^{by} THE ENERGY MANAGERS ASSOCIATION

Career in Energy Management





What made you choose energy management as a career?

I have always had an interest in the environment, and I didn't see myself working in an office all the time so when I left school, I picked a degree which was in something I was interested in rather than a specific career path. Geography was a good choice as it strengthened my interest in people and the planet, and how the two interact. It also allowed for a good mix between indoor and outdoor working. I was lucky enough to research water management in Saharan countries during my final year at University, which really sparked my interest in resource scarcity. From this, my

first real job was dealing with water management for a company with a huge property portfolio. It just so happened that the water and energy management functions were part of the same team, so when I started to get involved with energy savings at the same time as water ones, I became much more aware of how much influence energy had on the workings of a company, and the importance to ensure the consumption of energy was as low as possible. At the time, this career path offered me a good mix of instant results from energy reductions, and yet still fed my overarching interest in the impact these reductions were having on a global scale.

What does your role at the University of Glasgow entail?

My role within the University is a varied one. It is broken into three main areas. First, legislation and compliance. I manage all energy and carbon legislation and compliance reporting for the University. This includes things like EUETS, CRC and EPCs. The second part is the technical on-site project work. This can vary from BMS system management, LED lighting upgrades to boiler replacements. The third part is around promotion and Smart Campus development. For this part, I look at how to best integrate smart energy systems and equipment into both our new and old properties. A key aspect of this is the importance of ensuring the promotion of what is achieved goes out to the wider

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organisation, so I create reports and press releases for the internal organisation as well as, on occasion, external media outlets.

THE

CAREER

INTERVIEW

What is the most exciting part of your job?

By far the variety and challenge keep the energy manager's job exciting. I have always been a person who loves a challenge and to think through a problem, and this position provides that. Energy management never stands still, there is always something new and interesting to keep you on your toes. Specifically, within the energy management role at the University, the most exciting part has to be the technical project side. The building portfolio means that no expectedly simple project is ever that. Building age/type, experiments and people all play a very large part in how projects develop. It's a very interesting part of the job.

What is your biggest achievement to date?

My biggest achievement to date is the energy refurbishment of a busy hospital campus. The project involved a full LED installation of an entire ward block (including high dependency wards), a full boiler exchange, the installation of a 2MW biomass boiler and CHP engine, as well as other smaller projects such as burlap trolley warm-up time reductions. There were a number of difficulties to overcome with the projects due to patient care and welfare during the works, the building age leading to asbestos issues, as well as ensuring the works did not disrupt the function of the hospital. There were significant savings achieved, as well as financial returns, through the RHI. Overall, the project was a fantastic success.

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

I would have to say that the University developments into 'smart campus' are by far the most exciting and interesting part of energy management I have worked on. By integrating different pieces of equipment into one platform, it allows us to be more intelligent about how we run our buildings, both existing and new. The exciting part about this for the University is that, as well as trying to bring the smart campus concept into our new building projects, it means implementing what we can into buildings that were constructed 150 years ago.

What is the most frustrating part of your job?

A lack of time is by far the most frustrating part of the role. There is a huge workload and it's so varied that it is difficult to do the exciting and new project trials simply due to competing priorities. There is a new wave of exciting technology hitting the market, but like a lot of new technologies these have to be

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> tried and tested to ensure they are the right fit for the University. This is unfortunately the bit of the job which isn't time resourced particularly well as we all tend to fall into the trap of compliance and reporting.

What is the best approach to attract women into energy management sector?

The best approach to enticing more women into the sector is to promote the idea that energy management can be whatever you want it to be. There is a huge scope within the sector so finding something which suits your needs and situation is easy to do. Whether you like technical

engineering, on-site roles or more legislative and reporting based desk roles, Energy Management has something which will suit everyone.

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

Energy Management used to have a reputation that it was a role for engineers

who were looking to slow down into retirement. This is no longer the case. You don't have to be an engineer or a data analyst or a legal expert specifically. You just have to be confident enough to be able to ask







for assistance when things get more technical than your level of expertise. You have to be the type of person who likes to take on new challenges as energy management is full of new ideas, solutions, legislation, equipment and stakeholders, and these change all the time.

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

Myths and legends follow energy management and have done for many years. I have had people tell me that they didn't think we paid for water as it was covered in other bills. I've had people say that when they look directly at light fittings, they are too bright and people who think turning a thermostat up to the maximum temperature heats the room faster.

But by far the most challenging statement was from an older gentleman who headed up an engineering team where I started in energy management. He told me "we don't do things like that here, hen" referring to energy saving and management. It was definitely a surprise being so young and new into the job, but I think it was a good wakeup call, which showed me that to make the energy management function worthwhile, people had to not only understand what it meant but had to buy into the idea. A valuable lesson which stays with me to this day.

What are your long-term motivations?

Long term motivations for me are based around a development of the sector. I am focused on driving energy consumption down, whether this be in this organisation through a technical role or perhaps in a lecturing capacity, whereby I teach younger generations the value of what the energy management field is all about.



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