

RWE

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#1 ISSUE

Cultivating
confidence

Make your presence felt.
That's very important.

MONICA

Head of Project Delivery, APAC



POWER LOOKS GOOD ON YOU. Monica Liu, Head of Project Delivery APAC, RWE Offshore, Taiwan.

Pick-up trucks, cultural insights and finding the confidence to speak up.

Monica Liu tells us how she continues to forge her own path at RWE.

Meeting her via the magic of Teams before our in-person shoot, I can already sense Monica is a positive force to be reckoned with. She's eager to share advice that helps aspiring women in the energy sector.

Where did you start your journey?

I completed my graduate programme in Civil Engineering at the University of Toronto. After that, I knew I wanted to go into Construction Management.

I began working in oil and gas, before embarking on my journey in renewables.

What were your early challenges?

As a young female Engineer, I had to work extra hard to demonstrate that I knew what I was doing. That I deserved the same respect and treatment as my male colleagues. I had to get used to joining heated discussions, which were common with the rest of the team.



How did you find the confidence to raise your voice?

Honestly, the confidence, I mean there was not enough confidence at the beginning! I had to inject confidence in myself. To behave in a way that made me feel empowered.

Especially when it came to discussions, there were huge cultural differences. At meetings I asked myself, "Are they fighting?". For me, because of my Asian upbringing, these impassioned conversations seemed impolite. But delving deeper, I discovered they were always about business. Actually, colleagues in the midst of heated debates would seamlessly transition to sharing beers after work!

"I had to inject confidence in myself. To behave in a way that made me feel empowered."

That observation became a very valuable lesson. Even today, I feel I'm a really good observer. It means I get another perspective on situations before responding to them.

How do you continue to assert yourself?

There's a powerful talk by Amy Cubby: "Your Body Language May Shape Who

You Are" – and it's played an important role in my career.

I got promoted to Project Manager in a construction project. At that time, I was in my late 20s and five months pregnant. It was a typical North American company, mainly made up of middle-aged white guys. They also had bigger body sizes. I mean, they were BIG. Me showing up on site as a tiny, young Asian woman!? To them, I was like a new graduate.

That's when Amy's presentation helped me. Your body language changes the way you behave and how you're perceived. If you sit in a meeting with your arms crossed, you look tiny. So, you have to expand yourself.

So, how did you navigate the transition to project manager while pregnant?

I think personal and professional growth accelerates when we're put into uncomfortable situations. Basically, you don't have another choice, you have to forge ahead.

After I got promoted, the construction site was three hours from my home. But I travelled there every week just to attend our weekly meeting. I even drove a powerful pick-up truck.

I can imagine you owning your power in a massive truck.

[Monica laughs]

It was really fun. I enjoyed it.

I was making my presence felt – that was very important. As the team observed my commitment, they acknowledged my competence and authority.

"If you sit in a meeting with your arms crossed, you look tiny. So, you have to expand yourself."



“I want young women facing challenges to know that we have weathered similar experiences. And I want to share my personal journey to inspire and guide them.”



Can you tell us about a pivotal moment in your career?

My turning point was when I assumed larger responsibilities; I realised people were counting on me.

I moved from Toronto to Taipei seven years ago and spearheaded the offshore wind projects for the island. I had to establish a team, overcome cultural barriers, navigate regulations, and manage stakeholders. We started with six and we left with a team of over 85 people from 20 different cultural backgrounds.

How is bridging cultural gaps important in your role at RWE?

We're involved in offshore wind projects across over 30 diverse markets – so it's paramount for success. We do it in lots of different ways. We have cultural sensitivity training, interactive workshops, exchange programs, and even a buddy system.

How do you use cultural insights to make a business impact?

That's actually my new role at RWE. It's something I'm very proud of. We didn't have a role for it previously, but we began to see the supply chain bottleneck in Europe – so we were forced to look at the Asian market. I thought “This is something I could do,” because of my background and experience. So, I pitched the role to our leaders, and they all came on board.

“I see RWE as more than an employer – I see it as a partner in my ongoing journey of growth, self-discovery, and meaningful contributions.”

Tell us about your role as a mentor.

I’ve been a mentor for many in Taiwan, especially female mentees. Because some of the challenges I faced were from being a visible cultural minority, but other issues that seemed significant weren’t as daunting in hindsight.

Part of my job is to create a secure environment, so my team share their thoughts willingly. It’s good to remind myself “What was I thinking when I was that age?”, “What do they need?”.

I want young women facing challenges to know that we have weathered similar experiences. And I want to share my personal journey to inspire and guide them.

How do you help others speak up?

I back them in taking the stage, ensuring their voice is seen and recognised – not just within our company but the broader community. This helps them gain confidence, and it underscores our commitment to diversity.

How did it feel to be named on the Women’s Power list?

The truth is it felt fantastic!

Also, I want to expose some of my vulnerabilities. At the time, I was experiencing a difficult period.

My five-year project had entered a new stage. I had a diminishing sense of visibility, and my voice seemed muted.

And then recognition came at that moment. It was a powerful validation from the industry.

A boost of courage, precisely when I needed it most!

It wasn’t just a professional accolade, but a personal one. I’m a mother of two girls, eight and ten years old. When I moved to Taiwan, they were just one and three. In those years, I sacrificed a lot. I was always travelling, always working and I didn’t spend much time with my family. But I wanted to be their role model – so that has been a driving force in my career. Being listed provided the tangible evidence that staying true to my values leads to impactful recognition.

How has RWE helped you further your goals?

RWE has played a pivotal role in shaping my career. Everything RWE does aligns with my commitment to being a role model for my two daughters. What’s more, the company’s dedication to Diversity Equity and Inclusion has helped me make a real difference in the sector.



“Everything RWE does aligns with my commitment to being a role model for my two daughters.”

The expected way to end this interview would be to say: “Who knows where the wind industry will take Monica next?”. But Monica is far from expected. She is the powerful force behind her career journey, and she decides where it will go. We know she’ll continue to forge her own path at RWE, using her unique skills to empower more talented voices like hers.

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#2 ISSUE

Defying
stereotypes

Once I tasted success,
I got addicted.

MICHELLE

WTG Offshore Technician, Germany



POWER LOOKS GOOD ON YOU. Michelle Simon, WTG Offshore Technician, RWE Offshore, Germany.

How will they know what you're capable of?

Michelle Simon discusses ambition, exceeding expectations, and euphoric runs in Heligoland.

We don't use the word badass in the corporate world. But Michelle is proof that we should. It's shoot day, and she's got two outfits. One: her on-land attire. And two: her bright orange survival suit, designed to withstand the toughest offshore conditions. And what a story she has to tell, from being picked on at school, to being turned away from

mechanics, to going further than she could've ever imagined.

What first drew you to mechanics?

It all started with my motorcycle. You take 1000 pieces of metal, put them together, and get something that goes 300km/hr. It's amazing. I feel the same for turbines, but it's way more impactful.



“It made me want to prove the bullies wrong, but then I wanted to prove myself something.”

What were your early challenges?

I used to be overweight, and I was bullied in school. It's weird to say now, but I'm thankful for it. First, it made me want to prove the bullies wrong, but then I wanted to prove myself something.

I had some back pain, and the doctor said I needed more muscle support. So, I went to the gym. Once I tasted success, I got addicted. I grew into the whole gym, sports, weightlifting thing.

Then, when I tried to go into car mechanics, all the companies said, “No, we don't take girls because it's hard”. It was autumn, the season of tyre changing, and they thought I couldn't do it.

How did you react?

I was disappointed. It was my dream! But I didn't give up. I did many jobs at car workshops and one saw how serious I was. That interview was quite weird because I was at the office, and I spoke for about an hour. That hour was a fight. The interviewer didn't see a car

mechanic, he saw a tiny girl. I had to convince him that I really wanted to do it. Then, he agreed to give me a try.

When did you make the leap to wind power?

In 2018, I made brakes for wind turbines rather than cars. I wanted to do something that benefits everyone, but still mechanical. And we all need power, so it was the perfect combination.

First, I worked onshore. Then after five years, I wanted to go offshore. I heard great things about RWE. So, I had a closer look.

Did you experience the same challenges in the energy industry?

Before I joined RWE, when I worked onshore, I struggled with some customers. Someone once said to my colleague, “Oh nice, you've brought your wife to help.” and he said, “She isn't my wife, she's my colleague!”. People would also say things like, “Can you even lift heavy stuff?”.

How did you deal with that?

I just told them it's not what we do all day. And we help each other. Men also help each other because they don't want to ruin their backs. I asked them questions. Like, “Which is the part I can't do that others can?”.

Do you still feel a need to prove yourself?

No. Not at RWE. No one ever asked me “Oh, do you think you can do it because you're a girl?”. I think it's because of the team.



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What’s so great about the team?

They show me that for them, it’s not a difference. What gender I am. If I’m small, if I’m big, if I’m male, if I’m female. Where I come from. It doesn’t matter. Everyone starts the same.

And from the beginning, everyone was honest. Sometimes you hear things you don’t want to hear! Because it’s *really* honest. There’s no gossip. We see each other for two weeks every month, so we have to get along. That’s what makes me feel at home.

What do you do to let off steam when you’re working?

I go for runs in Heligoland, the tiny island where we’re based. It really clears my mind. Often, I think about the changes I’ve made – for myself and my career. When I was fighting to get mechanics training, I would’ve never thought that I’d end up here.

What are your plans for the future?

I want to do my electrician training next year. Now I’m a mechanic, but if you work on turbines, it’s best to have both. Then someday I can be a good Troubleshooter – the people who search for complex issues on the turbine. I’m also doing helicopter training. We’re learning what to do if the helicopter goes down in the water. Some people are struggling with it. The getting out of the helicopter is easy, it’s what’s in your head.

“We can do all the stuff the boys can do.”

How do you get that mental strength?

I have to do it because it's my job. Panicking is not an option. You just switch off your head and go through it. Ten years ago, I would've run away, but now I've grown enough to do it.

Actually, last year I had a huge struggle with seasickness. My boss said, “You have to find a way. Just try anything. Try ginger tea. Try everything.” Without being mean he told me, “If you can't get this managed, we can't keep you”.

But it was always my dream to go offshore. So, it was a really wild ride. There were two or three months that I didn't know if I could stay. And then, one day there was really rough sea I didn't mind. That was the best day EVER!

What would you say to someone else who was once told “You can't do it”?

I would tell them that the people who say that to you, “How will they know?”

How will they know what you are capable of?”

I have a feeling that being an Offshore Technician is something more women want to do, but maybe they're afraid of something. Maybe it's judgement, or they think the work is too heavy. But it's just not the truth. We can do all the stuff the boys can do.

What would you say to anyone looking to join RWE?

Do it! It's amazing. I've worked at other companies before, and they were good. But RWE is even better. There's no judgement. Everyone's honest. Everyone just tries to push you.

At the end of the shoot, Michelle shows us all a video of herself being hoisted up in a helicopter in her survival suit. It's the perfect example of how she's taken her passion for machines and adrenaline and turned it into something epic. Move over Destiny's Child – Michelle is our true Survivor.



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#3 ISSUE

Embracing
yourself

I don't feel I need
to be a certain way.

SAMANTHA

O&M Implementation Manager, USA



POWER LOOKS GOOD ON YOU. Samantha Mullin, O&M Implementation Manager, RWE Offshore, USA.

Whether it's me in high heels or hi-vis, it's still me.

**Samantha Mullin talks
embracing her full self at RWE.**

Samantha is soft spoken, but she commands the conversation. She's someone you want to tune in to. Her responses might be quiet and considered, but what she says? That's truly loud.

Tell us about your background.

I grew up on a small, family-owned farm in the middle of rural Pennsylvania.

I was fortunate to do really well in school and receive a scholarship

to a private engineering university in New York. Wow – I was in for a surprise when I got there! Everybody was the best in their class, and I wasn't special anymore. There were folks from very wealthy backgrounds, and I had a pretty humble upbringing. But I embraced it, even when it was uncomfortable.

When the schoolwork was difficult, I dug into my extracurricular activities. And it ended up working out. I graduated with honours.



How did you get into the energy industry?

During my studies, I did an internship with a local wind turbine company. That was my springboard to join what is now RWE (but was EON Climate and Renewables). I started in Austin, Texas as a Data Analytics Engineer.

What did you think about wind power?

The US has been slower to adopt offshore wind, so I joined onshore, and I've moved to offshore recently.

First, I wrestled with moving 3000 miles away to Austin without any friends or family nearby. I knew I'd make my way, but it was scary. I lived in the heart of downtown – which, as a farm kid, was somewhere I never thought I'd be! Noise at all hours was definitely an adjustment.

But my colleagues really took me under their wing. Now, that's how I like to welcome new joiners – especially people who've come to a new city. Because you might be the only person they connect with in those first few weeks.

Did you think you had to fit a certain mould?

Being a female Engineer, you always feel like you're sticking out. You're either too feminine to be taken seriously, or you're too edgy.

At first, I was really careful about how I was perceived. But as I've grown, I've embraced being both. I can be feminine; I can be caring, empathetic, and slow to anger, but still effective. Then I can lean into decisiveness, leadership, and strength – sometimes, that's

even physical strength with my farm background.

Today, I own my power by not having to fit into a particular box. Whether it's me in high heels or hi-vis, it's still me.

What made you see that?

I took a three-month, offshore secondment to the UK. I had to leave my family, my husband, and my dog. I even had to drive on the wrong side of the road!

Any other operations experience has always felt 'out-of-body' – like it wasn't me. But over three months, I didn't have that luxury of not being myself. I needed to be the girl with my nails done and hair nice because that's how I felt as a full human. And there were female technicians who made me feel seen and understood. It's super important to have those people you can look to and see, "Oh, they're doing both, so why can't I?".

It pushed me out of my comfort zone, but it teed me up for success. I was fortunate to be selected as the O&M Lead for the US, which I've been doing for the last two years.

“There were female technicians who made me feel seen and understood.”

“What you may see as a weakness could be exactly what a team needs.”



“Being a female Engineer, you always feel like you’re sticking out. You’re either too feminine to be taken seriously, or you’re too edgy.”



What would you say to someone who’s stepping out of their comfort zone?

What you may see as a weakness could be exactly what a team needs. What someone is dying to experience. To fit, or to have the courage to do something they never thought they could. You could bring something to the table that’s not even been noticed as missing.

How do you use your different skills to your advantage in your work?

I grew up as the eldest of five sisters. I was always looking out for everyone else. Now, having the chance to mentor graduates is extremely fulfilling. To be somebody that folks want to come to, that’s a kind of superpower.

What’s the key to being accessible?

Taking a real interest in what people care about. When new people come, there’s a tendency to give them the work that’s falling off the sides. But helping them pursue what’s important to them is the best way to connect.

Would you say your own experience has helped you mentor others?

Absolutely. I’ve hit the jackpot with every manager. It’s one of the reasons that I’ve been here my entire career. I’ve had the support of people who want to see me grow.

Now, I’m taking that torch up and being that person for others. I can’t believe I’m here already. I still feel like I’m trying to figure it out every day.

“If you’re not supported for everything you are, you need to see yourself out of that situation.”

What advice would you give to someone with your skills and expertise?

To really lean into every part of what makes you, you.

There’s a bunch of pieces of me which, on the surface, don’t fit. Hard-working, dirty environment, farming background – and now, I work in a skyscraper in Boston. But people with different life experiences connect with me. It’s about not shutting out one piece.

Also, it’s important to find mentors to explore the areas that don’t appear as flashy or glamorous. For a while, I had “Dairy Herd Manager” on my resume. As I progressed, I wanted to take it off. I spoke with a mentor, and she said, “Don’t ever take that off, that’s such a unique experience that very few engineering graduates will have.”.

How do you find the confidence to open up?

A lot of it comes from being in a safe space. If you’re not supported for everything you are, you need to see yourself out of that situation. I’ve been fortunate to have fantastic managers that gave me the space to share, but if I hadn’t, I wouldn’t be here. Being able to share your background is educating – and that’s kindness.

Why did you choose RWE?

Fundamentally, I was behind RWE’s vision. They were a big company with

strong foundations, but they were positively impacting communities like mine. Lots of our onshore operations were in cornfields and cotton fields – exactly the environments I’d grown up in.

What excites you about the future?

There’s such a space to develop. As we’ve taken on offshore wind, the challenges have got even more exciting. So, on one hand, it’s the engineering problem; on the other, it’s a people issue. We’ll hopefully be active offshore for many, many decades. That means a LOT of people are going to wear RWE logos, go home to their families, and provide for them because of what we’re doing today.

If there’s one misconception that this campaign could change, what would it be?

It might seem like you need to choose between one or the other, feminine or assertive – or later down the road, a mom, or a leader. But I want folks to know that you can be all of those things and be successful.

There aren’t many Dairy Farmers turned Engineers in this world. Samantha is proof that what you bring to a role can’t be written in a job spec. Instead, it’s found in unexpected, seemingly ill-fitting experiences. Magical qualities that help us break new ground.



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#4 ISSUE

Becoming
a leader

We all struggle, but it
shouldn't hold you back.

CONNIE

General Manager Offshore Windfarm, Denmark





POWER LOOKS GOOD ON YOU. Cornelia Cichon, General Manager Rødsand Windfarm, RWE Offshore, Denmark.

I look at other mothers and think, “You’re superwoman”. But I often look like a panda in the morning.

Conny Cichon talks Operations, motherhood and thinking like a leader.

Conny starts by warning me that she hasn’t prepared for the interview. Honest and vulnerable, it’s exactly how she wants to be seen. But her answers are raw, real, and better than any script.

What made you fall in love with energy?

As a student, I stood in front of a turbine, and thought, “Wow! This is the area I want to work in. I want to go where the big machines are, where we produce electricity”.

I started working in power plants at just 25. That was a bit of a shocker as one of the established Engineers would

introduce me by saying “This is Conny. She’s going to take my job.”.

How did you deal with that?

Back then I thought, “Oh my god, I’ll never be able to do this!”. But after some time, I just smiled at people and said “Yes, I will!”.

When did you start at RWE?

I joined the RWE graduate program at 27. As part of the program, you get to see different aspects of the company, so I’ve been with Investor Relations and Consulting. When the program was over, I knew I wanted to go back into power production. That’s when I got an offer at the Renewables business.



What made you choose Operations?
The vibe. It was a brand-new team and RWE's first German offshore wind farm. We were like pioneers.

What's one of the biggest things you've learned throughout your career?
That I was too passive for too long.

What do you mean by that?
I come from a family that worked hard but was modest. I thought if I gave 100%, people would recognise me. But nobody ever said, "Wow, look at you, you should be promoted."

It took me a while to realise the difference between being a diligent employee and proving you're ready to move up.

Did you decide to show up more?
The change happened with the RWE talent program. I wanted to apply for the specialist careers group. My boss, she said, "Uh-uh. You've led large projects. Apply for the leadership one, I'm not letting you do the others". With her push, I went for it. Then I realised I needed to actively ask for a leadership role.

How did you go after it?
There was a vacant position, I applied, and I didn't get it! But because I applied, people knew I was serious. A month later, I got a call from my future boss with a different opportunity. I also realised you need to think like a leader.

How is thinking like a leader different?
Sometimes people ask me if they should go for a leadership role. I always

say, "Have you, in the last month or year, thought 'My manager should change things' or have you thought, 'If I was in that position, I would do this'?" One is identifying problems – the other is finding solutions.

It's easy to see things that should be done differently, but if it stops there, you don't have that leadership mindset.

How do you see the potential in others?
Everyone has a strength; we're just different. I always try to see what gives someone energy.

If they've got potential to be a leader, I tell them straight away. And reactions are different. If they don't want to, that's okay. But some don't dare to. That's when I tell them that I applied to a job, didn't get it, and another door opened.

How does it feel to help someone dare to go for it?
In my team, there was one woman who started as an Office Clerk. She was doing everything we needed, but nothing more. I saw that she was super reliable and skilful, so I pushed her and supported her. She grew out of the team and now, she's in a higher position.

Also, one of the guys is not as good at office work, but he's amazing at bringing people together. So, I told him. A day later, he texted me, "I've never seen my skills like that. Thank you for seeing so much in me." Then he volunteered to take on a higher responsibility job improving the team atmosphere. That made me really proud.



“Everyone has a strength; we’re just different. I always try to see what gives someone energy.”



What are the challenges you face as a mother?

It's like I have two full-time jobs and I'm not giving enough to either. Sometimes, I need to leave work to take care of my son and I feel like I should've done two hours more. Other times, I play with my son, and I need to leave because I live in Germany but work in Denmark. He always says, "Why are you leaving again?". That breaks my heart.

But it makes me more efficient. I don't have 14 hours a day to spend on my job and I also have a life in between.

What has being a mother taught you about your role?

In Operations, we work together very closely. It's like family life – there are good times and arguments. Even with grown-up men, deep down, we're all a bit like children. We want to be heard and appreciated. Not literally, but figuratively hugged. And that's the life of a parent. You need to tell them it's okay to blow off steam, but now it's time to get back to work.

What advice would you give to a mother who wants to be a leader?

I would share that I'm struggling. I've seen mothers in leadership positions, and I've always thought, "You're superwoman. You're confident, you look great and everything's perfect". Yet when I'm at home, I often look like a panda in the morning! Then when I get to know them, they tell me, "I'm struggling" and that makes me feel human. We all struggle, but that shouldn't hold you back. And now it's okay to shut the laptop in the afternoon, pick up our children, and do some work in the evening.

“We all struggle, but that shouldn’t hold you back.”

I would also say that parents know what it feels like to have everybody wanting something from them. They need to juggle different tasks and responsibilities. These are exactly the skills you need to become a leader – so they should all go for it.

Why do you think self-doubt should be viewed as something positive?

I always question myself. But by asking the question, I’m also asking myself, “What do I need to do to be better?”. By doubting, we never stop growing.

What can women bring to this industry?

Working offshore is very male dominated. People are always trying to show that nothing can hurt them. But that creates a culture where you don’t openly say if something’s wrong. Women are more likely to say they’re scared or ask people how they’re doing. And it’s not only women who want a more open culture – everybody does! I’m really happy that RWE is looking into how we can improve the offshore environment to make it more accessible for women.

How is RWE helping you? How are you helping RWE?

RWE has given me so much. I had wonderful training, got to see the company, and found a great network. I’ve grown my confidence so much. Now, this is something I want to give back to others.

“By doubting, we never stop growing.”

Maybe Conny’s responses have sparked something in you. You might be thinking of all the things your boss could change, and how you’d make them happen. Or you might tell someone you’re struggling. And that’s the power of Conny. She’s not just reflecting on her own career, she’s helping us all take a step back and think a little differently. So, consider your big picture, then dare to go for it.



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#5 ISSUE

Pushing
for progress

Never accept the situation
as is, just because.

ZSUZSANNA

Director of Legal, Germany

I wanted to become a Director, but it was more about what I could do when I was there.

Zsuzsanna Sessel-Zsebik discusses the legal profession, self-belief and finding a role where she can create change.

Zsuzsanna is a truly influential woman in the business. Her team lays the legal foundations that allow RWE to produce energy for millions. But you wouldn't know it. There's an openness to her that would put anyone at ease. So, I dive straight in.

How have you got to where you are today?

My ambition level was always higher

than I got rated as. So, I think it's by looking at how I'm doing, and continuously improving. Addressing the feedback that I've got from people who believed in me. It's rare that someone dares to tell you what they really think. So, if they say, "You'll never get to the next level *unless* this happens." then you have to address those shortcomings.



Can you give us an example?

It happened in my very first role. I'd trained as a Hungarian Lawyer and moved to Germany with my husband. That's when I started working at EON (now RWE). My manager said, "You're smart and doing a good job. But you aren't German qualified, so you have difficulties, even when doing international business."

This truly bothered me. I thought, "Why am I being downgraded, simply because I don't have the paper?". But German Law has its own specifics, and what I'd learned wasn't entirely transferrable. So, I took that feedback on board. I agreed to work part-time, studied and finished my full qualification in Germany.

Did you always want to become a Director?

Actually, my most hated question is, "Where do you see yourself in five years?". I don't plan like that. I prefer "Where do you see *your projects* and *your team* in five years?" Throughout my career, I've always wanted to become influential. The higher you are, the more power you get to do things your way.

I never had a particular position in mind, I just wanted to grow. That means the next level, the bigger project, the more complex challenge. Eventually yes, I wanted to become a Director, but it was more about what I could do when I was there.

What were your initial challenges and how did you overcome them?

Every position, every decade, every task has its challenges. When I started, the biggest challenge was being accepted. I was a foreigner, and young, and a woman. The legal team had just one female (later, two). The entire profession

was very male-driven and competitive. You had to prove that you were making an essential contribution. You had to prove that you are indispensable.

I was always bothered that a competitive environment didn't incentivise teamwork due to this elbow mentality. We could achieve much more if we worked together and built on each other's creativity and know-how.

How did you change that environment?

What I believe was always my principal strength (and it still is) is how I choose to organise the team. It's how I believe a legal team should be working, not what's expected. For example, traditionally, you organise a team by region – but this doesn't promote sharing experiences cross-border. Instead, we organise ours in international practice groups that work closely together.

Do you have any advice for others looking to do things differently?

Yes. Speak up. Show the alternatives. Never shy away. Never accept the situation as is, just because.

Do you ever question yourself?

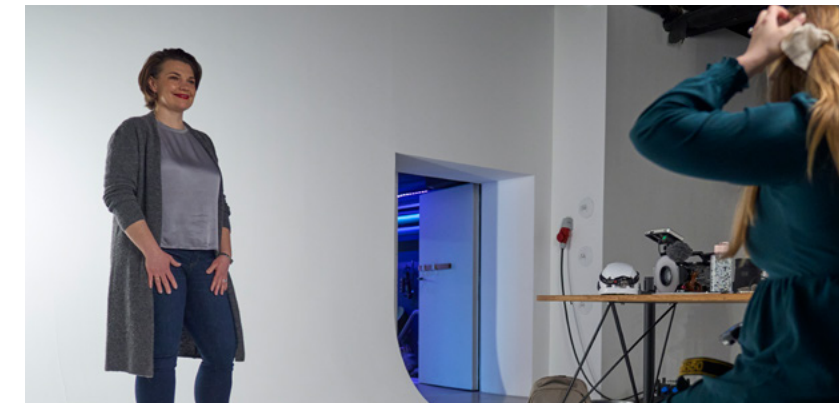
Certainly, I have my doubts which need to be overcome. A good example is how I got into my first leadership position. My manager asked me whether I was interested in applying for a team lead role and I said I wasn't ready. Then it was given to an external candidate who wasn't the right fit. Over the next couple of months, I was really disappointed. I kept asking myself why I didn't take it. I could've done much better with minimum leadership experience! But once that manager moved to a different role, there was an opening again. Then I went for it. And I got it.



“Every position, every decade, every task has its challenges.”



“If you
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What motivates you?

I look to the number of positive experiences that I've collected over my career. It's proof that if you follow your own vision, and you do it consistently, you'll reach it. There's a feeling of satisfaction that comes when you've insisted on a plan, and you see the positive results. Outcomes that have worked out because you've played an influential role.

Do you have anyone who's shaped your career?

I don't have *one* role model. I have many. I admire them all for certain skills. I don't want to copy, but to build on their experience. Ultimately, I always try to follow my own way.

What advice would you give other women wanting to advance?

Never settle. Once you get into a position where you feel comfortable, you are building your routines and applying them. If you stop becoming creative and you stop growing, you are shrinking actually.

How have you balanced your private and professional goals?

You can't really cut off... If you have this always improving mindset, a great idea might come at an unexpected moment – like while cleaning or jogging. And you want to implement it immediately.

So, for me, a job was never nine to five. I take my working time flexibly. If my daughter has a performance, I go with her. Also, after dinner I might sit down and write two more emails, because I've had time to reflect.

“Really, it’s the people of RWE who’ve supported me the most.”

How would you go about improving your team?

Giving open feedback just like I’m asking for it. But also offering everyone the opportunities to perform at their best. So, if that means a training, or a new task or a new project to improve themselves, that’s how I develop them.

If you could tell other women something they didn’t know about you and your experience, what would you say?

Women tend to have more doubts, especially about themselves. And adapt. themselves to the situation. What I would do is exactly the contrary. Speak up. Trust yourself. And believe in your vision.

How do you keep that positive mindset in everything you do?

I like to look back on the last 20 years and I’m happy with where I am. And I

want to keep that momentum up for the next 20. I know that I can’t just lay back. The journey continues.

How has RWE helped you in your career?

The size of the company, the multiple tasks and positions have offered me many, many opportunities to develop, and to contribute to business success. Really, it’s the people of RWE who’ve supported me the most.

After 20 years in the business, Zsuzsanna has all the energy and determination of someone just getting started. And that’s the brilliant thing about her. She’s challenging the status quo and pushing for progress – all while believing she can. And we’re totally here for it. This is the era of women finding their power and owning it, unapologetically.



RWE

POWER

LOOKS

GOOD ON YOU

#6 ISSUE

Owning
your power

Feel that fear.
Do it anyway.

DEBBY

Talent Acquisition Coordinator, Germany



POWER LOOKS GOOD ON YOU. Debby Blay, Talent Acquisition Coordinator, RWE Offshore, Germany.

I took a bold step, and I'm grateful.

Debby Blay discusses the journey to owning her power.

Debby's energy is like that first feeling of sunshine on a cold, spring day. Her smile spreads from her face, to all who meet her within a matter of seconds. She's ready to share her experiences.

What's your story?

My story... Let's start with coming to Germany. I moved from Ghana in 2015, without any family. Once in Munich, I studied for my master's in Psychology and Learning Sciences at LMU.

How did you get into the energy industry?

I found myself here through a stroke

of luck. I worked at a tech company and was affected by a lay off which got me back on the market.

I'd heard great things about RWE from friends, and the job stability was already a plus. I was still sceptical though. I thought, "Oh, this is a huge company, what if I don't see anybody like me there?". But I took that bold step. And I got the job.

What were your first impressions of RWE?

I was surprised. The transition was smoother than I expected, and RWE made me feel at home. It was more than physical differences, the people were very welcoming.



Surprised how?

When I first joined, we had a whole-team HR event the UK. I had this overwhelming anxiety – thinking, “Will I be the only person of colour there? Should I not go?”. But when I went, it was nothing like I expected. Yes, I was the only person of colour. But the welcome was really huge. It meant a lot.

What were the barriers you faced? How have you overcome them?

I’ve faced the challenge of difference. Of feeling alone because of my background. Everything from work expectations, to communication styles, and then navigating legal and bureaucratic systems.

And of course, language... Before I moved, I (almost) didn’t know any German. So, it was my number one priority. I did lots of courses so that I could integrate. No way have I overcome that barrier entirely, but I feel integrated compared to the early days. Community has also helped me. It’s useful to find people with shared experiences and hear how they’ve navigated differences.

What were the cultural differences you noticed at work?

One of the things I subtly struggle with is that in Ghana, you don’t speak about your wins. Here in Germany, you have to be loud about them! I still feel like people will say, “Who do you think you are?” or, “You’re being too proud”.

What’s helped you overcome that?

Leadership. Their way of supporting and guiding me. They always recognise my

achievements, even when I think they’re not paying attention.

This came up recently in my annual review. My bosses told me, “Be loud about your successes. We believe in you, so learn to share them”. They’re the ones encouraging me to own my power. And when I reflect on how far I’ve come, I do see that power looks good on me!

How do you push yourself?

I’ve always tried to continuously improve. It’s not only seeking feedback for feedback’s sake, but hearing it and working with it. Then it’s just getting out of that comfort zone.

What are your biggest strengths?

Being empathetic, bold, and likeable. Sometimes I feel like I’m self-made, and I do tell people that. I’ve been through many challenges, and the way I’ve overcome them gives me strength and empathy. Because I’ve been in that space before, I do relate a lot and I try to put myself in the shoes of others.

What does Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEI&B) mean to you?

For me, it goes beyond common differences. It’s about welcoming a broad range of backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences. And creating an environment where everybody feels accepted and included. A psychological safe space. Where your thoughts are valued, you have equal opportunities, and you feel connected to the company. I definitely feel that.



“When I reflect on how far I’ve come, I do see that power looks good on me!”



“I’ve always tried to continuously improve. It’s not only seeking feedback for feedback’s sake, but hearing it and working with it. Then it’s just getting out of that comfort zone.”



What can we do to show more women that they can thrive here?

There are so many things we’re doing around DEI&B, we just need to talk about them more. RWE are employing people of colour and making them feel welcome; I want to project that to the outside world.

We also have lots of ongoing programs like mentorship, networking, and leadership training. Our leaders are actively promoting diversity and addressing biases, including advocating for part-time work.

How do you help others feel accepted?

I try to offer support – especially to new team members. I also recognise when somebody helps me. Those acts of kindness seem small, but they go a long way in making people feel like they belong.

What do you and your team look for when hiring talented people?

It’s not just about skills and experience, we also think holistically. We look for an adaptable mindset and willingness to contribute collaboratively.

We’re also putting in a lot of effort to ensure we’ve got diverse candidate pools. We use an inclusive language tool, and you don’t have to tick every box to apply.

“Feel that fear. Do it anyway. Because you’re doing a great job.”

How do you see the talent pool changing?

Good question! I hope I can nail it. I think we’re going to put an even greater emphasis on diverse skillsets and versatility. We want more people who show a proactive commitment to continuous learning. They’re the ones who can help us navigate future challenges.

Would you recommend RWE to other talented women? Why?

Definitely! First and foremost, it’s their commitment to diversity. You see how leadership has such a passion for it. That’s a real sign of the company you’re joining.

Secondly, RWE creates an environment for growth and development. There’s a strong network of talented women here who attend forums, events and discussions designed to connect and empower us. This sense of community has been invaluable.

Finally, leadership really promotes our successes. They see what I do – even though somehow, I don’t see it. They don’t leave you to your own fate, they guide you through.

What advice would you give your younger self at the start of your career here?

Feel that fear. Do it anyway. Because you’re doing a great job.

And finally, what advice would you give to women thinking of joining RWE?

Take a bold step. I took a bold step, and I’m grateful.

Debby might not be the first in the room to sing her praises, but she’s getting there. And she’s bringing others on the journey with her. She sees the power in people and encourages them to own it. We hope her story convinces you to take that bold step, just like hers.

