and a hotel and retail development in Princes Street Edinburgh.

Eddie O'Neill, Managing Director said, "In the current economic climate the industry has been challenged in many ways but we in GA are fully committed to ensuring our workforce continues to train and up-date skill levels to meet the current and future challenges in an evolving and changing marketplace."

As a registered employer with CITB-ConstructionSkills NI, GA are focused on the training and skills development of their staff to help improve business performance. Future plans include accessing new markets, improving and increasing contract delivery on a ongoing basis.

*The Lyric Theatre, a key project
for Gilbert Ash in 2011.*



Ardis Building



Ardis Building based in Lisburn has over 30 years experience in the building trade. With a high reputation and a previous regional winner of FMB Master Builder of the Year. The company undertakes general building work and repairs ranging from extensions to building a Fire Station!

Ardis Building understands that in the current economic climate training is a necessity to have a fully skilled workforce in order to complete jobs to the highest standard and gain contracts. With this in mind they have had two joinery apprentices complete their NVQ training, one at Level 3 and one at Level 2. As CITB-ConstructionSkills NI registered in scope employers Ardis were entitled to use CITB-ConstructionSkills NI's grant scheme to claim a proportion of the costs towards training.

Speaking about the Grant Scheme Richard McAuley owner said, "The Grant system was very easy from beginning to end. The staff at CITB-ConstructionSkills NI were extremely helpful and the form was processed without any fuss and within a short period of time. I highly recommend it."

Ardis are committed to training and whilst the future of the industry is difficult to assess at this unstable time, they will be taking full advantage of training using of CITB-ConstructionSkills NI's grant system in order to prepare the staff and the company for what is ahead.



Quinn Piling



Quinn Piling has been providing civil engineering and drilling expertise in Ireland for over 30 years and has grown to become one of the leading geotechnical experts in the country.

The company has the capability to carry out a wide range of activities - on everything from small domestic developments to large scale commercial and marine projects which have included Loch Ryan Port Development, Aberdeen Harbour Redevelopment, and Kennedy Centre, Belfast. High levels of both customer service and technical knowledge are demonstrated on every aspect of a contract and the company has a strong reputation of providing a solid, cost effective solution.



Quinn Piling has been recently working closely with CITB-ConstructionSkills NI and has put candidates through the NVQ Level 2 in Piling Operative and Piling Operator. The company also put forward a candidate for development as an assessor for the piling sector for both in house assessments and commercial use. CITB-ConstructionSkills NI has supported Quinn Piling through this training and provided advice, guidance and Grant assistance for the achievement of these qualifications.

Fergal Quinn, Contract Manager, said, “At Quinn Piling we ensure all staff are trained to the highest standard to perform their job to the optimum level in a safe working environment. In this current economic climate we realise it’s critical for training to take place on an ongoing basis for the company to be a success, win contracts and have long-term benefits.”



Quinn Piling at work onsite

Henry Brothers



CASE
STUDY
6

With the current recessionary climate hitting the construction industry especially hard it is good to see a company investing in its people through training and qualifications.

This is the case with Henry Brothers (Magherafelt) Ltd becoming the first construction company in Northern Ireland to train all their site supervisory staff in the new NEBOSH Award in Health & Safety. This involved a total of 26 foremen and site managers successfully completing a 3 day course delivered by Bemac Training onsite at Henry Brothers and grant aided by CITB-ConstructionSkills NI.

Following this formal training each candidate had to submit a practical risk assessment on a chosen activity on their site. The final part of the course involved answering 40 Health & Safety questions under exam conditions and monitored by the National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health.

Managing Director, David Henry, when presenting the awards said “This NEBOSH Award is an internationally recognised achievement which reflects your high level of competence in your work and underlines the company commitment to Health & Safety and to its personnel.”

Those who attended the course felt that it was beneficial in reinforcing their current knowledge of health & safety as well as increasing their confidence and competence.

The company has recently obtained the status of Chartered Building Company through the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) and this investment in supervisor training emphasizes the principle of “Professionalism and Integrity in Construction” which Henry Brothers upholds as a CBC organisation.



Henry Brothers Ltd. supervisors and site managers who attended the first NEBOSH Award course to be held in the NI construction industry. Included in the picture are David Henry (Managing Director), Ian Henry (Senior Contracts Director), David Wallace (H&S Director) and David McConaghie (Training Manager).

Fox Contracts



County Tyrone company Fox Building & Engineering Ltd (t/a Fox Contracts) have been trading since October 1997, primarily in the areas of Civil Engineering and their scope of works includes: road construction, specialists in sportsground construction, bridge construction and airfield construction.

The majority of this work is won through the tender process with a significant proportion generated through the Northern Ireland and Irish market place, however, there has been expansion recently into the United Kingdom.

Fox Building & Engineering Ltd is committed to training its staff in order to develop skills and over the past year training has been undertaken in a range of areas including Confined Space Entry, Noise at Work, NVQ Plant Operations and Diploma in Environmental Management amongst others.

As a CITB-ConstructionSkills NI registered in scope employer Fox Building & Engineering Ltd applied for Grants to help claim back a proportionate cost of the training undertaken. Samantha Fyffe said, "Our people are one of our most important tools and we invest heavily in maintaining a competent and skilled workforce. This is represented in Fox Building and Engineering Ltd winning the Specify Construction Excellence Awards for Training on 06 October 2011. The CITB-ConstructionSkills NI Grant Scheme has been a great aid in assisting with the cost of training. It is a simple and easy process and the staff were always ready to help with any query we had."

Fox Building and Engineering Ltd continuously develop their workforce and have recently restructured internally and have newly appointed supervisors that will be mentored and developed in the immediate future.



Martin McAlorum

MMA Joinery Specialists Ltd



Apprentices are essential and vital for the future of the Northern Ireland construction industry and can be an invaluable asset to any company.

One person who knows all too well the benefits that an apprentice can bring to a company is past Skillbuild NI winner Martin McAlorum. Martin competed in Skillbuild NI in 2001 and was a winner in 2002. He went on to achieve a gold medal in carpentry in the SkillBuild UK competition in 2002. He also competed in the WorldSkills competitions in St Gallen, Switzerland, June 2003 finishing 12th in the world.

Reflecting on his career to date Martin commented, “I started at Newry and Kilkeel college in 1999 where I took up a carpentry and joinery apprenticeship. In my first year I was selected as the best trainee in my year and was asked to represent the college at Skillbuild, the UK finals and then WorldSkills. The on the job training that I achieved through my employer at the time combined with my college training and the experience I gained at Skillbuild was second to none as it helped to test my ability and gave me the confidence to know that I had chosen the right career path.”

Since competing in the WorldSkills competition Martin has gone on to set up his own business MMA Joinery Specialists Ltd. Now in its eighth year, MMA Joinery Specialists Ltd provide work for approx 20 sub



Martin McAlorum assisting a joinery Skillbuild competitor of which MMA Joinery is a co-sponsor.

contractors and 5 full time staff and a big part of the business plan is to recruit apprentices.

Martin comments “From my own experience I know all too well the benefits that an apprenticeship has to an employer – it’s definitely a win-win situation. Being at the training stage an apprentice is more inclined to be open to the employers’ methods of training which becomes an exercise in cost effectiveness for the employer – it means that there will be less time and money spent in re-training.”

Martin continues to be loyal to his apprenticeship roots and every year he is invited back to Skillbuild to provide mentoring to apprentices. He added

🗨️ As a former WorldSkills competitor in the carpentry trade I am invited back to Skillbuild every year to the NI finals to help with the marking process in order to find a winner. As a past competitor I am able to speak to the competitors and give them an insight as to what the judges are looking for. This helps the competitors to focus on their training especially areas for improvements. 🗨️

Jimmy Girvan Joseph Hughes Painting Contractors Ltd



Jimmy Girvan is a qualified painter and decorator supervisor for Joseph Hughes Painting Contractors Ltd. Jimmy left school at 15 with no qualifications and within the past few years has achieved his NVQ Level 2 in Painting & Decorating and holds a CSR Blue Card.

Jimmy said, “With no qualifications, I wasn’t sure what direction I was headed. I had an interest in painting and decorating as my father and brother were in the trade. I started and completed a four year apprenticeship with a private painting and decorating company in Belfast.”

After his apprenticeship Jimmy moved on to McLaughlin & Harvey and was subcontracted to DeLorean until the early 80’s. He went on to commence his foreman duties on contracts in Stranmillis College.

Jimmy has been in his current post for over six years where he has been working as supervisor on major contracts such as the Four Corners Hotel, Belfast, Radisson Hotel, Belfast and Tesco flagship store in Craigavon.

Jimmy also worked on the Boys Model School as part of the Belfast Schools initiative where CITB-ConstructionSkills NI worked in partnership with Amey FMP (Farrans, H&J Martins and Pattons) on project based training tailored to help clients and contractors get the right skills where they need them – on site. It was part of this initiative that Jimmy gained his NVQ Level 2 through the Experienced Workers Practical Assessment route.

Jimmy said, “I enjoy my job and am delighted to still have opportunities to learn and gain qualifications later in life. My skills and experience have allowed me to work on high profile projects which has given me a great sense of pride.”



Pictured are Barry Neilson, Chief Executive CITB-ConstructionSkills NI, Jimmy Girvan and Brigid McGuigan, FMP at the recognition of achievement event for the Belfast Schools project held in September 2010.

Neil Burns Gilbert-Ash



Neil Burns is employed by Gilbert Ash (GA). Having grown up on a farm Neil developed an interest and love of working outdoors. As a result, learning practical skills and working within the construction industry seemed a natural progression for his career path. Despite having the opportunity to continue on to A Level Neil decided to apply for a place on an apprenticeship scheme and successfully did this with Gibert-Ash.

In describing his job Neil said, “Working within the Fitout Division of Gilbert-Ash, my daily duties cover a wide range of tasks from 1st Fix to 2nd Fix joinery work, shop fitting and maintenance works. Being part of a construction team also means that I work closely with other trades and my aim at all times is to produce high quality work to satisfy the needs of the Client. I find completing work in a live building (during client’s business hours) is particularly challenging!”

During his time with Gilbert-Ash Neil has encountered a wide range of tasks and he has had the opportunity to travel extensively with the Fit-out Team. These experiences have helped to develop Neil’s skill levels and also assisted with his personal development.

As a registered employer with CITB-ConstructionSkills NI, GA are focused on training and skills development of their staff to help improve business performance. Neil has trained alongside experienced tradesmen and he continues to develop his management skills through the CIOB Site Supervisory Certificate and Diploma.

*Neil Burns working
onsite with Gilbert Ash*





**SAFETY HATS
MUST BE WORN
WHEN USING
ACCESS
EQUIPMENT**

Wear Helmets

action

First aid

GA

Paula McCloskey, Specialist Joinery Group



Paula McCloskey is a Business Development Manager for Specialist Joinery Group in Maghera. Paula is a fully qualified Quantity Surveyor with Post Graduate Diploma in Advanced Management Practice and MSc in Construction & Project Management.

Having always had an interest in general construction with particular interest in interior design from a young age Paula went on to study Quantity Surveying at QUB.

Paula spent her placement year with Sammon Surveyors and returned to employment with Sammon after graduation, whilst continuing studies at Masters level. After studying part time for 4 years at Post Graduate Level Paula specialised in Business Development for Construction SME's which is beneficial in her current role with Specialist Joinery Group. As part of her role Paula follows leads, develops relationships with architects and clients to secure future work, working on tender submissions, and managing the estimating team and completing Pre Qualification Questionnaires Documentation.

Paula enjoys meeting various groups of people as part of her job and following a project from inception to completion as with every job there are often not enough hours in the day to get all the tasks completed.

Speaking as a female working in the construction industry Paula said, "My experience in the industry is positive. I have always been treated

with respect. I don't think there is as big a taboo about females in construction anymore, we have proven our worth and everyone is happy to get along. I am involved in a lot of team work and I feel a balanced team of both females and males creates a better work environment, as everyone brings different skills to the table.”

Paula's employer Specialist Joinery Group actively support continued professional development and she is given every available opportunity to develop her skills and given the opportunity to work within every department within the business, giving Paula a greater understanding of how construction companies operate.



Paula working on key projects as part of her current role in Specialist Joinery Group

Phillip Green – Self Employed Bricklayer,

Gold medal winner, WorldSkills 2011



Phillip achieved Gold Medal in bricklaying at WorldSkills London 2011 where more than 150,000 spectators from across the world watched 1,000 young skilled people from 50 countries compete over four days to be the best in the world in their skill. Phillip's first taste of the construction industry was whilst on work experience with a local builder and he then went on to complete his apprenticeship working in the family business D.G. Green & Sons whilst attending Belfast Metropolitan College.

It was during this apprenticeship that Phillip's Skillbuild journey began and he achieved silver medals in brickwork in the 2008 & 2009 competition, winning gold in the 2010 competition. Phillip successfully went on to compete in the UK National Finals in 2009 and 2010 winning bronze medals on both occasions. It was due to this success that Phillip was selected as part of the UK Squad and underwent intense training and selection before being selected as a Team UK member for WorldSkills 2011. Speaking on his success Phillip said,

“As you can tell a lot of hard work, commitment and sacrifice was needed to get to WorldSkills but it was all worth it as I won the Gold Medal for Bricklaying, the definite highlight of my career to date. Skillbuild has had a major impact on my career, both personally and professionally, it created great opportunities for me and my business and I would encourage any young apprentice to consider competing.”

Working now as a self employed bricklayer Phillip is involved in designing, pricing, building brick and block work, dealing with clients and architects, supervision of other bricklayers if required and importantly dealing with the finance of invoicing and credit control.

As Phillip is a practical person he enjoys the physical and mental aspect of his job. Working outside in all sorts of weather can have its good and bad points but you know what to expect living in Northern Ireland.

Phillip is very passionate about his job and on speaking about his career route he said, "I have served an apprenticeship and have gained vocational qualifications and fully endorse this route into the construction industry. You can earn a good wage and if you have ambition and drive, the world can literally be your oyster."



*Phillip Green
D.G.Green &
Sons Bricklaying
Services
displaying his
WorldSkills gold
medal bricklaying*

Grant Robson GRAHAM



GRAHAM is an established Building and Civil Engineering Company with trading records going back over 200 years. Up until 1st April 2009, GRAHAM was one of three subsidiary companies of John Graham Holdings Limited. However, in April 2009, the Investment Projects and Asset Management divisions of John Graham (Dromore) Ltd became Limited Companies in their own right, and are now subsidiary companies of John Graham Holdings Limited.

GRAHAM is the largest of the three units with a turnover of approximately £190m in the UK and Ireland with operations in Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Eastern England and Scotland. Construction activities are undertaken in two divisions, Building and Civil Engineering.

In the Building division GRAHAM provides a comprehensive service across the education, health, leisure, retail, commercial, civic and industrial sectors.

In the Civil Engineering division GRAHAM has a wealth of experience in the successful delivery of major road schemes, water and wastewater treatment facilities and road and rail bridges.

Grant Robson has undertaken the Careers Focus scholarship programme with GRAHAM construction starting in 2009. On speaking of his career path he said, “When I was in high school I did not believe that I could make it to university I was an average student who was unclear on what path to take when leaving high school. Then one day

GRAHAM construction were speaking at a school assembly about a scholarship (Careers Focus) which sounded interesting so I applied and was successful. Since then I made it to university and have passed my first two years and just began my third, I have also had the opportunity to work with some amazing managers and engineers where you are learning on a daily basis. So I would like to thank GRAHAM themselves for giving me this life changing opportunity.”

As part of the Career Focus programme Grant is given work placements throughout his academic studies so he can gain practical experience and see how the theory works in reality. This helps the students learn in a practical setting and see ‘the real world of construction’. Like all jobs in construction the weather can be a downfall but Grant appreciates that it is part of the job and the work must go on.

Communication skills are imperative for the careers focus scheme as you are communicating with the University, internal staff within the organisation and those on site. GRAHAM are keen to progress their staff at every opportunity and have already put Grant through training in CAT & Genny and H&S awareness. His training and personal development will continue through the programme helping to establish his career in construction.



Grant Robson

The Construction Industry Training Board (Northern Ireland) was established in 1964 under the Industrial Training Act (Northern Ireland) 1964 (superseded by the Industrial Training Northern Ireland (Order) 1984). It is responsible for all in-scope construction employers (out of scope companies include electrical and building services engineering companies) in Northern Ireland. Its remit is to 'encourage adequate training of persons employed or intending to be employed in the construction industry'.

ConstructionSkills is the Sector Skills Council for the construction industry and was established in 2003. It covers the whole of the UK and both contractors and professional services companies. Its role is raising employer engagement, demand and investment in skills; ensuring authoritative labour market information for its sector; and developing national occupational standards and ensuring qualifications meet employer needs. ConstructionSkills is a partnership between CITB-ConstructionSkills (GB), CITB (NI) and CIC (the Construction Industry Council).

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