



Jane K.G. Kristiansen

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What role do you play in the gas-fuelled shipping sector?

My current work-life mission at ECONNECT Energy is to enable our clients to adopt cleaner fuels through our smart marine infrastructure technologies for energy transfer. Traditional industries are plagued with conservatism, so I am committed to implementing innovative solutions to support our global client base in their transition to a more sustainable future. Our jetty-less solutions are highly adaptable to market trends, and LNG bunkering is one of many applications we aim to realise with our clients.

How did you arrive at this role? Was it your intention to join this industry?

I have always had a fascination for technology, especially big machines. Growing up I heard many stories about my great uncle Ashton who had sailed to Antarctica to build Britain's first permanent presence at Port Lockroy in 1944. Pretty inspirational! Since submitting my thesis in aircraft design over 20 years ago, I found my way to the oceans through 16 years in the upstream, midstream, and downstream sectors. I then jumped at the chance to work with smart marine solutions at ECONNECT Energy, and finally have direct access to maritime professionals who are just as eager as myself to enable a sustainable energy value chain.

What value do you see in the WiGS initiative? What would you like to see from the WiGS initiative to help progress females in the industry? What do you think can we do to help?

WiGS can go a long way to inspire females working in the industry, by providing guidance and an open door to women who want to follow their passion and transition to the maritime industry, bringing with them a wealth of expertise from other sectors. I am encouraged by the WiGS network and convinced that great business ideas can be generated by such a diverse and talented group of women investing in positive change for the industry. Networking events are key to building bridges, and inviting speakers to share their experiences, successes and failures is a good way to build camaraderie.

How have you or your organisation worked with SGMF concerning the safe and sustainable use of gas as a marine fuel?

SGMF is a trustworthy name with a strong membership comprising leading companies in the maritime industry. Our organisation aims to comply with SGMF's best practices and functional requirements for the design and operation of our jetty-less infrastructure solutions. We are currently participating in SGMF's group work, looking into Ammonia as a future marine fuel. It will be imperative that SGMF, regulators and policy makers work effectively to formulate a framework to enable adoption of future marine fuels, just as they have done for LNG.

How do you feel this sector has embraced the talent and value of women?

Working in a male-dominated industry has its challenges but is also a very enriching experience. I wouldn't change it for the world! I firmly believe one should be measured on merit rather than gender; everyone has the potential to succeed if they really understand what motivates them and are willing to lead in an inclusive, collaborative and transparent fashion. I still think shipping struggles to accept outsiders, especially women, but this is changing rapidly due to a greater focus on ESG principles, and thanks to the example set by women who have been highly successful in this sector.

What excites you or interests you most about this industry and how does this motivate you?

We are undergoing an energy revolution which needs smart and sustainable solutions. I see LNG as the only large-scale solution today to make a real impact on GHG emissions. While Europe is pushing for carbon neutrality by 2050, developing countries are still in need of reliable energy sources. Combined with new bunkering hubs for small to medium vessels, this could enable regional economies to prosper. The regulatory, political and capital market influences are complex, and being able to encourage energy transition whilst tempering fossil fuel criticism is highly motivating, particularly in the maritime sector.

Continued



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Please share something personal about you / your personal experience / achievements / challenges overcome that the reader may find interesting or inspire the future generation coming into the industry.

I realised I was a T-shaped person late into my career. Very often organisations build teams around a very specific expertise, so having a multi-faceted approach was sometimes misunderstood or disregarded, especially in my younger days as I was not considered senior enough. It's important to dig deep and understand how to use one's skillset and find an environment that can nurture your capabilities and career aspirations.

Was there a significant moment when you felt that being a woman put you at a disadvantage during your career? If so, can you share this?

Too many disadvantages to remember! Some were rather unpleasant; some were rather humorous. Many years ago, I went for a job interview in France with a transportation company, and while I was sitting in the interview, the CEO announced to his deputy that I wouldn't be getting the job as I would most likely run-off with his top engineer (who was male) and the company would end up in ruins. Looking back, I would say that certain career paths were inaccessible due to my gender, in addition to my preference for a collaborative rather than combative management style.

How have you overcome any negative experiences you have encountered during your career? What would be your advice to others?

I have experienced both highs and lows, working with people who define the word hubris and have gone out of their way to suppress my career. One learns and grows from these experiences, and very often it pays to use time to reflect and change your mindset to rise above the injustice and seek out new and more fulfilling career opportunities. You have to believe in yourself and your capabilities: this is more likely to cultivate a successful outcome in the long-term.

The industry is making an effort overall to be more diverse but do you feel that being a female in the industry has offered you any advantages?

Navigating the male-female dichotomy is a skill itself, and only through experience have I become more comfortable with managing the complexities of human behaviour. In a male-dominated industry there have been times when being a female helped to traverse negotiation deadlocks and inject a different perspective into work situations where empathy was needed. It's certainly a proud moment when I can impress a male audience with my technical expertise, and by adding in a dash of humour I would say being a woman has its advantages.

Any words of wisdom and advice for anyone looking to pursue a career in the sector?

Read up: learn about the different product and service offerings

from SGMF's members and keep abreast of the latest initiatives on the decarbonisation front. Uncover and embrace your passion for the maritime industry: knowing what will get you out of bed in the morning is a sure route to success. Lastly, keep your sense of humour intact: bad moments are only temporary!

What would be your top three reasons/selling points to encourage other women to join the maritime world?

Maritime offers a wealth of different career opportunities, and is a sector which will only increase in size and importance as global populations increase. I have met some incredibly smart and knowledgeable maritime individuals, whose seafaring storytelling brighten up the dullest days. The maritime ecosystem cultivates curiosity, innovation, and collaboration: all highly motivating attributes in any career.

What would you like to see the industry do more of to encourage females to seek careers in the marine gas?

Like any other technology-based industry which is trying to attract greater diversity, I feel that demystifying the maritime sector – which can come across as a bit daunting to the outsider – is a great start. We all grow up with preconceptions about different industries and career paths, so the earlier we expose children to the great opportunities in marine gas, the more likely they are to choose to join us.

Who was or is your role model and why?

I've never had a role model and am still looking for one!

