

By Jean-Pierre Chalifoux, Eng.

When one’s title is at risk...

Those who hold the title of engineer know all too well the amount of effort it takes to achieve it, and with reason... The title represents the engineer’s brand image and constitutes a reference as well as a guarantee in Québec’s society for work professionally done. For these reasons, its use is regulated, which means that the word “engineer” and the letters that compose it cannot be placed anywhere or anyhow. How well do you know these regulations?

A TITLE “SET IN STONE”

The **professional title** can only be used by those individuals who are duly registered members of the Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec (hereafter referred to as “the Ordre”). It is placed after one’s name and can be written in either one of the following forms (beware of spelling and punctuation):

	In French	In English
In its long form	Abc Ghijklm, ingénieur	Abc Ghijklm, Engineer
In its abbreviated form	Abc Ghijklm, ing.	Abc Ghijklm, Eng.

It should be noted that this title corresponds to the permit delivered by the Ordre; the way it should be written is therefore invariable.

The professional title cannot be qualified as “senior”, “professional”, “mechanical”, “holder”, etc. Only junior engineers (formerly known as engineers-in-training) may and must include the adjective which indicates that their permit comprises certain restrictions relating to their practice.

	In French	In English
In its long form	Zy Wu, ingénieur junior	Zy Wu, Junior Engineer
In its abbreviated form	Zy Wu, ing. jr	Zy Wu, Jr. Eng.

FUNCTION TITLE AND ACADEMIC DEGREE

One’s **function title** allows for greater flexibility. An engineer can indicate his or her field of practice. For example, one could read, under an engineer’s name:

- Chemical Engineer, transformation processes
- Mechanical Engineer, commercial buildings division
- Software Engineer
- Aeronautics Designer
- Engineering Manager

Note: When one’s function title includes the term “engineer”, the individual in question must actually be an engineer and a registered member of the Ordre. In other words, an undergraduate engineering student, a candidate with the Ordre and a junior engineer cannot lead others to believe that they are engineers via their function title.

When one’s function title includes the term “engineer”, the individual in question must actually be an engineer and a registered member of the Ordre.

An **academic degree** other than the degree required to become a member of the Ordre (usually B. Eng.) can be added following one’s professional title. Similarly, it is possible to include other professional titles, if any. Here are a few correct examples:
Ef Jklmno, Jr. Eng., M. Eng.
Ef Jklmno, Engineer, MBA
Ef Jklmno, Engineer and lawyer

PROJECTS OR CLIENTS OUTSIDE QUÉBEC?

Elsewhere in Canada, “P.Eng.” for Professionnal Engineer is the equivalent of the English reference “Eng.”, and “EIT” for Engineer-in-Training refers to “Jr. Eng.”.

It bears reminding that in order to practice engineering in another province, a Québec engineer must obtain a permit or authorization from the Canadian association in that jurisdiction.

SPECIALIST AND DOCTOR, REGULATED TITLES AS WELL

Similarly, the use of “specialist” and “Doctor” titles is also strictly regulated pursuant to sections 58 and 58.1 of the Professional Code.

As such, members of the Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec must ban the use of the word “specialist” in all professional situations. In order to convey a level of expertise in a given field of engineering, one should favour the use of adequate terminology in the function title. The term “expert” is appropriate if it can be supported by one’s qualifications.

An engineer or a junior engineer who holds a doctorate degree in engineering or in a related academic discipline can emphasize this degree without placing “Dr” before one’s name. Here are a few correct examples:

- Ugh Bnrto, Eng., Doctor in computer science
- Ugh Bnrto, Eng., Ph. D.
- Ugh Bnrto, Eng., Dr in biomedical engineering

The promotion of engineering is accomplished through small simple steps. The proper use of its title is one that is expected of each member of the Ordre.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK RELATING TO THE ENGINEER'S TITLE

Professional Code, section 32

No person shall claim in any manner to be an [...], engineer, [...], or use one of the above titles or any other title or abbreviation which may lead to the belief that he is one, or initials which may lead to the belief that he is one, or engage in a professional activity reserved to the members of a professional order, claim to have the right to do so or act in such a way as to lead to the belief that he is authorized to do so, unless he holds a valid, appropriate permit and is entered on the roll of the order empowered to issue the permit, unless it is allowed by law.

The prohibition [...] extends to the use of such titles, abbreviations and initials in a feminine form.

Engineers Act, section 22

Any person not a member in good standing of the Order who:

[...]

2° assumes the title of engineer alone or qualified, or makes use of any abbreviation of such title, or of any name, title or designation which might lead to the belief that he is an engineer or a member of the Order,

3° advertises himself as such,

4° acts in such a manner as to lead to the belief that he is authorized to fulfil the office of or to act as an engineer,

5° authenticates by means of a seal, signature or initials a document relating to the practice of the engineering profession, [...]

is guilty of an offence and is liable to the penalties provided in section 188 of the Professional Code (chapter C-26).

Regulation respecting other terms and conditions for the issuance of permits by the Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec, section 3

Provided that they are entered on the roll, holders of a junior engineer's permit may use the title of "Junior Engineer" in English or "ingénieur junior" in French.

They may use the abbreviation "Jr. Eng." in English or "ing. jr" in French

They may not in any way:

1° claim to be an engineer;

2° use the title of "engineer" or its abbreviation "Eng." without it being preceded by the word "Junior" or its abbreviation "Jr.", or use a title, designation, abbreviation or initials which could imply that they are engineers ;

3° allow themselves to be advertised or designated by the title "Engineer" or its abbreviation "Eng." without it being preceded by the word "Junior" or its abbreviation "Jr.", or by a title, abbreviation or initials which could imply that they are engineers.