

Name Jolene Maxwell

WIE National Committee position for Newcastle Division



Education, Experience & Achievements

Academics

2007 – Present
Master of Business Administration
University of Newcastle
Currently undertaking a Master of Business Administration part time.

2002 – 2005
Combined B Engineering (Civil)/B Surveying
University of Newcastle
Completed B Engineering (Civil) with Second Class Honours, 1st Division

2001
B Science (Architecture)
University of Newcastle
Completed the first year of B Science (Architecture) with Distinction Average

Employment

Nov 2005 – Present
Lindsay & Dynan Pty Ltd
Broadmeadow
Structural and civil design engineer for commercial, industrial and residential projects.

Nov 2004 – Nov 2005
GHD Pty Ltd
Newcastle
Undergraduate Engineer

What led you to choose Engineering as a career?

I always had a passion for buildings so I began studying Architecture at Uni when I finished my HSC. After a year of Architecture I realised I was more interested in the building's behaviour rather than how it looked so I moved on to civil engineering and never looked back.

What is it about Engineering that inspires you?

The day to day challenges with structures that are never the same, continually challenging your own design, and looking outside the square for better solutions to problems.

What has been the high point in your career to date?

Almost everyday is a high point, the high point just seems to keep getting taller.

Throughout my short career, my experiences have included being affiliated with turning on the first Coal Handling Preparation Plant in the Hunter Valley, through to Project Managing high profile jobs such as the Newcastle Airport Expansions. Gradually being given greater responsibility and input into projects such as these has meant that the bar is continually being raised and I'm sure it's not going to stop.

What has been your biggest challenge so far and how have you solved it?

Winning the trust of some very important and challenging clients after losing a colleague. It was a slow process but I got there.

How have you managed your work and family commitments?

I haven't had the pleasure of raising a family as yet.

Do you have any advice for women who are considering engineering as a career, or for those who are already Engineers?

I cannot stress enough how great a career in engineering is. In my field of civil engineering, it is so diverse; I can be designing a mining structure for the coal industry one day to determining the stormwater system for an aged car facility the next, to carrying out inspections on site.

You will continue to learn throughout your career; my boss has been in the industry for many years and says he is still learning. Things change so you need to adapt.

You are not limited by being female in engineering; "you can bang the table just as hard as the guy next to you", that's all it takes.

You don't need to change your personality to "fit in with the boys" either.

"Honey attracts the bees", being yourself will get you further.

You may have some hurdles that you think the boys don't get, e.g. tough clients not trusting you as much because of gender.

Sticking with your beliefs, being honest and not giving up will make you better and stronger in the long run.