



INDUSTRY MENTORSHIP: INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM MAPPING

The built environment is rarely created by a single profession working in isolation. This activity helps mentees move beyond reading role descriptions to exploring how different professionals collaborate, resolve conflicting priorities, and rely on each other throughout a project's lifecycle.

Step 1: Scenario Selection

Choose one scenario below for your session, or use an active project from your own practice. (Feel free to create your own scenario that better fits a live project).

- **Scenario A (Urban Regeneration):** Transforming a vacant dockland site into a mixed-use community hub with housing, retail, and a public park.
- **Scenario B (Sustainable Transport & Realm):** Redesigning a congested high street to introduce segregated cycle lanes, pedestrianised areas, green infrastructure, and sustainable drainage.
- **Scenario C (Retrofit & Adaptive Reuse):** Converting a Grade II listed historic mill into affordable creative studios and tech workspaces.

Step 2: The Collaboration Web Exercise

Instructions:

1. Refer to the **Built Environment Ecosystem Map** below.
2. Select **four key roles** required to deliver the chosen scenario.
3. Use the **Interdisciplinary Matrix** to map out how these roles interact, where potential design conflicts arise, and how the team works together to solve them.

[CLIENT / DEVELOPER]

- └─ Identifies site, secures funding, sets brief.
 - └─> [TOWN PLANNER] ─> Secures planning permission & policy compliance.
 - └─> [ARCHITECT / URBAN DESIGNER] ─> Creates spatial design & vision.
 - └─> [ENGINEERS] (Structural, Civil, MEP) ─> Ensures the building stands & functions.
 - └─> [QUANTITY SURVEYOR] ─> Manages budgets, costs & procurement.
 - └─> [PROJECT MANAGER] ─> Keeps timeline, team, and budget aligned.
 - └─> [LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT] ─> Integrates public realm, ecology & drainage.
 - └─> [MAIN CONTRACTOR & TRADES] ─> Builds the scheme safely on site.



Interdisciplinary Matrix Worksheet

Professional Role A	Professional Role B	How They Must Collaborate	Potential Trade-off or Conflict
Example: Architect	Example: Structural Engineer	Integrating column locations into open-plan floor layouts.	Architect wants large open spaces; Engineer needs columns to support upper floors.
Role 1:	Role 2:		
Role 2:	Role 3:		
Role 3:	Role 4:		
Role 4:	Role 1:		



Step 3: Mentor Real-World Case Study & Discussion

Objective: The mentor shares real-world industry experience to show how different roles interact in practice, helping the mentee see beyond theory.

Instructions for the Mentor:

1. **Share a 5-Minute Project Story:** Walk your mentee through a brief, real-life project you have worked on. Highlight a time when multiple disciplines had to work together to solve a specific problem.
2. **Work Through the Discussion Prompts:** Use the three prompts below to structure a dialogue with your mentee:
 - **Prompt 1 (Workflow & Communication):** Explain who you communicate with most on a typical project day. Example: *"As an architect, I spend a lot of time talking with structural engineers to check column placements and quantity surveyors to check material costs."*
 - **Prompt 2 (Handling Compromise):** Describe a real situation where two disciplines disagreed (e.g., preserving a historic wall vs. lowering construction costs) and explain how the team compromised.
 - **Prompt 3 (Shared Transferable Skills):** Point out 2–3 skills that almost every built environment professional needs, regardless of their job title (e.g., active listening, clear email communication, visual sketching).

Step 4: Mentee Reflection & Actionable Next Steps

Objective: The mentee applies what they have learned to their own career path and creates a tangible takeaway for future networking or site visits.

Instructions for the Mentee:

Reflect on New Roles: Take 2 minutes to consider all the roles discussed in Steps 2 and 3. Answer: Which role, besides the one you were already interested in, surprised you or sounded more interesting than you expected? And why?



Draft a "Curiosity Question": Write down one specific question you can ask a professional from a different discipline the next time you are on a site visit, at a panel talk, or at a networking event.

Examples to help you start:

"What is the biggest challenge you face when working with architects/engineers on a new site?"

"How early in a project do you usually get involved, and what is your first step?"