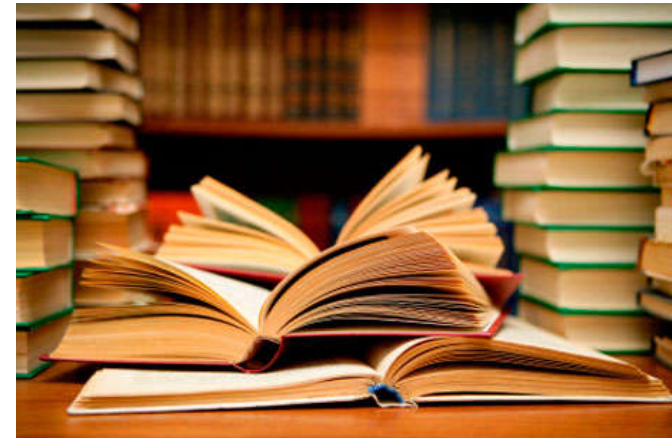


## Chapter 2. Professionalism: Basic concepts

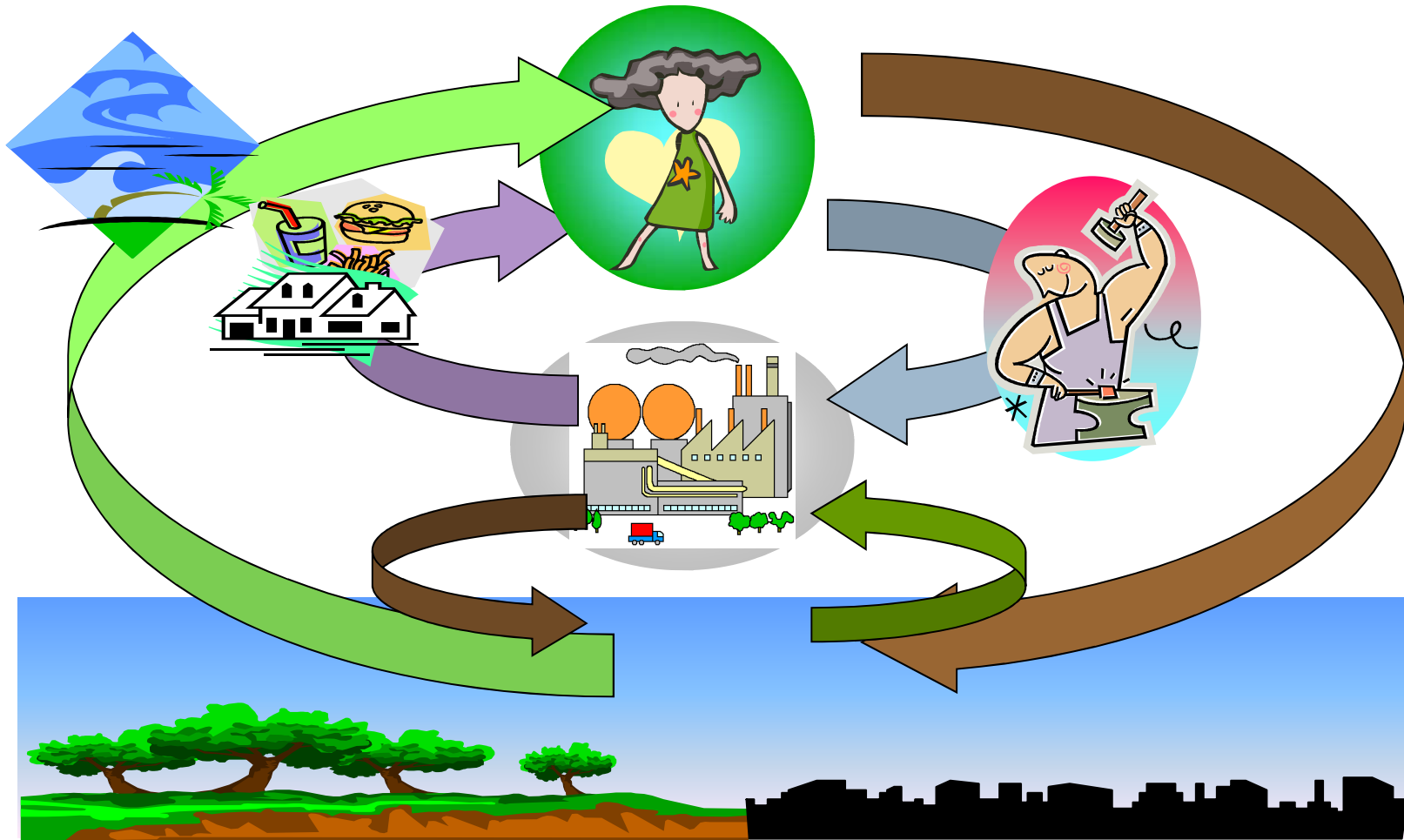
Jose O. Montesa Andrés



- ▶ **Definitions**
- ▶ **General model of interactions**
- ▶ **Actors to be considered**
  - ▶ **Customer / Client**
  - ▶ **Professional**
  - ▶ **Society**
    - ▶ **The State and the profession**
    - ▶ **Professional associations**
    - ▶ **Business associations**
    - ▶ **Users associations**
- ▶ **Professionalisation**



# Human beings and their environment

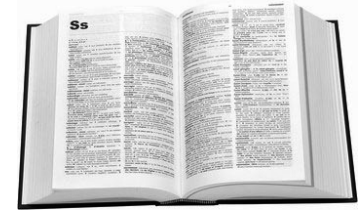


# Consumption, work and specialisation

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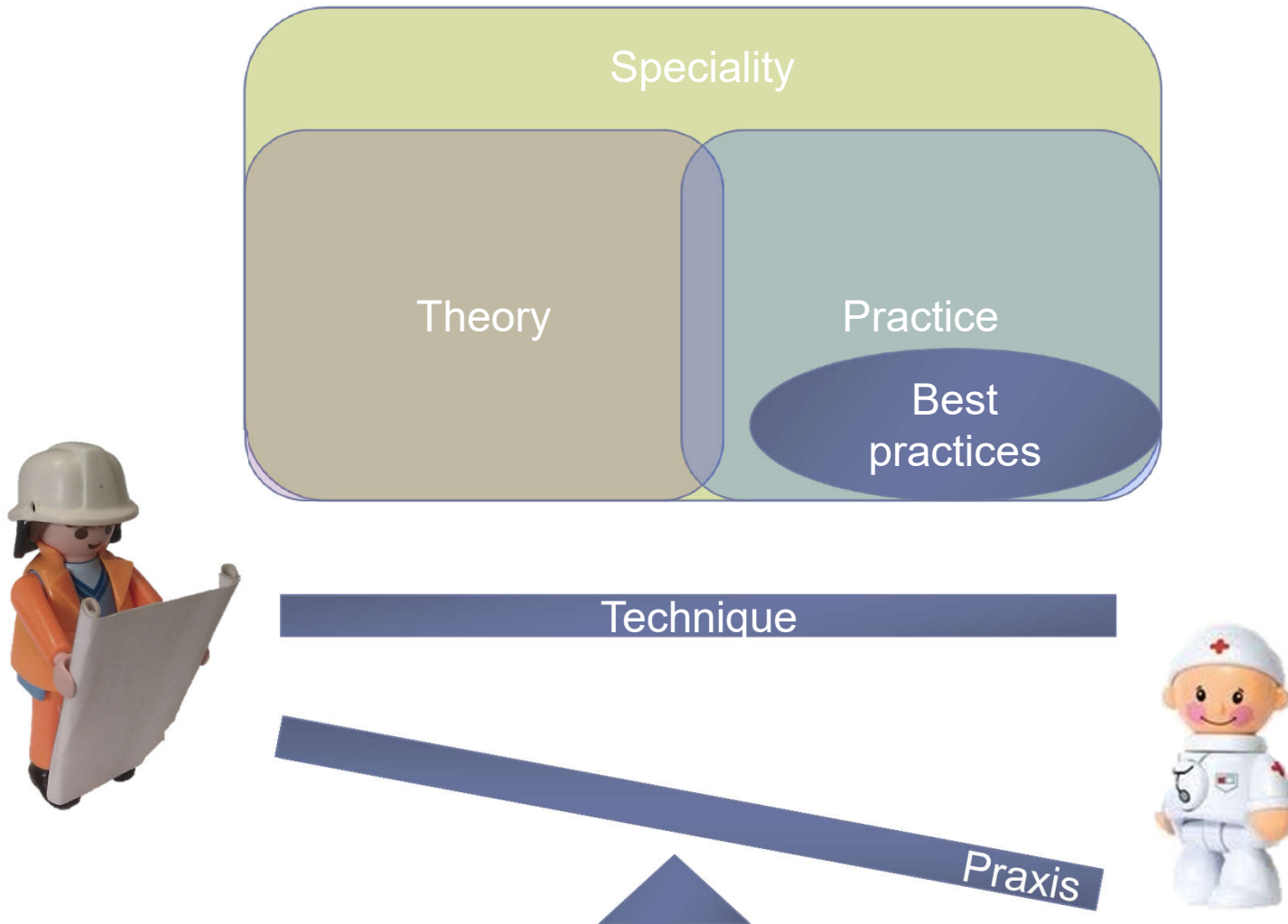
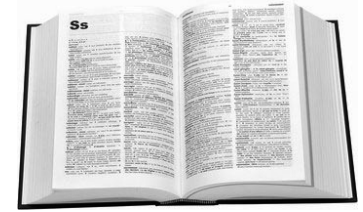
- ▶ Human beings have needs which must be covered to live comfortably (basic needs, social needs, ...).
- ▶ They work in order to get what they want.
- ▶ For certain reasons, work tends to require more specialised skills:
  - ▶ We are not able to produce everything we want, and so turn to specialists.
  - ▶ Specialisation often leads to greater productivity because of factors of scale.
- ▶ Society recognizes those who are specialised in any science, art or practice as: amateur, worker, officer or professional.

# Definitions related to “knowledge”

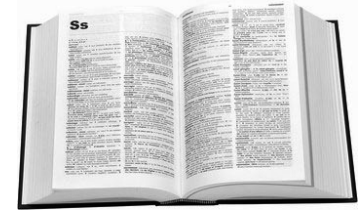


- ▶ To specialise
  - ▶ Concentrate on and become expert in a particular subject or skill
- ▶ Theory
  - ▶ A supposition or a system of ideas intended to explain something, especially one based on general principles independent of the thing to be explained
    - ▶ A set of principles on which the practice of an activity is based
- ▶ Practice
  - ▶ The actual application or use of an idea, belief, or method, as opposed to theories relating to it
- ▶ Praxis
  - ▶ Practice, as distinguished from theory
- ▶ Best practice
  - ▶ Commercial or professional procedures that are accepted or prescribed as being correct or most effective
- ▶ Technique
  - ▶ A way of carrying out a particular task, especially the execution or performance of an artistic work or a scientific procedure

# Knowledge

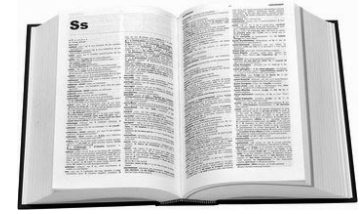


# Definitions of practitioners of an art or science



- ▶ Amateur
  - ▶ A person who engages in a pursuit on an **unpaid basis**
  - ▶ Engaging or engaged in **without payment**; non-professional
    - ▶ An amateur archaeologist; Amateur athletics
- ▶ Work
  - ▶ Activity involving mental or physical effort done in order to achieve a result
  - ▶ Work as a means of earning income; **employment**
- ▶ Job
  - ▶ A paid position of **regular employment**
  - ▶ A task or piece of work, especially one that is paid

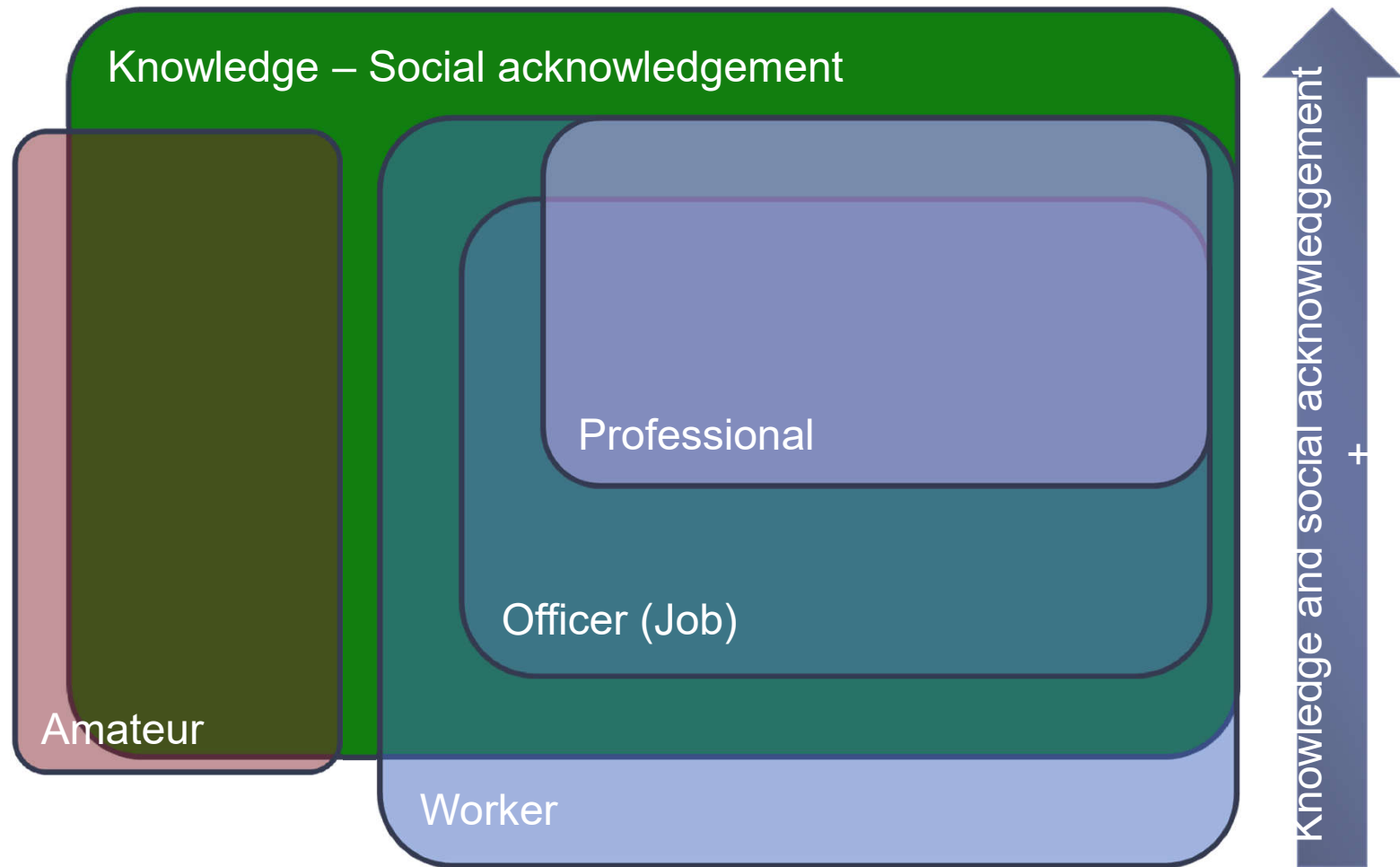
# More definitions



- ▶ Profession
  - ▶ A paid occupation, especially one that involves prolonged training and a formal qualification
  - ▶ Derives from the notion of an occupation that one “professes” to be skilled in
- ▶ Professional
  - ▶ A person engaged or qualified in a profession
    - ▶ A person engaged in a specified activity as a main paid occupation rather than as a pastime
    - ▶ A person competent or skilled in a particular activity
- ▶ Professionalism
  - ▶ The competence or skill expected of a professional



# Knowledge and social acknowledgement





# Actors to be considered

## ▶ Customer / Client

- ▶ Person or entity requesting the services of a professional
  - ▶ His request initiates the professional activity, which should be compensated.
  - ▶ He gets the product obtained, or benefits from the work performed.

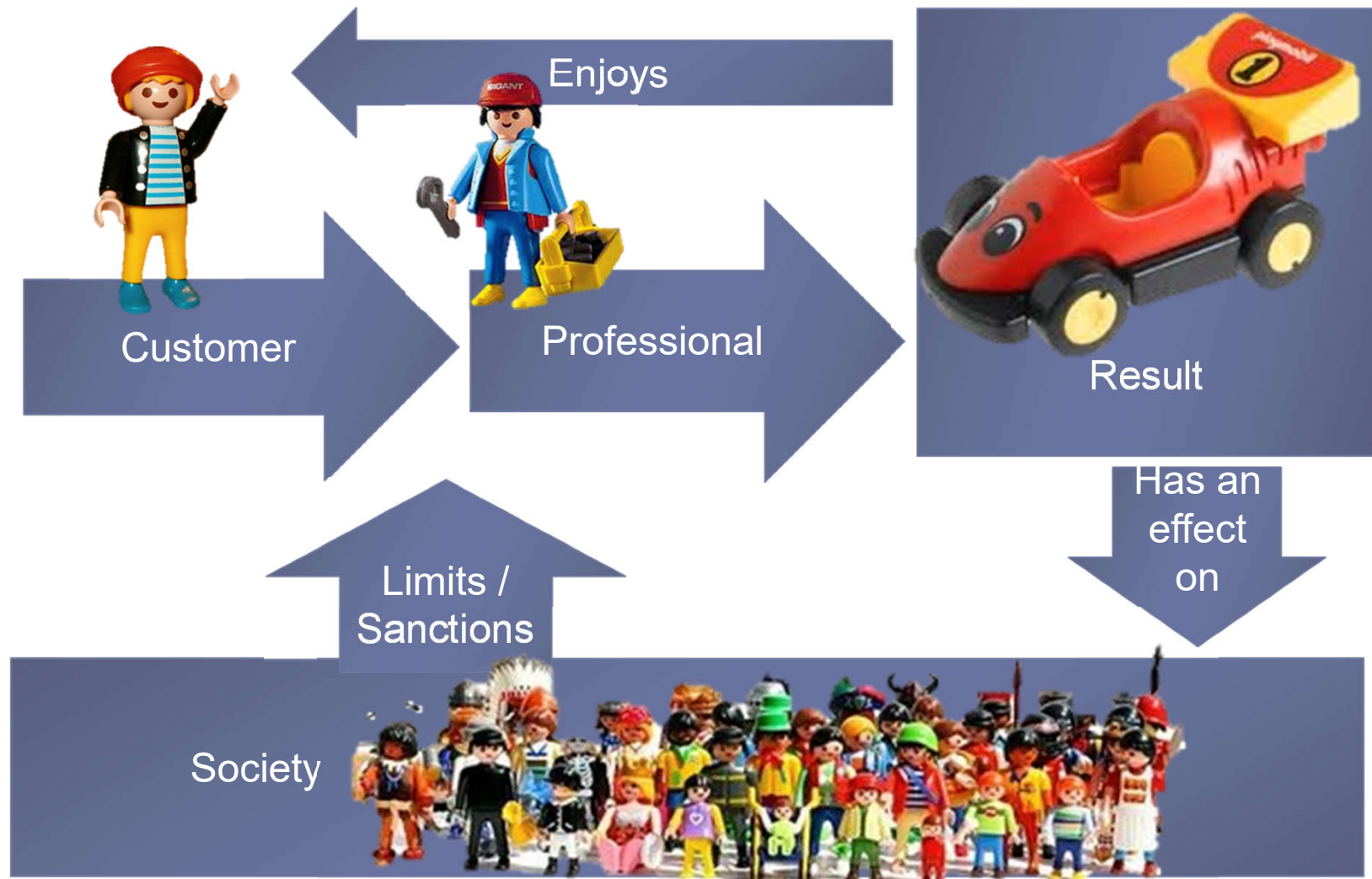
## ▶ Professional

- ▶ Person who performs the necessary actions to satisfy the client request, within the limits the society allows (ethical and legal)
  - ▶ He is responsible for the running process and/or the outcome.
  - ▶ He receives remuneration in return.

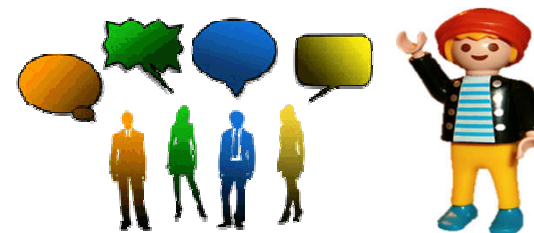
## ▶ Concerned society

- ▶ A group of people who feel affected by the process, the result or its use
  - ▶ They have the capacity to influence any of those involved in the process (client, professional or concerned people) and regulate it.

# General model of interactions

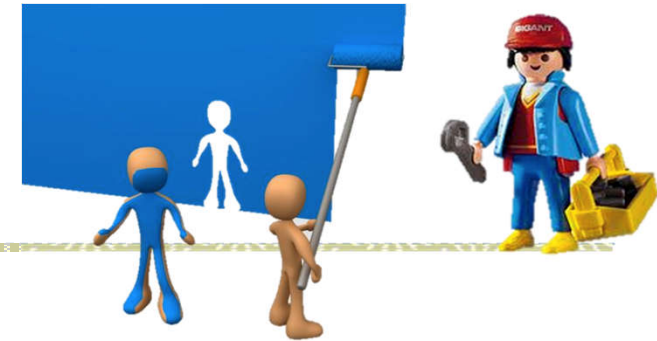


# About customers/clients



- ▶ The request made may be sanctioned by society:
  - ▶ For not being ethical (moral judgment) or
  - ▶ For being illegal (because it violates laws or regulations)
- ▶ The client seeks a professional on the basis of:
  - ▶ The power of expert opinion
    - ▶ Based on the customer's perception of the experience, special skills or knowledge of the professional.
  - ▶ Reference power
    - ▶ Based on the behaviors or personal characteristics of a professional which are admired by the customer or other people who influence the customer.
    - ▶ References we may receive directly from friends, or from news published on a professional and his/her success.
  - ▶ Legitimate power
    - ▶ Legitimate power comes from the authority of your rate and position in the chain of command.
    - ▶ In this case, the state can license certain persons to practice a profession.

# About professionals



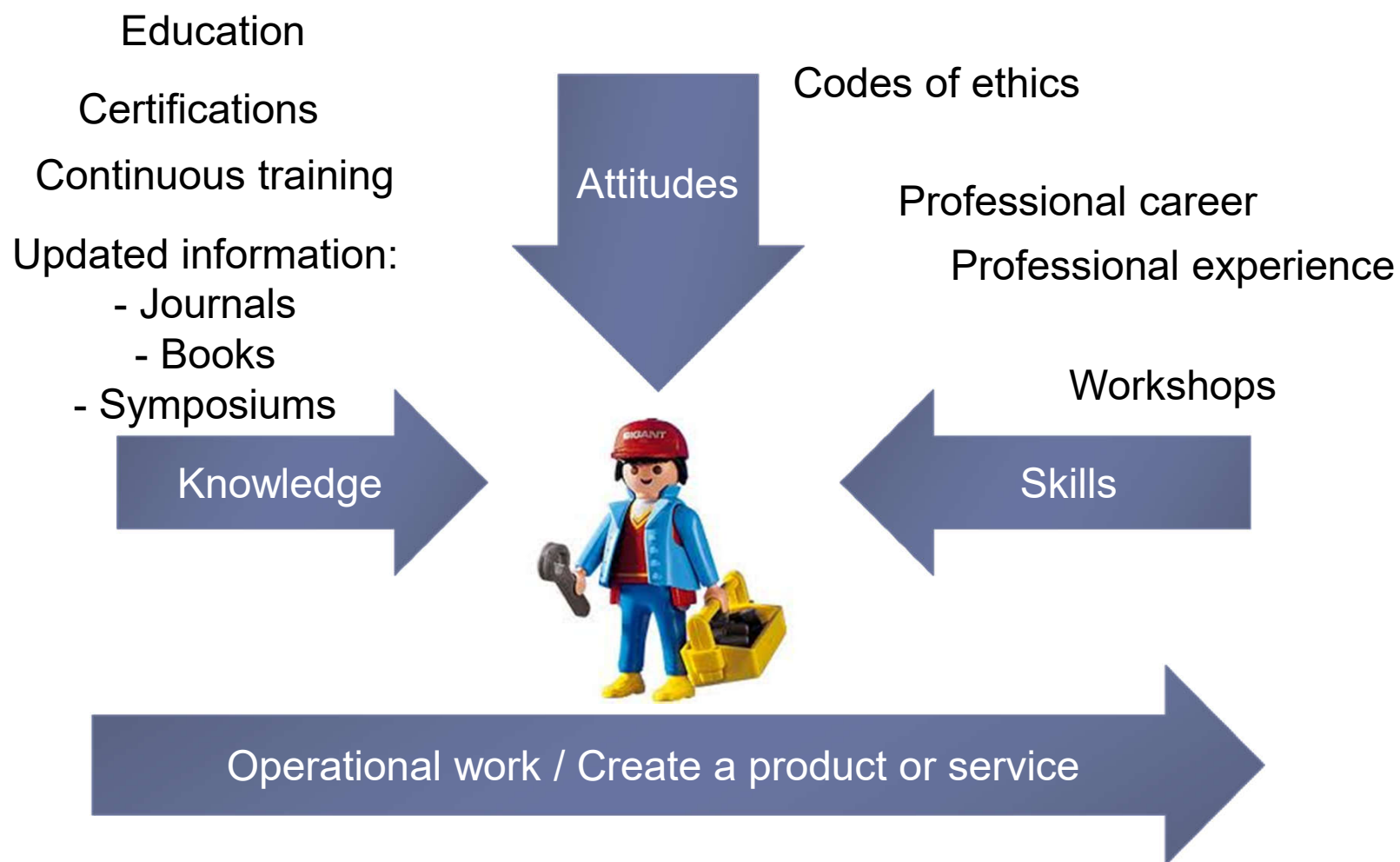
- ▶ They are in charge of the work.
- ▶ They require certain skills to enable them to carry out their work:
  - ▶ Technical skills
    - ▶ They may need specific knowledge, skills or experience.
  - ▶ Social skills
    - ▶ Communication and interpersonal abilities
  - ▶ Decision-making
    - ▶ They manage conceptual models, create and design feasible solutions, choosing the one that maximizes customer satisfaction.
  - ▶ Independence
    - ▶ They act with freedom, otherwise there is no responsibility.

# About professionals



- ▶ They have acquired these skills:
  - ▶ After a training process
  - ▶ Through self learning
  - ▶ In a social context, while working with colleagues
  - ▶ Throughout their “career”
- ▶ If possible, these skills are socially reinforced by:
  - ▶ Regulated studies
  - ▶ State accreditation or accreditation from associations
  - ▶ Without these requirements professional encroachment can occur.
- ▶ **Practicing a profession is no guarantee of professionalism!**

# About the professional



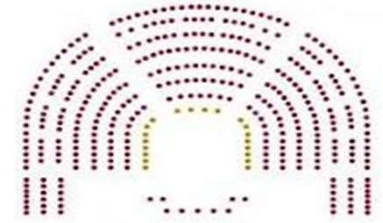


# Society



- ▶ Ensures welfare
  - ▶ Meets the requirements of members
  - ▶ Regulates the actions taken by clients and professionals
- ▶ The State
  - ▶ Protects the public interest
  - ▶ Legislates and enforces laws
- ▶ There are different types of associations
  - ▶ Professional associations
    - ▶ Ensure good practices, training, upgrading and certification of its partners
  - ▶ Business associations
    - ▶ Protect companies involved in the provision of certain goods or services
  - ▶ Users associations
    - ▶ Ensure customer and stakeholder satisfaction





# The State and the profession

- ▶ Some professions are regulated because of their societal impact, and you can't practice them without a license.
  - ▶ Examples
    - ▶ Medicine, law, architecture, ...
    - ▶ Food handler, electrical installer, ambulance driver, ...
  - ▶ They are regulated by law, which now clearly defines the following:
    - ▶ The accreditation process: degree, state exams or association membership
    - ▶ Clarifying when acting illegally, negligently, ...
      - There are situations where civil liability insurance is mandatory.
      - In future chapters we will clarify these concepts.



# Professional associations



- ▶ They represent the professional interests of their members.
- ▶ They watch over their training:
  - ▶ They guarantee knowledge (degree, experience, ...).
  - ▶ Levels of certification and specific skills:
    - ▶ Certificates which distinguish their own members from other people practicing the profession
  - ▶ Support for continuous training:
    - ▶ Courses, conferences, ...
  - ▶ Encourage interactions between professionals:
    - ▶ Panel discussions, book presentations, award ceremonies, ...
- ▶ They lend support to the social vision of the profession:
  - ▶ Collaboration in social events
  - ▶ Promotion and enforcement of their “codes of ethics”
  - ▶ Punishment and expulsion of members who do not act professionally
- ▶ Examples: official associations, fishermen's associations, ...

# Business associations



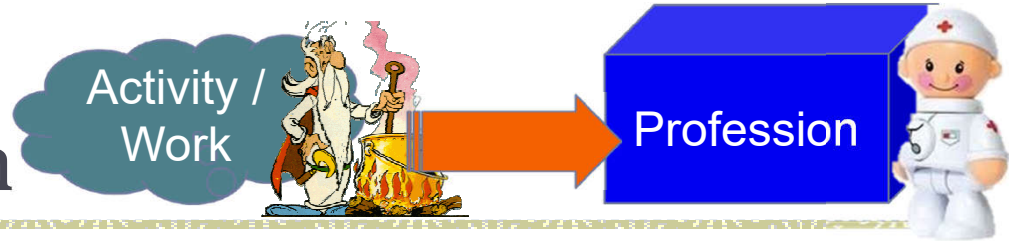
- ▶ Business associations that provide a particular good or service to society
- ▶ They may provide:
  - ▶ Advantages for society such as:
    - ▶ Promoting the use of their “products”
    - ▶ Conducting training activities
    - ▶ Demonstrating the benefits of their “products”
    - ▶ Example: “Valencia historic centre merchants association”
  - ▶ Disadvantages for society such as:
    - ▶ Minimizing any information on disappointing cases
    - ▶ Lobbying: act of attempting to influence decisions made by officials in the government
    - ▶ Promoting an organized oligopoly market
    - ▶ Example: Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)

# Users associations / Stakeholders



- ▶ These associations are sometimes non-profit.
  - ▶ They promote the use and enjoyment of specific products or services:
    - ▶ Provide user training
    - ▶ Promote public events to develop and disseminate knowledge and information for the benefit of its partners
    - ▶ Example: “Internet Users Associations”
  - ▶ They defend user rights:
    - ▶ From businesses, associations and professionals related to the “product”
    - ▶ Operate in coordination with public institutions, bringing together the specific interests of its members
    - ▶ Example: FACUA-Consumers in Action

# Professionalisation



- ▶ Social process by which any occupation transforms itself into a true “profession of the highest integrity and competence”
- ▶ This process tends to involve establishing:
  - ▶ Acceptable qualifications and a professional body
  - ▶ Some degree of demarcation between qualified and unqualified amateurs
- ▶ At some point:
  - ▶ Individuals have demanded recognition and social status according to their activities.
  - ▶ The state has regulated licenses and responsibilities to be assumed by those performing these activities.
  - ▶ This has led to the professionalisation of the activity.
- ▶ Example: Medicine (druid, barber, shaman → doctor)

# Questions to answer related to the professionalisation of an activity



- ▶ At the individual level
  - ▶ Skills required at each professional level
    - ▶ What does it mean to be professional in ...?
    - ▶ How do professionals in ... work?
    - ▶ What are the roles carried out?
    - ▶ Which knowledge and skills are required?
    - ▶ What are the procedures attempted by these professionals?
    - ▶ What are best practices?
  - ▶ By transcending our current actions
    - ▶ How can they contribute to career advancement?
    - ▶ How can they ensure that future generations benefit from their experience and knowledge?
- ▶ At the social level
  - ▶ How can you publicly describe what a professional can do for you?
  - ▶ How can this profession gain credibility, respect and a good reputation?
  - ▶ How do people know they are dealing with a competent professional?

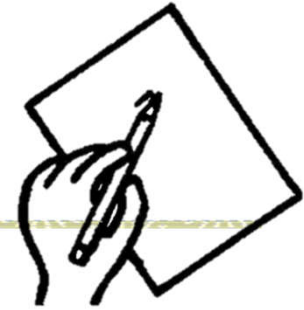
## Exercise: New professions

- ▶ Discuss the concept of new professions
  - ▶ What is meant by...?
    - ▶ Examples
  - ▶ A person may self-define as an “astronaut”
    - ▶ Since when?
    - ▶ Can anyone be an astronaut?
    - ▶ Who regulates it?
  - ▶ Is there a professional degree for becoming an astronaut?
    - What would you study?
    - What would be required?
    - Who regulates it?





## Exercise: Professionalism isolated



- ▶ Today
  - ▶ Do national accreditations make sense?
  - ▶ Which way for transnational accreditations?
  - ▶ Does it make sense that two states regulate the same profession in different ways?
  - ▶ What happens to the transnational worker?
  - ▶ Give examples of corporations that need the universality of accreditations.



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- A large, dense stack of books, including titles like 'BARTOLOME BENNASSAR', 'Régiment de l'armée', and 'CHRONIQUE FAUCONNET'. The books are of various sizes and colors, creating a textured, layered appearance.