

# IF I WERE A YOUNG PROFESSIONAL

We asked Senior Professionals what would they focus on to render the industry a better place for all if they were Young Professionals today

by Hosnia S. Hashim, Besim Şişman, Chris Osarumwense, Gerhard Thonhauser, Leopold Bräuer

Hosnia S. Hashim,  
Vice-President  
Operations,  
KUFPEC,  
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I would like to express my full support for initiatives aimed at fostering the enhancement of leadership skills in the youth, as I am convinced that the energy sector increasingly requires the new insights that a fresh perspective will bring to the complex problems ahead.

In the Middle East, there is a growing trend of positioning young professionals in increasingly relevant roles, that were previously given only to very experienced professionals. This is a result of the recognition of the importance of incorporating the young vision, the young enthusiasm and above all, the young preferences and expectations in the shaping of our collective future. I hope that the WPC "Future Leaders Forum" – the 5th Youth Event for the WPC – will provide another opportunity to listen to the leadership vision of the young professionals, which will ignite with a fresh insight the discussion about the main topics relevant to the energy sector. I want to see a vivid exchange of opinions in Rio and new ideas on the main aspects

of the world's energy ecosystem, the production and distribution of energy, the new sources of energy, the geopolitics, the sustainability of energy sources, and the security of operations.

It is thanks to the participation of you, the young professionals in our society, at work and especially in the energy sector, that we all pay more attention to the environment, to sustainability and to the issues of inclusivity in the World.

## How can the industry empower women for sustainable development?

I believe the corporate world has a lot to say (and to do!) in relation to empowering women at work, and most particularly, to ensure their fair inclusion and participation, for sustainable development.

Several elements would be of prime importance:

1. Motivate young females from high school years or even earlier, to pursue careers in the oil industry, by expanding the oil sector liaisons with academia. We need to do more to reach out, and explain that oil sector careers for women encompass not only engineering and geosciences, IT and HSE careers, but also the lawyers, accountants and human resources professionals. Young women and girls need to understand that the oil industry will be an option for many decades to come, and that joining our workforce is a prime option.
2. Utilise our available role models,

ie: women who are in leadership positions in technical or managerial roles. Encourage them to give lectures, establish networking sessions and give interviews, so that younger generations both in and outside our corporate ranks gain inspiration and see no barriers to their own promotion to higher responsibilities. We need to instill self-empowerment in the replacement generation.

3. Share the stories of success of women in the industry more and more, particularly using modern media. I want to see our women leaders in energy participating more in Twitter, Snapchat, YouTube, Facebook, LinkedIn, and other platforms. We need them, our established leaders globally, to be near and accessible to the younger generation of females in the industry. They need to "speak" and inspire them in their own "language", with their own media.
4. Finally, we need to have gender-diversity policies to facilitate the careers of women in the industry – better succession pipelines, more inclusive of women, better career progression options, and even work schedule options related to maternity years. Women are a minority in the industry now, but coming out from academia, the percentages tell us we will have equal entry numbers of both genders. Are we prepared? ●

**Besim Şişman,**  
President and CEO,  
Turkish Petroleum,  
Chairman of  
Turkish National  
Committee (TNC),  
Turkey



**If you were a young professional, what career paths would you have chosen if you did not choose your current path, and why?**

If I were a young professional, I would choose one of the engineering disciplines. I believe that human development is closely related to the improvement of engineering applications, with more practical impacts on the quality of daily life than any other professions.

Engineers make a world of difference and always think of tomorrow wrapped up with technology and

innovation. Any type of engineering, whether civil, industrial, mechanical, agricultural, biomedical, aerospace, mining, computer, chemical or environmental, touches different aspects of life to make it better and more liveable. To do so, we need creativity, independence, willingness to take risks, analytic thinking, inexhaustible curiosity and passion, which are all part and parcel of the engineering mindset. For me, engineering is a kind of endless adventure of novelty, which makes me excited. ●

**Chris Osarumwense,**  
Managing Partner,  
Greenfields  
Consultancy and  
Allied Services,  
Nigeria



**How would you develop yourself professionally for increased productivity in the industry?**

The oil and gas industry in most countries is the champion of technological advancement, leading edge processes and systems, diversity and corporate culture. In most instances, the culture is multinational, competitive and driven by professional competence, therefore any young professional wishing to have a successful career in this environment will find the following advice helpful:

- Be visible and available for work – staff who are visible and available for work get more recognition from their supervisors and managers. It is your responsibility to bring your skills and capabilities to the attention of your supervisors. Holding back is not well appreciated in the industry.
- Focus on and invest in your own development – the YP must seek out and take advantage of development opportunities in his or her early years. Monetary benefits should be secondary considerations. Growing your professional discipline skills/competences should be the primary objective.

- Take advantage of exposure or broadening opportunities – international exposure or opportunities to develop multi-discipline skills are useful where staff are comfortable with the depth of their own discipline skills.
- Seek out a mentor or role model who will coach and mentor you in support of your personal and professional development through continuous learning.
- Be self-starting and unlimited in action – YPs must be self-motivated and learn to work and deliver with minimal supervision. They must not allow themselves to be limited by the bureaucracy of the system. They must continue to push the boundaries of achievement.
- Grow your relationship skills – many oil and gas companies are giving more priority to relationship skills. The ability to get along with others and work effectively in teams is getting more attention in the selection of business managers.

A career in the Oil and Gas business can be very professionally fulfilling and financially rewarding for those willing to put in the work required to grow the depth and breadth of expertise required. ●

Gerhard  
Thonhauser,  
Chairman and  
Founder, TDE  
Group,  
Austria



**If you were a young professional: what essential knowledge would you need to start a business nowadays in our industry?**

Being an entrepreneur is a question of mindset rather than knowledge. You have to be aware of your strengths and weaknesses, work hard to compensate for these or team up with others. Develop a passion for what you do and be the best in this area – nothing less! You will have to be persistent, be able to listen to others, to learn fast and accept working with even smarter people than you.

Knowledge about a certain subject is a means to make you unique, a prime condition for success. Being a petroleum engineer, particularly one who can bridge "old industry" with

the "web-age" will bring you into the right position. If you can combine uniqueness with value creation for your clients and are able to communicate, then you will succeed. Share your passion and you will convince - do not "sell"!

Sharpen your knife, never stop learning and be ready for opportunities. The more you know, the better you are prepared for opportunities that may open up.

If you are a deliverer, team up with a seller. If you are a seller, team up with a deliverer. If you are both, you are lucky but have to deal with the question of how you will scale up.

Get started – go for it. A good friend once told me "you can't learn to play the piano by reading about it". ●

Leopold  
Bräuer, Head of  
Department,  
Technology  
Development and  
Application,  
OMV,  
Austria



**What technology would you consider important in driving the industry over the coming years?**

Technology is a key driver in the upstream industry of the future. Technologies will cover the whole area of exploration, drilling, production and reservoir management, as well as surface facilities onshore and offshore.

There is a need for professionals of all disciplines: geologists, physicists, chemists, petroleum engineers and others.

What we see currently in seismic acquisition and processing is equally intriguing to the developments in reservoir simulation and reservoir

management. To illustrate some of the achievements of our industry: if you drilled at OMV's headquarters in Trabrennstasse in Vienna your wellbore could easily reach Saint Stephan's Cathedral in the very centre of Vienna.

Another exciting development: oilfields will become more digital in the future: most of the relevant measurements on the wellbore will be taken remotely and will directly influence the measures to be taken to manage our reservoirs to maximise recovery and production.

So it is not one single technology that makes the breakthrough: it is all of them. Let's go for it! ●