

Canadian Institute of
Quantity Surveyors

Institut canadien des
économistes en construction

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

"Meet the People"



Alan Hand, PQS(F)

TITLE: President

COMPANY: A.W. Hooker Associates Ltd.

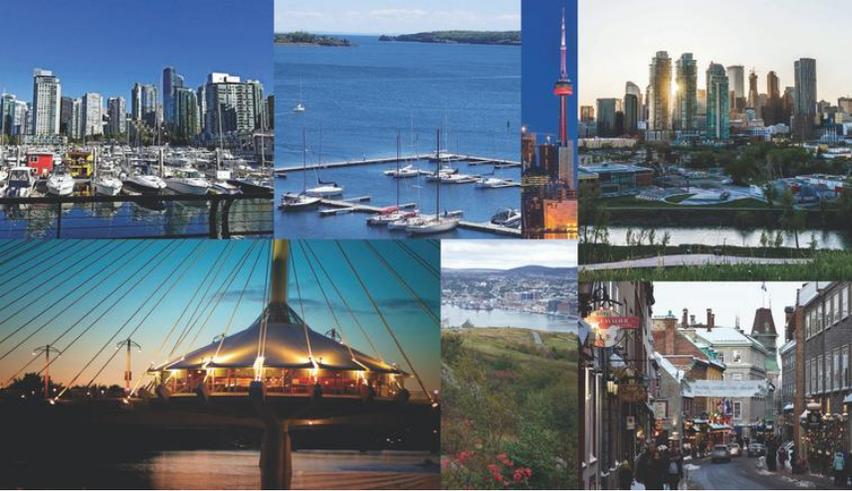
YEARS IN PROFESSION: 48

Would you change anything about your career path?

At this late stage in my career I feel there is nothing I would want to change in my career path. I was fortunate to start my education and career at the same time in what is often called a co-op program. I studied and worked as a trainee QS at the same time. The big advantage was being able to apply what I was learning as soon as I learned it. An even bigger advantage was gaining experience and skills so that when I graduated with my QS degree I had already progressed to leading the work on certain projects and had other QS's working under my direction. This increased my value to the company I was working for and they paid me more because of that. So no, there is nothing I would change.

What keeps you interested in your job/this profession?

In my first job as a QS, I was afraid I would become bored doing repetitive tasks and to some extent that was true. But I also realized that most career paths require doing the same tasks over and over and that is how we become skilled and efficient at doing them. Then over time I started finding that the variety and unique designs of each project I worked on kept it interesting. Especially the more challenging and difficult projects. I also found that as I gained experience with an ever widening range of QS services, that also kept it more interesting. I learned to never turn away work because I hadn't done it before - accepting the challenge of taking on something new continues to keep my interest today. As they say, "Variety is the spice of life".



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Any special skills that you think came in handy when you first started out in this profession?

One skill that I think is important is being able to visualize what the building or structure we are working on will look like when it is built. Whether reading printed drawings or sketches, or more commonly today, viewing CAD drawings and BIM files on a computer screen, it is a very useful skill to be able to build a mental image of the finished product. When preparing an estimate, I like to measure the quantities in the order of how it will be built (for example, starting with excavation and foundations). It is like I am constructing the building in its proper sequence in my mind. I found that I was less likely to miss any items in my estimate that way.

Where do you see the industry headed?

I believe that not only will there always be an important role for Quantity Surveyors, it will continue to grow more important over time. Any construction project requires a wide range of many different professionals. While the role of the QS is maybe not as well known or recognized as others, that is steadily changing to the point that we are now well understood and respected for the work we do in helping create successfully completed projects. The demand for our services continues to grow, as is the range of the types of services we offer, so there is a great need for young QS's to be the future of the profession. There is a bright future ahead for our industry.