

## INTREPID PATHWAYS—LYNN OLSEN

### PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

#### **Formal qualifications that led you to a career in the industry**

BSc(Geology)

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

Principal Consultant - Applied Geosciences. As a Principal Consultant I am responsible for managing projects to ensure that all work is carried out to a high technical quality. Principal Consultants are expected to maintain an active industry network and contribute to bringing consulting work into the group.



My day to day activities include: Technical work in the resource estimation and audit areas on projects in Australia and overseas; developing and presenting training courses to industry on resource estimation and related topics; technical mentoring to clients; internal training and mentoring to junior staff; managing projects including budgeting, client liaison and technical review and internal business improvement projects to improve the quality and effectiveness of the company.

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

Mining Consultancy

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

I spent 8 years working as a mine geologist and resource geologist on a fly in fly out roster in various gold and copper mines in Western Australia. Following this I have worked for consulting companies based in Perth. During this time I have worked on most of the hard rock commodities and become extensively involved in training and mentoring.

### EXPERIENCES WORKING IN THE RESOURCES SECTOR

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

Not at all. I had never been on a mine site prior to university and had no idea what I was getting into. I also had no plans for getting into geostatistics when studying geology. I had some idealised view of wandering around looking at volcanoes and fossils.

**If at any time you left the industry and came back, why did you leave, how long were you gone for and what motivated you to return?**

I took 4 months off on maternity leave before leaving my husband at home and returning to work. My motivation was not wishing to take a break in my career.

**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?**

I applied for the job at Snowden while at a reasonably junior level of experience even though the advertisement was for a highly experienced consultant. I have found that sometimes you have to put yourself forward to get anywhere. This is not an area that most women find easy.

**Have you ever been in a supervisory or senior management position? If so, what are the pros and cons of being in such a role?**

As a Principal Consultant I am in a technical role but do manage other consultants when working on larger projects. I find this is an area where people are often not provided enough training.

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

Yes, I have carried out a postgraduate certificate in geostatistics. While this was useful I have found that most of my learning has come through working and experience. Developing courses and training others is also a great way to really learn a topic.

**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?**

I have enjoyed the opportunity to work on different projects around the world and on different commodities.

### **WORKING LIFESTYLE**

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

Capital city based (with limited travel)

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

I enjoyed FIFO when I was younger but did not want to continue with a family as I found it hard to maintain relationships. My current role varies in the amount of travel but is generally 3 to 4 trips a year of less than 2 weeks at a time which is a good amount.

**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?**

My family has dropped to one income as we wanted one of us to be at home with our daughter. I work full time which I do enjoy, although at times I feel like I am missing out.

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

Yes, Snowden is fairly flexible with working arrangements. I have the option to work from home when required and have flexible hours.

### **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 found it easy most of the time to work in a male dominated industry. I think that I have become a much more outgoing, confident person due to this.

**Do you feel that you faced any obstacles or discrimination by virtue of your gender in your career and if so, how did you address these issues in order to continue to progress?**

There is still a bit of an old boys club around which makes it harder for women to get to the top.