

# Career in Energy Management

**The Energy Managers Association aims to encourage and enable more professionals to enter the world of energy management and environmental roles. Being an energy manager may not seem like the most obvious career for many. The EMA has taken on a challenge of changing the perception of energy management, by raising the sector's profile and sharing its members' – leading energy managers – insights into their career progress and achievements.**

**In this issue, we have asked Matteo Deidda, Networks Energy Manager at Vodafone about his career in energy management.**



## What made you choose energy management as a career?

My interest in energy and sustainability started in the early years of my academic studies in Civil Engineering. At that time, I started to read several online journals, newsletters and forums about sustainable building techniques and energy efficiency in facilities management.

My interest then shifted into the wider sustainability subject matter when I attended my University seminars, and I selected optional modules related to sustainable economic development.

The lightbulb moment came when I decided to extend my Higher Education journey by reading for an MSc in Renewable Energies. This is when I knew deep down that my future career path would be in energy.

When I joined Sainsbury's as an Energy Analyst, I then realised how broad the energy industry is and how diverse an energy management role could be.

## What does your role at your organisation entail?

As many other Energy Managers will probably tell you, no two days are the same in this job. Especially in an organisation like Vodafone that have strong ambitions to achieve their energy and carbon reduction targets in a meaningful way.

At the moment, I am working on some onsite renewable energy initiatives, offsite PPAs and energy efficiency projects.

These will be key initiatives to achieve the 2025 targets of only consuming renewable electricity and half the business carbon emissions versus 2017 baseline.

We have also launched a new monitoring and targeting platform, and I am working to improve the accuracy of the system. Data and analytics play an integral part in our energy management strategy and there is an emphasis on delivering reliable data that the business and key stakeholders can trust.

I also spend a lot of time promoting energy initiatives internally, this may sound like a "nice to have", but the reality is that you can have the best energy management strategy in the world, but if you cannot communicate it properly by engaging peers and the leadership board, you will struggle to drive change.

## What is the most exciting part of your job?

There are two aspects of being an Energy Manager that I find very exciting:

- The continuous innovation. The speed at which new solutions and disruptive technologies are researched, developed and implemented in mass is second to none. Wind and solar power are an example of this trend, as they developed from niche solutions into an integral part of the global electricity generation mix in just over a decade. Most recently, the shift to smart solutions and the integration of IoT, big data, machine learning and artificial intelligence is driving a new revolution in the energy management sector.
- The variety. The continuous technology innovation, together with an ever-changing policy and market landscape, makes this job a continuous learning experience. There is always a new supplier, research or application that leads into a new journey of discovery.

## What has been your biggest achievement in the past year?

I have organised the first Technology, Media and Telecom (TMT) Energy Forum by bringing together some of the leading organisations in this sector.

We met for the first time in October and the feedback from attendants was very positive and endorsing of the forum.

Energy Managers can sometimes feel "lonely" as they work to drive change in an organisation where usually energy isn't the core business. Building a network with peers from other organisations that face the same challenges is really important.

Similar consumer forums already exists in other sectors, like retail for example, and are a great opportunity to share knowledge, challenges and drive innovation with peers.

The TMT forum will meet again in February and hopefully this will become a recurring event in the future.

### What was the most exciting project that you worked on and why?

When I joined Sainsbury's back in 2013, we designed and launched a new energy behavioural change programme. The idea was to define simple actions that 100,000+ colleagues could implement across the business to reduce energy consumption on areas such as cooling, baking and lighting.

Helping people changing their habits is one of the most difficult things to do, but also one of the most rewarding when achieved.

Over the next 5 years, the programme developed from the initial concept to usual business practice, even being included in new employee induction packs.

It was fascinating to be involved in such a large-scale programme and to hear from colleagues that I have never met before talking about energy, asking questions and coming up with great ideas to reduce the company's energy consumption.

Some of the Store Managers were so passionate about the programme that four of them joined the Energy Team on a temporary role. They delivered a nation-wide energy roadshow, engaging face to face with every Store Manager in the country (over 1,200) and sharing best practise, ideas and collecting feedback.

### What is the most frustrating part of your job?

Changes in policy and regulations are needed as the energy industry evolves to deliver a clean, smart and flexible system to meet societal and market demand.

However, I find it frustrating when regulatory changes disregard the impact on existing investment on things like renewable energy, energy efficiency and other energy management projects.

ENERGY MANAGERS ASSOCIATION

## EMA RECOGNISED ENERGY MANAGER

*Rewarding Knowledge and Skills*

*Does the EMA Recognised Energy Manager status highlight your credentials as an energy manager?*



Charlie Cox

"It is nice to have the official endorsement of the EMA, and I am sure that it will increase my profile both inside and outside of UHNM. My natural position is to think that it shouldn't matter what qualifications or recognition someone has, as long as they do a good job. However, in reality it is essential for an energy manager to be seen as credible by a broad spectrum of colleagues, in order to garner support for the important work that they do."



Dewi Day

"I believe that an energy management training programme like this is an important aspect of my career development and has helped broaden my skillset. I have learnt a great deal from the modules that I completed as part of this programme as well as other professional training courses. Shortly after gaining the EMA Recognised Energy Manager status, I was recognised as a star performer in my department at QinetiQ. I also believe that having a recognised energy management qualification can strengthen a CV and help future career progression."



Joel Kirby

"Absolutely, and this is one of the main reasons I wanted to become a Recognised Energy Manager. I would like to think that this also helps me to demonstrate competency to key members of staff within my workplace. It has not been long since I got the status, but it has helped from a confidence point of view, if nothing else, knowing that your knowledge has been validated and that you do know what you are talking about."

THE EMA RECOGNISED ENERGY MANAGERS  
SUCCESSFULLY DEMONSTRATED THE KNOWLEDGE AND  
SKILLS IN ENERGY MANAGEMENT.



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This uncertainty and lack of stability have a negative impact on the ability of Energy Managers to build strong business cases and get access to CAPEX.

A very recent example is the Targeted Charging Review and the financial implication that it will have on existing and potential onsite renewable generation and storage demand side response projects.

**If you had the opportunity to change one thing that would make your job easier, what would you change?**

Vodafone has a very large portfolio in terms of number of sites. The vast majority of them are radio base stations, they are small sites from an energy consumption perspective, and they are scattered around the country, they are unmanned, difficult to access and often on a Non Half Hourly supply with no AMR connectivity.

Having access to granular and reliable energy consumption data for these sites would be one thing that would make my job easier. This is something that we are currently working on, but the process is long and resource consuming.

I also think investing time and effort in developing good quality and reliable data feeds, together with the development of a smart reporting and analytics tool is essential for a successful energy management strategy.

**If you could recommend three things to have success as an energy manager, what would you recommend?**

**Keep it simple** – energy can be a very complex topic, involving different technologies, policies and acronyms. Especially when working as an Energy Manager on the consumer side, for organisation where energy isn't the core business, it is essential to be able to simplify the concepts to engage colleagues and senior executives, pitch the business cases and get the business on board.

**Engage the business** – energy is a cross functional topic in large organisations that often involves Finance, Corporate Responsibility, Procurement, Operational, Government Affairs, FM and more. As an Energy Manager, you need to involve colleagues from different parts of the organisation by tailoring the message so it is meaningful to the audience. Doing so will make it much easier to deliver projects and drive change when the time comes.

**You don't need to know everything** – as an Energy Manager you may have a very broad remit that sometimes involves procurement, technology, policy, data analysis and behavioural change. You don't need to be an industry expert on every part of energy management, but you need to be able to rely on your supply chain, colleagues and peers to drive the right outcome. See it as an orchestra director, you need to know the music and be able to make all the instruments play together, but you don't necessarily need to know how to play all of them.



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### What advice would you give to someone looking to become an energy manager?

My personal advice to anyone considering becoming an Energy Manager is to show their passion and interest and to share it with others.

As Energy Managers, we come from a more diverse background. Some of us used to work in HR, FM or as Store Managers but what we all have in common is a strong passion and curiosity for energy, and a willingness to share this interest with our colleagues.

The most successful Energy and Sustainability professionals are those who can drive change in the organisation where they operate by making energy management visible, relevant and important.

You can learn most of the technical aspects on the job, so what makes a real difference is your attitude and personality. I also think that building a network of peers and suppliers across the industry is essential. The EMA or the Energy Institute offer great platforms for young professionals to build their professional networks.

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### What is the most absurd statement that you have heard in your job?

I sometimes come across service and technology providers who present their product claiming an unrealistic opportunity to reduce CO2 emissions or energy consumption.

When numbers look too good to be true, they are usually exaggerated or untrue. Of course, this is not always the case and there are initiatives that deliver large energy and carbon savings, but it is important to look at the science behind these technologies and understand how the result can be measured and verified properly.

Some of these technology providers are cyclical and suppliers with different names but same product come and go.

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### What are your long-term motivations in the position?

As I mentioned before, two things that I really enjoy in this industry are the variety and the speed of change.

Net zero carbon commitment, radical changes to the distribution and transmission physical infrastructure, development of EV market, new smart technologies, and pressure from public opinion to climate change action.

These are only some of the changes and challenges that our society will face in the future, and they all have something in common, they're all related to the way that we consume and generate energy.

I am really curious and excited to see what the future of energy will look like, and this passion for change and innovation is also my main motivation in this role.

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### How do you think the role of an energy manager will change in the future?

I believe that the role of Energy Managers will become increasingly important as public bodies and private organisations are under public scrutiny to set and achieve ambitious carbon reduction targets.

The application of smart connectivity and analytics solutions will certainly have a large impact on our day to day job, and we will have to learn about technologies and techniques that we may not be familiar with such as IoT, machine learning, big data and AI. This also means that we will have to engage with teams, colleagues and suppliers who we haven't met before, and we will have to get used to new ways of working that in the past have been closer to software development than energy projects.

Finally, I believe the next few decades will see radical changes in the carbon and energy policy landscape, hence Energy Managers will need to be aware and be able to navigate and influence new regulations.



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