

## INTREPID PATHWAYS—GILLIAN HAMSON

### **PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND**

#### **Formal qualifications**

BA (History)/BSc. (Hons) (Geology), University of Melbourne.

#### **Current professional role & responsibilities**

I am currently working as a Development Geologist on the Enfield Oil Field (operated by Woodside). My current role is primarily planning new horizontal oil production wells and infill opportunities for the field. On a broader scale, my job involves integrating a variety of subsurface data (e.g. wells, 3D and 4D seismic, production data) in order to model the subsurface so as to identify opportunities to improve oil recovery.



On a day to day basis my role has a strong emphasis on working as part of a multi-disciplinary team. In planning wells there is a lot of liaison necessary between myself and the drilling and completions engineers, geomechanics experts, geomatics and the subsurface team. When building static models, I gather data from the geophysicist, petrophysicist, biostratigrapher and other specialists to create a realisation of the subsurface, I then liaise with the reservoir engineer on how the static model performs in the dynamic domain.

#### **Current employer - type**

Large Oil and Gas E & P company

#### **Overview of career in the industry**

I began my career at Woodside in 2005 as a graduate straight out of university, and have been here ever since. I did not focus on soft rock/oil and gas geology at university so I pretty much knew nothing about the industry when I joined it. In my 5 years in the industry so far, I have worked on (among other things), seismic interpretation in Sierra Leone, core logging for the Pluto & Goodwyn fields, seismically-constrained reservoir modelling in Mauritania, and well planning and detailed static modelling for the Calliance and Brecknock fields as part of the Browse LNG Development.

### **EXPERIENCES WORKING IN THE RESOURCES SECTOR**

#### **Was working in the resources industry what you expected it would be when you were studying/training?**

I had no expectations, because I hadn't previously been exposed to the industry at all! (I was living in Melbourne prior to moving to Perth, and my university did not have a focus on soft rock/Oil and Gas). It has been a pleasant surprise on the whole.

**What is the single most risky step you have ever taken your career? Did you find it paid off? Is there anything you would have done differently?**

The biggest risk I have taken was accepting my first job and moving to Perth with no idea what I was getting myself into! I had the option of mining and government jobs as well so I hoped I had made the right decision. I have no regrets!

**What would you say have been the most significant 'step changes' in your career pathway, and how have you adapted to these?**

I have recently moved from working on a large LNG project in the development phase (where I was one of many geologists) to a producing oil team where I am the only geologist. It is early days but I feel I am adapting well and the main change is having to be very proactive and persistent and get things moving myself rather rely on other people take that role.

**If you undertook any additional formal study whilst in the industry, did you find it useful in progressing your career?**

I have just completed a Graduate Certificate in Business (Energy) at Curtin University. It taught me a lot about the way businesses and the industry works. It is hard to say whether this has translated directly into progressing my career, however I do feel more confident in my job and am now more open to future non-technical opportunities.

**What have you found most rewarding about the industry and what would you most like to get out of your career in resources in the future?**

The most rewarding thing is the variety of the work (and the fact that most of it is really interesting). It is good to have your ideas and then get feedback about whether you are on the right track.

Also it is great to be part of a team that works really well together, and I find that you get to learn a lot from your colleagues while solving various problems together.

As for the future, I would like to be exposed to different aspects of the industry (both technical and non-technical) – I am only at the beginning and still have a lot to learn.

**WORKING LIFESTYLE**

**What are your current work/accommodation arrangements?**

Capital city based (with limited travel)

**Do you have a preference for any particular arrangement? What have your experiences with different types of arrangements been like?**

I have only worked in Perth and expect I will continue to only work in cities while in the role of an Oil and Gas geologist.

**What changes or compromises have you had to make in order to balance family or other responsibilities or interests with a career in the industry? Have you found the right balance for you?**

I don't have a family so it is relatively easy to have a good work-life balance. However, that said, taking on part-time study while working full time was more difficult than I expected- I had a lot less personal time especially as I was trying to keep up my fitness and renovate a house at the same time. In hindsight I probably tried to do too much with my limited time during this period.

**Has your employer been open to negotiating changes to your role or roster to accommodate non-work interests or responsibilities?**

I buy extra annual leave (2 weeks extra, so 6 weeks in total), which was easy to have approved.

### **BEING FEMALE IN THE INDUSTRY**

**What challenges have you experienced by virtue of working in an industry that is predominantly male? Do you feel you have had to adapt to 'fit' the industry?**

I have never had any problems or issues whatsoever with being one of only a few females in my team. I don't feel I have had to adapt or change my behaviour in any way to "fit in". I have probably become a bit more confident and willing to speak up while working in a predominantly male environment than I might have otherwise.