



BUILD the **FUTURE**

A Career in Construction
Management

www.cmaanet.org



About CMAA

The Construction Management Association of America is an industry association dedicated to the practice of professional construction management.

CMAA represents more than 28,000 members including federal/state/local government and private sector owners, construction consultants, technology suppliers, academia, and legal organizations all with a common goal: to improve our nation's infrastructure.

CMAA was formed in 1982 to establish standards for managing construction projects. Construction management is rooted in traditional project management practices and also requires a unique body of skills and professional knowledge to perform successfully. CMAA is delivery method neutral; seeking to ensure that all professionals are prepared to succeed regardless of the scope, scale, or complexity of any project or program.

Today, CMAA has more than 28,000 members including individual professionals, professional service companies, and construction owners in the public and private sectors, as well as academic and associate members. CMAA has 34 chapters across the country.

CMAA Vision

CMAA is the voice of the program and construction management industry and the premier resource for professionals working in the built environment.

CMAA Mission

To promote, support, educate, and develop professionals who lead the delivery of programs and projects within the built environment.

BUILD THE FUTURE

Lead the Projects that Shape Tomorrow

Every major project begins with a vision. A hospital built to serve future generations. A transit system that transforms how people move through a city. A manufacturing facility that powers economic growth. A school where students will learn for decades.

But ambitious projects do not move from concept to completion through design drawings alone. Construction managers (CMs) are trusted advisors who help organize teams, decisions, and resources needed to deliver them.

At their best, CMs help project owners see around corners: anticipating risks, clarifying choices, and keeping the project aligned with its goals.

This work is technical, but it's also deeply human.

In construction management, success is not measured only by what gets built, but by how well people, decisions, and resources are brought together along the way.

CMs lead through communication, judgment, preparation, and trust, helping teams solve problems, make decisions, and keep projects moving. These skills come through training and experience, and they rely on a human element that artificial intelligence, automation, and digital tools cannot replace.

The work also offers variety. No two days — and no two projects — are ever the same.

One moment may involve reviewing a schedule or budget. The next may require resolving a site issue, leading a stakeholder discussion, evaluating risk, or helping a project owner weigh options that affect the entire project.

Construction management offers a career where decision-making is tested in real time, and the results are visible in the world around us.

It is also a profession where growth can take many forms. Professionals can begin in project support roles and advance into positions responsible for teams, programs, organizational strategy, and enterprise-level delivery.

Whether entering the profession as a student, transitioning from military service, changing careers, or pursuing the next stage of professional growth, construction management offers a path for people who want to lead complex work and leave something lasting behind.

How is a Construction Manager Different?

The built environment is shaped by many highly skilled professionals, each serving a distinct and important role.

Architects help shape the design, function, and user experience. Engineers develop systems and technical solutions that support safety, performance, and long-term operation. Contractors plan and execute the work in the field.

Construction managers serve a different role.

Professional CMs focus on the path from owner need to successful project or program delivery. They help connect the owner's goals to the realities of design, construction, schedule, budget, quality, safety, procurement, and stakeholder expectations.

CMs are not there to replace the expertise of other project partners. They help that expertise work together.

Think of a major project with a room full of experts. Each person may see the work through a different lens: design, engineering, schedule, construction, operations, community impact, or project owner priorities. CMs often serve as the connective tissue between teams, bringing together perspectives and translating them into coordinated action. The profession is at the intersection of influence, business, technology, and construction. For individuals who enjoy working across disciplines, leading teams, and influencing the big picture, construction management offers a broader and more integrated perspective of the entire project lifecycle.



What Is Construction Management?

Construction management is the professional practice of helping owners navigate complexity and successfully deliver projects and programs from concept through completion.

At its core, the profession is about alignment: aligning people, priorities, decisions, resources, and project goals in environments where conditions are constantly changing and no two projects are exactly alike.

Every project brings together a wide range of stakeholders, including owners, architects, engineers, contractors, regulators, suppliers, and community representatives. Each group brings different priorities, expertise, constraints, and perspectives to the table. Construction Managers help connect those moving parts and guide projects forward with clarity, accountability, and purpose.

Some days are highly technical. Others are centered on communication, negotiation, decision-making, or problem-solving under pressure.

A Construction Manager may spend one part of the day reviewing schedules, budgets, procurement strategies, or project risks, then shift into stakeholder meetings, site coordination, owner discussions, or resolving unforeseen challenges that could affect cost, schedule, quality, or operations.

The work requires more than technical knowledge alone.

Successful CMs learn how to anticipate issues before they escalate, balance competing priorities, ask the right questions, and help teams move from discussion to action.

Depending on the organization, delivery method, and project needs, Construction Managers may serve as:

✓ **Owner's Representatives**

✓ **Program Managers**

✓ **Project Managers**

✓ **Construction Executives**

✓ **Advisors or Consultants**

✓ **CM at-risk Leaders**

✓ **Design-Build Professionals**

✓ **Capital Program Leaders**

As projects evolve from planning and design through construction and closeout, the CM's role evolves with them. Early phases may focus on scope development, budgets, procurement, scheduling, and risk planning. During construction, attention may shift toward coordination, communication, quality, safety, documentation, and field execution. Later stages often involve turnover, operational readiness, and helping owners successfully transition projects into long-term use.

Modern Construction Managers also work in environments shaped by rapidly evolving technology and delivery methods. Digital collaboration platforms, Building Information Modeling (BIM), Virtual Design and Construction (VDC), artificial intelligence, sustainability initiatives, and integrated delivery strategies are transforming how projects are planned and managed.

But even as technology advances, the profession remains deeply centered on people, judgment, and leadership.

Construction Managers help teams make informed decisions, adapt to uncertainty, and keep projects aligned with the outcomes owners and communities depend on.

Why Choose a Career in Construction Management?

Construction management attracts people who want active, collaborative work that involves leading teams, solving problems, building relationships, and contributing to projects with real-world impact.

The work rewards people who can listen, organize information, ask good questions, and help teams move from discussion to decision. The role blends technical understanding with communication, execution, and sound judgment.

If you are the person who naturally tries to clarify the problem, organize the next steps, and bring people back to the goal, construction management may give you a place to turn those instincts into a career.

The profession also offers career flexibility.

Because CM skills transfer across project types, professionals can move between sectors, delivery methods, and leadership paths throughout their careers.

As programs and projects become more complex and expectations continue to rise, project owners will need skilled CMs who can lead teams, manage risk, use technology effectively, and keep projects aligned with their goals.

For people who want a career built on accountability, judgment, relationships, and tangible impact, construction management offers a path with long-term opportunity.

Construction managers are often drawn to the profession because they enjoy:

- Leading teams and coordinating complex efforts
- Solving practical, real-world challenges
- Balancing strategy, risk, budget, schedule, and execution
- Building relationships across disciplines
- Seeing ideas become completed facilities and infrastructure
- Working in a profession where no two days or projects are the same



Your Professional Journey

Build Your Expertise.
Expand Your Proficiency.
Advance Your Career.

A career in construction management is built over time. Whether you start with formal education, hands-on experience, or mentorship, continuous learning plays a role.

The Construction Management Association of America (CMAA) and the Construction Manager Certification Institute (CMCI) support that growth with a progressive pathway designed for every stage of a CM's career, from early career development to executive leadership.

This pathway helps professionals:

- ✓ Develop practical knowledge and problem-solving skills
- ✓ Demonstrate growing competence and experience
- ✓ Build credibility with employers and clients
- ✓ Prepare for increasing levels of responsibility
- ✓ Advance toward recognized professional certifications

Professional development in construction management is not a single milestone. It is a process of building capability, earning trust, and preparing for the next level of responsibility.

Where the Journey Begins

Construction management professionals enter the industry through many different paths.

Some begin through academic programs, while others develop experience through military service, internships, field roles, mentorship, or hands-on project exposure.

Because construction management sits at the intersection of leadership, business, technology, engineering, and construction, the profession benefits from individuals with diverse educational and professional backgrounds.

Early-construction management professionals often pursue studies in:

- Construction Management
- Civil Engineering
- Architecture
- Construction Technology
- Mechanical or Structural Engineering
- Building Sciences

CMAA also works closely with ABET, the internationally recognized accreditor of college and university programs in applied and natural science, computing, engineering, and engineering technology. Through its participation in ABET accreditation activities and industry advisory efforts, CMAA helps support the continued advancement of construction management education and the alignment of academic programs with the evolving needs of the profession.

Internships, co-op programs, military experience, mentorship, and field exposure help emerging professionals develop practical knowledge and leadership skills that support long-term career growth.

Key early-career competencies often include:

- Communication
- Teamwork
- Scheduling
- Budgeting
- Safety awareness
- Problem-solving
- Professional practice
- Construction methods and materials

Build Your Foundation



CMIT® — Construction Manager-in-Training

Every construction management career starts somewhere.

For many emerging professionals, the first challenge is not simply learning technical concepts — it is learning how projects truly come together. Understanding how decisions are made. Seeing how communication, coordination, planning, and accountability influence whether a project succeeds or struggles.

The Construction Manager-in-Training (CMIT®) program was created to help bridge that gap between education and professional practice.

Designed for students, transitioning and early-career professionals, the CMIT pathway helps candidates gradually build confidence, practical knowledge, and a deeper understanding of the construction management profession through a progressive series of stackable credentials.



CMIT Level 1 introduces the fundamentals of the profession, helping candidates understand the role of the Construction Manager, project delivery methods, communication, leadership, and the basic principles that support successful project delivery.



CMIT Level 2 expands into practical project management concepts such as scheduling, cost management, quality management, and professional practice.



CMIT Level 3 focuses on applied leadership and project controls, including contract administration, time management, communication, and safety and risk management.



CMIT Level 4 introduces more advanced project leadership concepts such as sustainability, integrated project management, value engineering, and broader project coordination responsibilities.

As professionals move through each CMIT level, they begin to see projects differently. What once looked like isolated tasks starts to become a connected system of people, decisions, risks, priorities, and responsibilities that must work together to move a project forward.

The program introduces candidates to the fundamentals of project delivery, communication, leadership, scheduling, quality management, contracts, risk, sustainability, and integrated project coordination.

More importantly, it helps emerging professionals begin developing the mindset of a Construction Manager: learning how to think ahead, anticipate challenges, communicate clearly, and support project teams in fast-moving environments.

For many professionals, the CMIT program becomes more than an early credential. It becomes the foundation for long-term growth in the profession and the first meaningful step toward greater responsibility and leadership.



CACM® — Certified Associate Construction Manager®

At a certain point in every career, professionals begin moving from supporting projects to helping guide them.

The Certified Associate Construction Manager® (CACM®) represents that transition.

Designed for professionals who are beginning to lead portions of projects and programs, the CACM reflects growing responsibility, applied judgment, and the ability to contribute at a higher level within project teams.

Professionals pursuing the CACM are often coordinating schedules, managing project information, supporting

procurement and documentation efforts, facilitating communication between stakeholders, and helping teams navigate day-to-day project challenges.

The certification recognizes more than technical knowledge alone. It reflects a professional's ability to apply construction management principles in real-world situations where communication, organization, problem-solving, and decision-making all play a role.

For many professionals, earning the CACM marks an important turning point. It signals readiness for increased responsibility, stronger leadership expectations, and greater involvement in project delivery.

It is often the stage where emerging professionals begin building the confidence and experience needed to transition into larger project leadership roles.

Lead at the Highest Level



CCM® — Certified Construction Manager®

As projects grow in size, complexity, and visibility, the expectations placed on Construction Managers grow with them.

Owners depend on experienced professionals who can guide teams through uncertainty, balance competing priorities, manage risk, support critical decisions, and help deliver successful outcomes in demanding environments.

The Certified Construction Manager® (CCM®) represents the profession's highest level of certification and is recognized throughout the industry as a mark of leadership, experience, and professional credibility.

Professionals who pursue the CCM are often responsible for overseeing the full delivery of complex projects and programs while managing budgets, schedules, contracts, quality, safety, stakeholder expectations, and organizational objectives simultaneously.

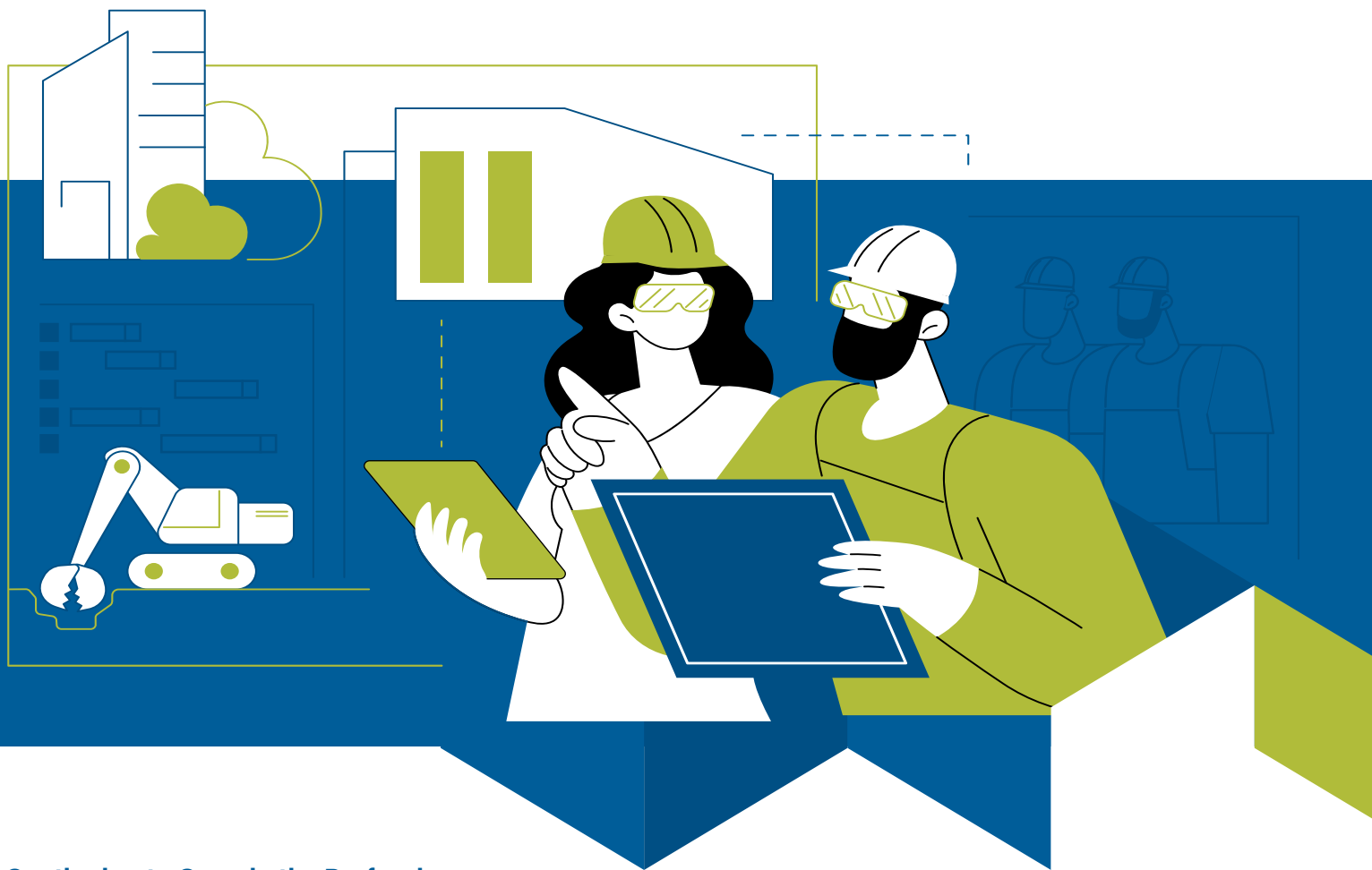
But the CCM represents more than technical expertise.

It reflects years of experience navigating real project challenges, building trust with clients and teams, developing professional judgment, and learning how to lead under pressure.

Many CCMs serve as trusted advisors to owners, senior project leaders, construction executives, capital program managers, and organizational decision-makers responsible for major infrastructure and development initiatives.

Across the industry, many organizations and project owners prefer or require the CCM because it demonstrates not only competence, but a long-term commitment to professionalism, accountability, and excellence in construction management.

For many professionals, earning the CCM is not simply the completion of a certification process. It represents the culmination of years spent developing the knowledge, leadership, relationships, and judgment required to lead some of the industry's most important and complex work.



Continuing to Grow in the Profession

Construction management is a profession where growth does not stop after a degree, certification, or promotion.

Every project introduces new challenges, new technologies, new stakeholders, and new ways of thinking about how work is planned and delivered.

The most effective Construction Managers continue developing throughout their careers: refining technical expertise, strengthening communication and leadership skills, and learning how to navigate increasingly complex projects and organizational priorities.

As the built environment continues to evolve, today's professionals are expected to understand far more than schedules and budgets alone. Modern CMs must be able to adapt to emerging technologies, changing delivery methods, sustainability expectations, workforce challenges, and growing demands for collaboration and accountability.

CMAA supports ongoing professional growth through education, industry engagement, publications, networking, mentorship, and leadership development opportunities designed to help professionals continue building knowledge and expanding their impact throughout every stage of their careers.

Professionals may continue developing expertise in areas such as project and program management, project controls, risk management, sustainability, BIM and VDC, Lean construction, contract administration, dispute avoidance, communication, and organizational leadership.

For many professionals, continuous learning becomes one of the most rewarding parts of the profession itself, because no matter how much experience someone gains, there is always another challenge to solve, another perspective to understand, and another opportunity to grow.

Start Building Your Future

Construction management is about more than delivering programs and projects. It is about helping shape the environments where people live, work, learn, travel, heal, and connect.

The profession challenges individuals to think critically, communicate clearly, solve problems under pressure, and help guide complex work toward successful outcomes. It rewards people who are willing to lead, collaborate, adapt, and continue learning throughout their careers.

No two paths in construction management look exactly the same. Some professionals begin in the field. Others start in classrooms, military service, internships, engineering, architecture, or project support roles. Over time, experience, mentorship, and professional development help transform that foundation into leadership.

The programs and projects may change throughout a career, but the impact remains constant.

The decisions Construction Managers help make today can influence communities, infrastructure, organizations, and public spaces for decades to come.

Whether you are exploring the profession for the first time or preparing for your next professional milestone, CMAA provides the education, resources, credentials, and professional community to help support your growth.



Explore the Profession

Construction Management
Association of America (CMAA)

www.cmaanet.org

Construction Manager Certification
Institute (CMCI)

www.cmcertification.org

Learn more about:

- Student and emerging professional resources
- Scholarships and mentorship opportunities
- CMIT®, CACM®, and CCM® credentials
- Professional development and leadership programs
- Local CMAA Chapters and networking opportunities
- Career pathways in construction management



Build What Matters.



Lead With Purpose.



Shape the Future of the
Built Environment.

Start Your Journey

Professional Development + Industry Learning

Access conferences, online learning, publications, education programs, and professional resources designed to support long-term growth.

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