

# FACING THE CHALLENGES OF OTHER PROFESSIONALS

**Winston Ayeni**

College of Environmental Sciences  
Kaduna Polytechnic, Kaduna

## ***INTRODUCTION:***

When “surveying” is defined as an art of taking measurements in order to determine the size, shape and position of points on the earth (Vanicek 1976). It is clear to see the special character of the profession. With the advent of digital surveying instruments and the radical improvements in computing and communication facilities, the definition given above has fast become obsolete hence the new name and practice of “Geo-Informatics.”

The definition has been given severally, one of which is, **the acquisition, processing, analysis, presentation and management of geo-spatial related information** (Huxhold and Levinsohn 1995).

This definition no doubt indicates the fact, being that, there is almost no facet of life that geo-informatics cannot be applied to from the complexities of Space exploration, Medicine, Engineering, and Environmental observations down to trivialities in social sciences. In fact once the question “ where” is asked the answer is in geo-informatics (Ayeni 2002). With such a wide spread, it becomes obvious that the number of potential users of his service are numerous, thus if there is a need not presently met by the surveyors, someone else would definitely step in and carry out such requirement. Whether it’s accurate or how efficient is left to the user or the person requiring the service.

### **RELATED PROFESSIONALS.**

A professional, according to Oxford dictionary, (1999) is” someone belonging to a profession”. A profession is an occupation requiring advanced learning. A professional is someone doing something for payment, not as a pastime. He is required to be skilful and conscientious.

With such a detailed definition and spread of geo-information, the list of other professions that we have to relate with are too many to be mentioned here, suffice to mention some of those in the building industry;

Architects, Planners, Builders, Estate Managers and Valuers, Environmentalist, and other ‘qualified’ surveyors.

As it is, they are all possible clients also.

### **CHALLENGES**

There are two types of challenges a true professional Geo-informatician would have to encounters. One is to keep pace with the ever- developing profession and the other is to be able to render services to all the known clients that would approach one for their needs (Ayeni 2003).

As at now, the Nigerian institution of surveyors, NIS, with the MCPD workshop is trying to inform its members and the public about some of the new trends in the profession, but one would agree with the fact that less than one quarter of its membership have attended MCPD 1 and 11.

That means that one can say without trying to be immodest that most surveyors have not actually educated themselves about their full capacity, let alone actually acquiring such skills as professionals who should be 'skillful and conscientious'. Considering the mentioned clients in the built industry one can ask if there are enough survey professionals to render their needs. According to SURCON there are less than one thousand five hundred registered surveyors and even fewer registered Technologists and Technicians (SURCON, 2002) so if we don't have enough surveyors to meet the needs in the built industry, imagine if everybody requiring spatial information ask for the services of a surveyor, it's the belief of the author that we just might not be able to meet their needs.

In other words the surveying profession has to meet its own challenges first and this could be done by increasing the MCPD workshops and find a way of making it truly mandatory by way of a fine or suspension of memberships registration with SURCON and NIS. Registerable candidate will then be encouraged to get registered so also will be technologists and technicians. Once these challenges of the profession have been taken care of or are been met, then one could think of the challenges from other professionals.

### **CHALLENGES FROM OTHER PROFESSIONALS.**

The most widely spoken about challenge is the behavior of other professionals accepting and in some instances trying to do the job of the surveyor.

Before discussing how to counter this challenges its important to ascertain the circumstance under which the other professionals (at best) got the jobs. Though not critical, because how a job was given

is not the problem as much as to who did the job. If, say a lawyer got the job but he gets a registered or trained surveyor to effects the job, then while recognizing the fact that middlemanship often increase the cost of jobs, as long as a surveyor did the job and he got paid then its not much of a problem. The sorry situation is when the other professional actually carries out the job. It should be noted that once he does that he is no longer a professional because if he were he would not do what he has not been specially trained to do as per the definition of a professional.

### **FACING OTHER PROFESSIONALS**

The first step in countering other professionals is for the surveying profession to educate its members as to their full capacity. As stated earlier this can be done with workshops and seminars in all the parts of the Country. Surveyors must learn to form partnerships not just with themselves but with other professionals; engineers, planners, all kind of designers to mention a few.

This would further bridge this void of information. Professional bodies like COREN, NIESV must be engaged in dialogue to educate their members more as to the need for true professionalism which is void of doing someone else job when one is not trained or qualified to, which is true QUACKRY (Ayeni 1999). On the part of government in all levels the surveying content in all contracts must be extracted and given to a competent surveying firms.

Finally if every professional behaves, as a true professional there really would be no countering of anybody as we all would only be working towards uplifting our beloved blessed country.

## REFERENCES

1. **Ayeni Winston (1999)** *Training Geo-informatist National Seminar at Federal Polytechnic, Mubi Adamawa State.*
2. **Ayeni Winston (2002)** *Geometric information of Kaduna Polytechnic GIK, Vol 2 No1*
3. **Ayeni Winston (2003)** *Challenges of a Surveyor GIK Vol3, No1*
4. **BRIMICONBE, ALLA J.** *( The future of Land Surveying Education. Surveying World (May /June 1998)*
5. **Vanicek, P (1996)** *UNB, Fton N.B Physical Geodesy Lecture Notes*
6. **SURCON (2002)** *List of Practicing Registered Surveyors.*
7. **Huxhold and Levinsohn (1995)** *Managing Geographic Information System Project*  
*Oxford University Press, Oxford 4*

## Glossary

MCPD	Mandatory Continuing Professional Development.
NIS	Nigerian Institution of Surveyors
SURCON	Surveyors Registration Council of Nigeria.
COREN	Council of Registered Engineers of Nigeria.
NIESV	Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and
Valuers.	