

INTREPID PATHWAYS—KIRSTY LIDDICOAT

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Formal qualifications

I have a Bachelor of Science (honours) in geology, and spent 4 years working with a geologist. I have also obtained a Masters in Mining Engineering.

Current professional role & responsibilities

I am currently the Safety Engineer. My role focus on providing engineering solutions to safety issues, and the main areas of focus are reducing employee exposure to dust and noise.

Current employer

Large, diversified mining company

Overview of career in the industry

I have worked in the mining industry for 6 years, starting as an open cut geologist in New South Wales. I moved from there to exploration in far North Queensland (Weipa) to work on near mine exploration in Cape York. This involved living on a boat while the drilling was undertaken.

From this, I moved to a operations planning engineering role in Iron Ore, undertaking the two week mine scheduling and reporting. From here I have taken a secondment to the safety department for exposure to the legislative and safety side of mining.

EXPERIENCES WORKING IN THE RESOURCES SECTOR

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

The work is much more practical, than the very theoretical side I was taught at university, however I enjoy the hands on side better.

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?

Moving to WA to undertake my first engineering role. I found this was a good move as it has opened up a lot more opportunities to me professionally.

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

I found the mining engineering very useful as there are many more opportunities for young engineers as opposed to geologists. I am also undertaking an MBA, which I am finding useful for project work.

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 find the challenges and satisfactions of seeing them complete the most rewarding, and also the opportunity to mentor new graduates. Long term I would like to move into a senior management role and gain more exposure to different aspects of the mining industry such as marketing and shipping.

WORKING LIFESTYLE

What are your current work/accommodation arrangements?

Regional mining community (FIFO) 9 & 5 roster

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

Currently I like FIFO as I get to live in the city but still work on a mine. I have spent 4 years in mining towns, which I really enjoyed and made many good friends. I believe that you need to do what is right in your life at the time, and that each type of lifestyle has it's upsides and downsides.

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 currently have no family, and moved away from my home state at 21. I have lived in a number of different states, so each time you move for a job, it can be like starting again. I always make a point to take the time to do what I enjoy.

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

I have been very lucky with my roster and roles, in that I have always been able to balance my non-work interests such as travel and sport.

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?

It can very much be a 'boys club' in some areas, so you feel like you have to be better than them to get the same respect. I have been very careful not to become 'one of the boys' all the time, but will still go to the pub and have a drink with them.

On a positive, I feel like there are many growth areas available, such as being confident in who you are and your ability.

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