



GOING PRO

The Deliberate Practice of
Professionalism

Authored by Tony Kern

SUMMATION: CAROLYN MATTHEWS

Levels of Professionalism



LEVEL I
MEMBERSHIP



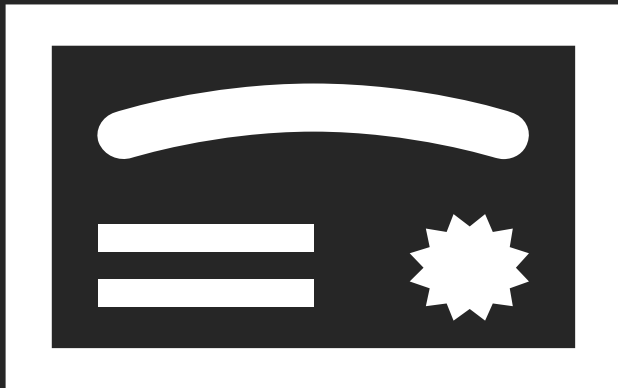
LEVEL II
FULL COMPLIANCE



LEVEL III
FULL EMPOWERMENT
AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Level I Membership

“I’m a pro because I earn a paycheck
in this industry.”



- Meets definition of “professionalism”:
Noun. A professional is a member of a vocation founded upon specialized education and training.
- No/minimal requirement for maintenance of initial standards.
- Functions on autopilot, as long as negative outcomes are avoided.
- Normalization of deviance and routine non-compliance.

Level II Full Compliance

“I’m a pro because I meet and maintain the standards.”



- Meets definition of “professionalism”:
Noun. Professionalism is the adherence to set of values comprising statutory professional obligations and formally agreed codes of conduct.
- Maintenance of initial standards.
- Strives to avoid negative outcomes.
- Less tolerant of normalization of deviance and routine non-compliance.

Level III Full Empowerment and Accountability

“I’m a pro because I am doing all I can to be the best I can and further the objectives of my peers, my organization, and the industry as a whole.”



- Meets definition of “professionalism”: *Noun.* Meticulous adherence to undeviating courtesy, honesty, and responsibility in one’s dealings with customers and associates, plus a level of excellence that goes over and above the commercial considerations and legal requirements.”
- Strives to exceed initial standards.
- Strives to avoid negative outcomes and pursue growth in quality, and efficiency.
- Intolerant of normalization of deviance and routine non-compliance.

Unmasking Pseudo Professionals



The Empty Suit

- Look great doing nothing
- Crave “face time”

Professional by Proximity

- Over reliance on relationships and associations

Professional by Pedigree

- Over reliance on degrees and certifications

One Hit Wonder

- Over reliance on past success



Six Domains of the New Professionalism

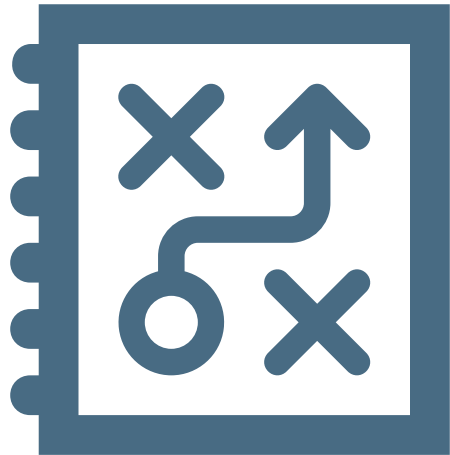
- Professional Ethics (25%) - “doing the right thing”
- Vocational Excellence (25%) - capability to “do the right thing”
- Continuous Improvement (20%) - fight the natural forces of apathy/complacency and ensure growth
- Professional Engagement (10%) - remain customer focused, aware of industry best practices, and socially linked to others
- Professional Image (10%) - external indicator of attention to detail and pride in profession
- Selflessness (10%) - keep ego in check and prevent progressive disease of careerism

The Deliberate Practice of Professionalism

1. Deliberate practice is highly demanding mentally, requiring high levels of focus and concentration.
2. It is designed specifically to improve performance-to strengthen it beyond its current levels.
3. It must continue for long periods of time.
4. It must be repeated, and adjustments made during the repetitions.
5. It requires continuous feedback on results.
6. Pre-performance preparation is essential.
7. Deliberate practice involves self-observation and self reflection.
8. It involves careful reflection on performance after practice sessions are completed.



Self Assessment & Behavioral Guidance



Self Assessment is driven by spectrum analysis of sub-domains under each Level III Professional domain. Ratings are classified as “Almost Never (0)”, “Sometime (.5)”, and “Nearly Always (1)”. The aggregate sub-domain scores are weighted by domain category (See page 93 for a specific example of behavioral markers and scoring criteria – Scoring of sub-domains start in Chapter 6).

To aid in self assessment, behavioral guidance is presented in the form of roadblocks, on ramps and fast lanes. These classifications provide actionable examples of behaviors along the professional spectrum and illustrate how to advance to the next level of professionalism.

Level III - Professional Sub-domains

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS (25%)

- ❖ Honesty
- ❖ Integrity
- ❖ Loyalty
- ❖ Accountability

VOCATIONAL EXCELLENCE (25%)

- ❖ Technical credibility
- ❖ Personal discipline & compliance
- ❖ Attention to detail
- ❖ Diligence
- ❖ Nontechnical excellence
- ❖ Problem solving

Level III - Professional Sub-domains Cont.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT (20%)

- ❖ Vision of excellence
- ❖ Differentiating performance
- ❖ Continual Learning
- ❖ Objective self assessment
- ❖ Resiliency

PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT (10%)*

- ❖ Active participation
- ❖ Coaching and Feedback
- ❖ Partnering
- ❖ Reporting

**Based on interactions with customers, co-workers, organization, and industry*

Level III - Professional Sub-domains Cont.

PROFESSIONAL IMAGE (10%)

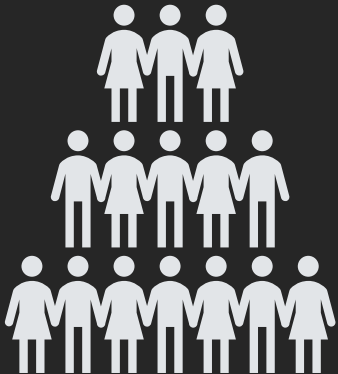
- ❖ Fitness and dress
- ❖ Communication
- ❖ Bearing and behavior on and off duty

SELFLESSNESS (10%)*

- ❖ Service motivation
- ❖ External focus
- ❖ Humility

**Based on servant leadership*

Cultural Implementation



Principal Inclusion in HR Functions

- Selection
- Training
- Evaluation
- Remediation

Resolution of latent pathogens/potentials

- Seed issues
- Underutilized team members

Create conditions for professional growth

- Establish a positive vision on the future
- Express confidence
- Stay out of the tactics
- Trust the team to execute

Author's Closing Statement

“Professionalism is no longer a vague concept. It is a viable and achievable choice. In our highly competitive global marketplace, it has never been more critical. The path to Level III performance is not an easy one, but it is a predictable, viable and achievable alternative to the disease of sloppiness and apathy that has infected many of our professions. It is available to anyone and everyone with the will to improve with little more than the application of the principals contained here.

In the words of George Eliot, “It is never too late to be what you might have.””