

## Diane Davy IEng FIET MCFI

I have always known I wanted to be an engineer, even from a very young age. However, as a young female interested in engineering and technology, the support I received from my school (it was the 1960s after all!) did little to get me off on the right track. Leaving school with a handful of O levels, I was fortunate to be offered a job by a company willing to provide training to young women.

Whilst working in the design office I decided I wanted to continue my learning, and with my employer's support studied for my ONC in evenings and day release.

Having successfully achieved this qualification, and after a career break, I went to work for a materials research organisation with my time split between research and the design of in-house test equipment.

In 1986, I became registered as an EngTech; I considered this professional achievement as a significant point in my career as an engineer. A few years later, I was encouraged by a mentor to consider applying for IEng via the Mature Candidate Route. This particular route had a reputation for being tough. However, in my experience it works if you know your stuff! Following a Professional Review Interview, I was given the go-ahead to write a Report based on my design project for a new piece of low-temperature experimental test equipment. A challenging technical interview followed, and at the end of which I realised that my nerves had disappeared and I had enjoyed the experience! I was now an Incorporated Engineer.

My career that has spanned 40 years has seen me work for a variety of employers, including Engineering Council and as CEO of IMechE. I have also worked on some extremely interesting projects. One that stands out in particular was in my early days as a consultant. A new client Sara Parkin, a Founding Director at Forum for the Future (FFF), (who believes passionately in the crucial role of Engineers to solve the problems of global sustainability) was working towards establishing a new project "Engineers for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (E21C)". This project took representative young engineers from sponsoring companies to analyse and recommend the educational and skills needs for young people to work as engineers in a way that naturally curtsied to the needs of the environment.



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I project managed the first two phases of this E21C initiative and when it more recently became an internally managed, integral feature of FFF's corporate activities, looking at the needs of engineering systems, I continued to provide an input to the project, focussing on CPD matters. Today, I continue to maintain strong links with FFF assisting each year with the selection of 12 scholars on their prestigious Masters for Leadership in Sustainable Development Programme.

I am currently a Partner of Chandler Associates, an independent consultancy service. As something of an interpreter I work across sectors to help engineers, scientists and technologists understand more effectively the organisations they engage with, and vice versa. Often an organisation knows what it wants to achieve, but isn't sure how to do it so I provide an analytical approach that leads to an innovative solution.

I attribute a lot of my success and interesting career to my professional registration. Without doubt, I have seen it as a badge of recognition of my professionalism, demonstrating that I have reached a standard acknowledged by my peers. In addition, in my current role as a consultant, my business partner and I believe that the maintenance of our registration status is crucial to our clients' positive perception of us and also our commitment to our profession.

My advice to anyone considering professional registration is 'go for it'. You will never regret making the effort that achieves recognition of your engineering ability by your peers, and after all, it can only enhance your career development.

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Registered July 1988

