CONSTRUCTION people

Spotting Culture Checklist for Construction Professionals

Use this checklist when considering a new role to gauge whether a company's culture aligns with your values and working style. Focus on what you observe, hear, and experience - not just what's written in the job ad.

1 Job Ad Signals

- Does the ad focus on outcomes, structured processes, and support rather than just hours, pace or vague expectations?
- Are responsibilities clearly defined, or do they feel broad and loosely scoped?
- Does it mention training, mentoring, or career progression opportunities?

Example: Ads highlighting structured tender support, defined commercial responsibilities, or clear project reporting lines often indicate planning and support. Vague ads that emphasise managing competing priorities without outlining systems or support may point to a more reactive environment.

2 Hiring Process Insights

- Are timelines communicated clearly and consistently?
- Are follow-ups timely, and are updates provided proactively?
- Are interviews scheduled professionally and conducted with preparation?
- Are site visits, assessments, or meetings organised effectively?

Example: A Project Manager invited to multiple site interviews can gauge organisational capability by how clearly site access is arranged, whether key personnel are available, and how safety and induction procedures are handled.

3 Interview Observations

- How do interviewers describe their team and leadership? Are they respectful and balanced or blaming and defensive?
- Are your questions about workload, support, or development welcomed or brushed off?
- Do multiple interviewers describe the culture and expectations consistently?
- Are examples of past projects discussed with a focus on learning and process?

Example: A Contract Administrator hearing one interviewer outline clear approval processes, escalation pathways, and commercial support, while another focuses primarily on autonomy and managing issues independently, may be seeing early signs of cultural misalignment.

For in-depth details click here

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4 Online Presence & Reputation

- Does the company celebrate people and team achievements, or only project wins?
- Are leaders visible, engaged, and acknowledging their teams?
- What patterns exist in staff tenure, promotions, and turnover?

Example: LinkedIn posts recognising project teams, internal promotions, and long-serving staff often reflect a people-focused culture. Consistent turnover at certain levels may indicate unresolved cultural or workload challenges.

5 Insights From People Who Know the Company

- Have you spoken to current or former employees through your professional network about day-to-day realities?
- How do they describe support, leadership style, and decision-making?
- Do they feel respected, heard, and valued?

Example: A Project Manager learning that tight deadlines are paired with structured resource planning and mentoring indicates a more sustainable culture, than one relying on informal problem-solving.

6 Alignment With Your Values

- How do you like to be managed - structured or autonomous?
- What level of workload and pressure is sustainable for you?
- How important are mentoring, development and progression?
- Does the culture support collaboration, safety, and accountability?

Tip: A culture that works for someone else may not work for you. Prioritise alignment over job title or project profile.

7 Red Flags

- Poor or inconsistent communication during the hiring process
- Vague or overly broad role responsibilities
- Conflicting messages from different interviewers
- Limited evidence of support, mentorship, or professional development
- Heavy emphasis on pressure or program urgency without clear systems or resourcing

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