

## **Career Development of Young Construction Professionals in New Millennium: Application of Sun Tzu's *Art of War* Principles**

SH Rodrigo# and SD Jayasooriya

*Faculty of Built Environment and Spatial Sciences, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Sri Lanka*

#sajunrodrigo26@gmail.com

The construction industry in the new millennium has shown a variety of challenges for young professionals. It is recognized that early career experience can play a significant part in lifelong professional capability, and the support and knowledge gained during the early years of post-graduate employment can influence future career direction and success. This study was conducted to identify the relevance of military strategies that are mapped with the career development of young construction professionals (Architects, Civil Engineers, Quantity Surveyors and Surveyors) while suggesting strategies to fill the barriers to career advancement. This study is based on the construction industry of Sri Lanka where a substantial number of young graduates enter the field not knowing the proper mechanism to build their future. The data collection was done through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews which were developed based on the Art of War. Data analysis was done by using both qualitative and quantitative techniques. It was identified that young professionals should have the inspiration to acquire the knowledge, skills and abilities of their peers by engaging deep job experience, adopting team member stance through professionalism and connectivity; handling office politics and conflicts effectively; maintaining flexibility and manoeuvrability; networking and soft skills. The outcome of the study elicits that there is a relationship between the tertiary education system and military strategies to the career development of young professionals. Therefore, it is strongly recommended to prepare a strategic agenda for the career development of young professionals by collaboratively working with the academia, industry and professional bodies, which is an important aspect to the individual, as well as to the organisational sustainability.

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