

Headlines from the online survey (May-June 2008)

915 replies were received, of which 26% were from clients, the same proportion from contractors or housebuilders, 35% consultants, and 11% specialists, suppliers or manufacturers. Two-thirds were from large organisations, 19% were from firms employing less than 20 people. Almost exactly half reported that they were members of Constructing Excellence – although many took this to mean membership of a local Best Practice Club or other activity rather than core membership.

Some top level conclusions are as follows:

- Egan drivers for change remain 'very important' today, especially committed leadership (80%), focus on customer (73%) and commitment to people (71%)
- Most respondents (80%) believe their management is committed to quality and efficiency, although this is directly related to position in company (more senior = more likely to believe it to be true)
- Most respondents (76%) believe their company is focused on the customer, though again middle manager and below may be less convinced
- Fewer respondents (60%) say they work in integrated, multidisciplinary teams - manufacturers, specialist contractors/small companies least likely to agree. Board members and non managerial staff were least likely to agree
- Less than half of respondents (48%) believe the projects they work on are completed to time, to budget and consistently exceed expectations - middle manager and below are least likely to agree.
- Most respondents (81%) believe their companies are committed to training, development and health & safety

When asked what have been the main benefits from 'rethinking construction', around half referred to integration, collaboration etc. There were no other significant responses. This contrasts with the fact that only 56% said that 'integrating the process and the team around the product' was a 'very important' driver for change in today's industry. Also, other commentators (Strategic forum for Construction) have highlighted integration as the key area where the industry has not met its targets.

But when asked about the disadvantages:

- many people are not doing it or are simply paying lip service to it
- there has been a lack of fundamental, cultural change in the industry
- lack of Government support
- too many advisers, not enough doers
- lack of progress in SMEs sector
- lack of investment in training
- too many KPIs, too much red tape

A very strong emerging message, with apologies to Elvis, is that we need "a little less conversation and a little more action", particularly in the following areas:

- greater vision for the industry, what we are trying to achieve
- more focus on long term planning and investment more focus on whole life cost, sustainability
- better image for industry, attract more diverse, higher calibre personnel
- better use of technology
- more cascade of benefits to smaller companies