

## Women in STEM – Speaker Questionnaire

### 1. What is your position title?

Senior Application Engineer

### 2. What precisely do you do? What are the duties/functions/responsibilities of your job?

My role is split between technical sales and project execution of Model Predictive Control solutions. For technical sales, I am responsible for ensuring any new opportunity with a customer is technically feasible. I ensure the scope is clear, that the product can technically solve the customers needs, and to calculate any return on investments. From the scope, I assist in generating proposals and any follow up meetings for any questions the customers may have.

Once the project is won, my responsibility changes and it then becomes my role to execute the project. My involvement is for the full life cycle of the project; functional design and baseline performance, step tests, model development, design testing, site installation, site commissioning and final acceptance. The other component of my role is application support for customers. If they have any questions or there are any issues with the application, then I am contacted and support the customer through this. I also monitor the performance of the application to ensure it is giving the best benefits to the customer.

### 3. To what extent is it what you expected it would be?

This role is exactly what I wanted in this stage of my career and pretty much exactly as expected. There is a great level of trust that the company has in me and I have in the company which means that I can tailor the role into what works for both myself and the company. I get to travel all around Australia and New Zealand.

From very early on in my career, I was fascinated by the number of opportunities for improvement on mining sites. It was always a pleasure to see improvement on throughput, quality and operability that a project can achieve. Even if it is a simple matter of fixing a filter operation, whether it be the code that controls it or the filter cloths it uses. The current role I am in is all about continuous improvement and it is a very satisfying role to know that I am helping customers.



#### 4. What is a typical day like?

I think this is why I enjoy my role so much, there is no typical day. My day can swing from anything from customer meetings (whether it be in person or over skype) discussing the product and scoping out solutions, to troubleshooting why an application isn't working. I really enjoy the variety in my role and seeing all the different sites and companies.

#### 5. What projects have you worked on that have been particularly interesting?

One of the projects that stands out from early on in my career is around gold production. A simple replacement of the type of filter cloth used increased gold recovery by millions of dollars per year.

All of the projects I work on in this role is really interesting as each site is unique, even if the process is very similar.

#### 6. What skills or talents are most essential to be effective in your job?

The most important skill that I have found in my career is good communication skills. Both verbally and written. Having a great network of colleagues, ex colleagues, friends and university friends is a great way of helping your career.

#### 7. Does your work relate to any experiences or studies you had in college?

Interestingly, my current role is more in line with my studies than any of my previous roles over the 14 years I have been working. As I am in the model predictive control space, it is a great combination of chemical engineering and process control (My degree is Chemical Engineering and Mathematics and Computing Science).

#### 8. What was your entry-level job title and functions?

My first ever role was a Graduate Engineer at Olympic Dam. I was in the production metallurgy team for the Smelter. It was my job to help the area metallurgist monitor the plant performance which involved a combination of walking through the plant and taking samples, monitoring lab results, monitoring the operator screens, and talking to the operators. I also was involved in a number of process improvement projects.

#### 9. What kind of hours do you normally work?

The work is quite variable. Being in a sales and execution role, there are times where it is very quiet and I work 37.5hr weeks, and conversely there are times where I work longer hours for a



few weeks or some weekends. These additional hours are generally compensated in time in lieu which is a great way of balancing work and life.

#### 10. What kinds of problems do you deal with?

Once again the nature of my role means that I deal with anything from commercial terms, business strategies, down to why a controller is not running the plant in a stable matter.

#### 11. What do you do if you can't solve a problem on your own?

The company I work for is a global company with a great support network. I enjoy building relationships with my peers and customers, so I use this network to help support me with any questions. It is really important to have a mentor and in every role I have had, I have found someone to assist me in guiding me through my career and my role.

#### 12. What kinds of decisions do you make?

The majority of my decisions are technical oriented. From the technical sales side, I decide what type of application to select, what technology to use, how many hours the project will take, etc. For my project work, it is deciding how to configure the application to achieve the objectives, whether it be improved quality, increased throughput etc.

#### 13. To what extent do you interact with customers/clients?

A significant amount of my time is spent interacting with customers and clients. That is the nature of a sales and support role. For a project, typically a few weeks at a time is spent on the customer sites doing the initial testing and commissioning.

#### 14. Which other departments, functional units, or levels of the hierarchy do you regularly interact with?

Due to the nature of my role, I interact with a broad range of departments and levels in the organization. I also head a STEM outreach team in South Pacific (Australia and New Zealand) which means I interact with marketing, community outreach and philanthropic committees, not just at a local level but at the global level as well.

In my role I interact in the different sales departments, technical support, project engineers in a variety of regions. I interact regularly with the Asia Pacific team and the global team depending on the opportunity and/or project. As my role covers South Pacific, I am in regular contact with people throughout the region in different levels up to the head of this region.



15. How much flexibility do you have in determining how you perform your job?

Our key performance indicators (KPIs) are set at the beginning of each financial year as part of performance reviews. These are set to be in line with the greater business goals. There is flexibility in terms of setting measurements for these goals. There are also personal goals which I set myself and have support of my manager to achieve.

16. Is your work primarily individual or predominately in groups or teams?

My work is a combination of all of the above. As I cover such a large region, success cannot be achieved without collaboration even if there are components I must do myself.

17. What do you like about working in this job?

I find enjoyment in improving systems and processes. Being able to have a measureable impact on the improvement for a business, whether that be in quality, throughput or energy/consumables reduction. I also really enjoy the variety of the role and being exposed to a large aspect of the business.

