



# WE Connect

Connecting women in renewable energy

## The month that's been

There are many women who have had that “a-ha” moment. That moment when it really hits you that you are going to have to navigate the challenges that come with working in this male-dominated industry. Unique challenges that you didn't necessarily expect or prepare for coming into the job. Despite the unique challenges, many women are thriving in male-dominated fields like science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). The last few generations have helped to bring more women into the workforce and leadership roles, but there's still much further to go. As we work towards a gender-diverse renewable energy industry challenging the norms, there are several strategies to succeed within it. In the end, the only difference between a challenge and an opportunity is your mindset.

### **1. Recognize the problem, but don't dwell on it**

It's important to recognize the challenge, but it is crucial to avoid dwelling on it. Acknowledge that, as a woman, you may face challenges your male counterparts won't have to. Progress starts with awareness. Focus on victories, not defeats.

## **2. Use every opportunity to learn as much as you can**

You may not be automatically respected, but nothing earns respect like showing up and being prepared. Grow in your subject matter by asking questions every chance you get and paying close attention to the answers. Take notes and review them and don't hesitate to ask follow-up questions.

A key lesson is learning to not allow others to speak over you. It doesn't mean you need to adopt rude behavior, but it does sometimes mean insisting on having your say.

## **3. Welcome tough questions**

A key part of earning respect is to not only to answer tough questions but to also welcome them. Showing that you don't shy away from topics that are difficult to discuss shows confidence in your decision making and reasoning skills. I have had to deal with people telling me I can't know what I'm talking about even after I've been in the industry for 10 years. As frustrating as it can be to have to prove myself, the hard questions make it easier to demonstrate my expertise.

## **4. Allies and champions**

Find those male and female champions that believe in you and what you are building. Partner with them as often as you can. An ally can help you gain credibility and help you navigate difficult situations.

## **5. Find a balance that works for you**

This month, WE Connect are focussing on finding a balance between your work and life. Join WE Connect in exploring this from a female perspective. Take advantage of both our online events as opportunities to learn and connect with other women working in renewable energy.

Yours authentically, Mercia



A huge shout out to all the women that have joined the WE Connect LinkedIn Group! Over the last month, our group has grown to over 100 women working in renewable energy and we continue to grow.

Please connect with us by following our pages on LinkedIn and [Facebook](#) via [WEConnect\\_Resa](#) and [WE Connect Community](#)

# The month ahead



## **This July we are connecting around finding Work-Life Harmony**

We specifically avoided the term 'work-life balance' considering the difficulties of balancing work and life 50 - 50. Finding harmony is a more realistic aim as the energy and time you spend on work vs life will change as you move through your career.

WE Connect are hosting two zoom events that are really for all women working long hours to get ahead, starting out their first job and finding a new routine, feeling the pressure to perform, the women rethinking their careers, weighing up the pro's and con's of a sabbatical or parenthood, the mothers, the mom's to be, co-workers of parents, and women contemplating a change but thinking this may be too late. And then, there are partners. You know the saying, behind every successful woman, there's a group chat cheering her on. In reality, your partner and support network or lack thereof plays a massive role in saying yes to new opportunities.

To hear from our speaker, [Melany Green](#) go and sign up now before you forget or life gets busy. Diarise the 28th and 29th of July 2020 lunchtime slots. Bring your own lunch and use this time to connect to this network and learn about work-life harmony:



**Event #1:** "The female career: a journey of 6 stages" 28 July 2020 13:00 - 14:00

Register via: [https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJclF-2oqDgrEtx\\_wBSjiqKXn1J7FAqtY8PT](https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJclF-2oqDgrEtx_wBSjiqKXn1J7FAqtY8PT)

**Event #2:** "Are we searching for work-life balance or harmony - surviving and thriving as a career loving parent" 29 July 2020 13:00 - 14:00 - **partners welcome**

Register via: [https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJAudeugqDopGdas2zohPthRz4gYqWd8\\_3Sk](https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJAudeugqDopGdas2zohPthRz4gYqWd8_3Sk)



### **WE Connect Website!**

The [WE Connect website](#) is officially live! We are really excited as this will provide another platform for mentors and mentees to reach out in order for the WE Connect team to facilitate connections. Still looking for a mentor/mentee, drop us an email and we can assist.

Are you passionate about gender diversity and want to get involved? Reach out via our Get Connected page. We'd love to hear from you.

## What we are Reading, Watching, Listening

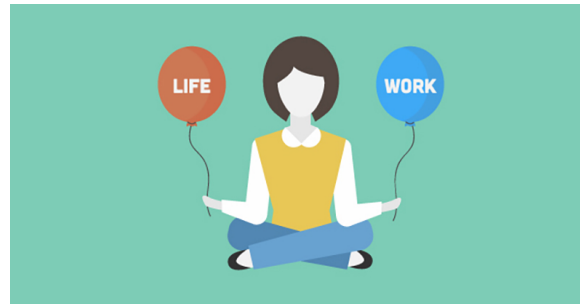
[Keeping things Private](#)

The Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) was further legislated in July 2020.

The President of South Africa has proclaimed the POPI commencement date to be 1 July 2020. Companies have 12 months to ensure that they are fully compliant. Click on the image and link above for more information.



Need a bit of inspiration. Check out these [8 Ted Talks](#) on finding harmony between your life and work.



**"Never be limited by other people's limited imaginations"** - Mae Carol Jemison is an American engineer, physician, and former NASA astronaut. She became the first black woman to travel into space when she served as a mission specialist aboard the Space Shuttle Endeavour!

Let's continue to build a powerful network of women working in renewable energy,  
The WE Connect Team

