

# PROFESSIONAL

## THROUGH AND THROUGH

*In a career spanning 38 years, legislator for the architectural, surveying and planning constituency Tony Tse has excelled in posts across the public and private sectors - despite initially failing his qualifying exam.*

May Chan Rhodes

One's career is not as much shaped by chasing the corporate ladder as by developing one's passion, abilities and knowledge, and this is how Tony Tse has risen to a position of trust in both public and private sectors.

A legislator representing the Architectural, Surveying and Planning industry, Tse has spent more than 38 years in the industry, after graduating from Hong Kong Polytechnic.

He spent 12 years in the Crown Land and Survey Office, now the Lands Department, where he became a senior estate surveyor, before moving on to the private sector, where he also held various senior positions.

It is surprising that for a high flyer such as Tse, the most memorable moment of his career was when he failed the professional qualifying exam while working as an apprentice with the Crown Land and Survey Office.



*“As long as we believe that what we do is important and meaningful, we should keep going. It is a long battle and no one knows if we can make it happen, but at least we have a chance to succeed if we try.”*

“I still remember how I broke out in cold sweat, when I discovered that I had failed the test,” said Tse. “It is more than a mere exam – it is about whether I could qualify as a professional surveyor.”

“I asked myself again and again why I failed as I studied hard and did all the preparation. I was lost in my thought until a surveyor in the office asked me a question: ‘Do you believe that you are already a surveyor?’. It is not the exam that makes you a surveyor. It is your abilities and your professional knowledge that make you who you are, and the exam is just a tool to demonstrate that you have already mastered the skills.”

“It was a powerful experience that changed the way I perceived qualifications and titles. Many people would strive for a promotion, but few would pause and look beyond the money and title to consider if they can do the job. The reality is, if you can do the job well, you don’t have to ask for the title because it will naturally come.”

Such a belief helped Tse to focus on his job when he was working with the government department, where he got solid training in how to handle transactions in and use and management of lands. As he became the senior staff in the office, he would always share this memorable experience with his fellow colleagues, encouraging them to think beyond their career frustrations.

Tse made his move into the private sector in 1989, when a series of political events had led people to question what would happen to Hong Kong’s laissez faire government policy after the hand-over.

The comparative greater opportunity of the private sector in the light of potential structural changes in the government, and the flexibility it offers, finally prompted Tse to make the move. And he found the change as refreshing as it was challenging.

“Working in the public sector is like being part of a big administrative body. It is about maintaining the stability of the system so that it will not be affected by any change in personnel,” Tse said. “However, on the down side, it is very difficult and often not rewarding to push through innovations.”

“The private sector is a completely different matter. Apart from being compliant with the laws and regulations, there are not many guidelines for you to follow. You have to think on your feet and make a business judgement. For the same plot of land, you can make or lose money because of your judgement. It is very exciting and demanding.”

In the following years, Tse worked at senior management level for several leading developers including Hongkong Land and Henderson Land.

Working alongside some of the most illustrious entrepreneurs in town, he was struck by how they were able to dissect an issue from multiple perspectives before arriving at a decision.

He also realized that there is a fine line between the thought processes of a decision maker and those of a professional adviser. The latter would be about listing out all the pros and cons based on one's professional knowledge, but the former is about being able to making a decision that best serves a purpose, and manage the risks as they come.

Such realizations motivated Tse to get involved in various community services from the Town Planning Board and Lands and Building Advisory Committee, to the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, the Vocational Training Council and the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors.

“As a professional surveyor in a senior management position, it is so easy to be trapped in your own world because you rub shoulders with people of a similar level of knowledge all the time,” Tse said.

“Being with people outside of my own profession challenged me to see the same issues through their eyes, and to communicate my idea in a way that is relevant and easy to understand for the general public.”

Serving in different capacities in the community deepened his conviction about the importance of his profession: as Hong Kong progresses in development and becomes increasingly regulated, it is important for the public, the policy makers and different stakeholders to fully appreciate what it takes to build, design and operate the city well.

Tse said there was a need for the profession to have a stronger presence in the process of policy making, urban development and housing matters.

“Surveyors, architects and town planners may not necessarily be at the decision making level in a bureaucratic structure,” said Tse. “However, the work of our hands – the buildings, the roads, the bridges – will stay with the city for decades. That is why it important to get our view across.”

He hopes to join the dots between the profession, the government, the general public and the other sectors in order to make a real impact. For example, he is lobbying the government to set up a statutory body that monitors the quality of building works consultants and contractors.

There is little transparency concerning the costs, quality, record and reputation of the city's building works consultants and contractors, Tse said, which put tenants and strata-title property owners in a vulnerable position, as they comply with the mandatory building inspection scheme.

People in the industry, especially surveyors, have strong views on the matter and are willing to help screen the buildings works consultants and contractors, but their hands are bound because of the lack of government support and appropriate regulatory rules.

“It is my wish to establish a platform for our profession to share their professional knowledge and experience with the public, and with the policy makers in order to make a difference,” said Tse.

“As long as we believe that what we do is important and meaningful, we should keep going. “It is a long battle and no one knows if we can make it happen, but at least we have a chance to succeed if we try.”

*This article is published courtesy of Classified Post.*



# 專業人士

## 堅持不懈

他，當初連執業資格試亦未能通過，卻馳騁職場38年，無論在公職上或私營企業中都成績斐然。他就是May Chan Rhodes筆下的建築、測量及都市規劃界立法會議員謝偉銓。

May Chan Rhodes

謝偉銓在公私兩界都身居要職，並非只靠在升遷的階梯上營營役役，關鍵更在培養個人的志趣、能力和知識。

謝偉銓乃是建築、測量及都市規劃界議員，畢業自香港理工學院（香港理工大學的前身），投身業界逾38年。

他曾於工務司署地政測量處（現為地政總署）任職12年，官至高級產業測量師，其後進入私營機構，歷任多個高位。

如此一位有為之才，職場生涯中最難忘的一頁竟是在工務司署地政測量處任職見習產業測量師時，未能通過執業資格試。

「我還記得，當我得悉未通過考試時的一身冷汗。那不只是一次考試，更加事關我能否成為一名合格的專業測量師。」

「我反覆問自己：我努力學習、用心備考，為何會不合格？當時，我陷入沉思，直至一名測量師同事問我：『你覺得自己是一名測量師嗎？』你能否成為測量師，並非取決於一場考試，而是你的能力和專業知識。考試只不過是一種途徑，讓你展示你所掌握的技能。」

「那件事完全改變了我對專業資格和名銜的看法。不少人力爭上游，卻少有人能夠停下腳步，將名利放在一邊，考慮自己是否有能力承擔這份工作。事實上，要是你有這個能力，自然會水到渠成，根本毋須費心爭取。」

謝偉銓憑著這個信念，在政府部門謹守本分，學習處理土地買賣以及土地使用和管理事務。在任職期間，他常常將這份難忘體驗與同僚分享，鼓勵他們莫受縛於職場挫折，要將目光放得更遠。

謝偉銓於1989年進入私營機構，當時發生了一連串政治事件，令人質疑香港的自由貿易政策在回歸後會何去何從。

正當政府結構可能出現轉變，私營機構的出路則顯得廣闊而靈活，終於促使謝偉銓採取行動。他發覺，這種轉變令他耳目一新，同時又充滿挑戰。

「在公營機構任職，就有如龐大組織中的一份子。公營機構必須維持體系穩定，不受任何人事變動的影響。這不利於推動創新，亦令成效不彰。」

「私營機構則完全不同。私營機構除了法例及法規以外，就沒有太多指引需要遵從，但需要行事果斷，從商業角度作出判斷。一個決定就足以影響一幅土地的賺蝕，過程不但刺激，且須投入大量精力。」

其後數年，謝偉銓在香港置地及恒基兆業地產等多家主要發展商擔任高級管理人員。

在與本港一些傑出企業家共事的過程中，謝偉銓深深驚歎於他們在作出決策前能夠從多角度剖析問題。

他亦認識到，決策者與專業顧問的思考過程有著細微的差別。後者會根據自身的專業知識列出所有利弊，而前者則會作出最符合目標的決策，並處理可能出現的風險。

這點促使了謝偉銓參與城市規劃委員會、土地及建設諮詢委員會、香港貿易發展局、職業訓練局以及香港測量師學會的各種社區服務。

「專業測量師擔任高級管理職位，時常跟知識層面相若的人相處，容易造成局限於自己的世界中。」

「與從事其他職業的人打交道，使我能夠從他們的角度去看待問題，以方便普羅大眾理解的方式來傳達我的理念。」

在社區中擔任不同職務，使他確信自己所從事職業的重要性：隨著香港穩步發展，規管日益嚴格，必須讓公眾、政府及不同持份者充分理解如何妥善規劃、建造及管理城市。

謝偉銓表示，專業人士有必要多參與決策過程、城市發展及房屋事務。

「測量師、建築師及城市規劃師不一定是官僚機構的決策層成員，但我們的工作成果——樓宇、道路、橋樑——將會在城市中留存數十年。因此，我們的意見必須清晰表達。」

他希望專業人士、政府、普羅大眾及其他業界人士之間能夠建立聯繫，產生實際影響。例如，他正遊說政府設立一個監察樓宇工程顧問及承建商質素的法定機構。

謝偉銓表示，本港樓宇工程顧問及承建商的造價、成本、質素、往績及聲譽欠缺透明度，對遵從強制驗樓計劃的租戶及分層物業業主未能提供最佳的利益。

測量師等業內人士在這件事上態度鮮明，亦願意協助甄別樓宇工程顧問及承建商，但卻由於缺少政府支持及適當的監管而感到束手束腳。

「我希望建立一個平台，讓專業人士向公眾及政策制定者分享我們的專業知識及經驗，發揮我們的作用。」

「只要我們所做的事是重要而有意義的，就應該堅持下去。這可能是一場持久戰，無人知道我們能否成功，但只要盡力而為，我們便會有成功的機會。」

本文由 Classified Post 撰文