



Kristine Blackwood

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Babcock International Group

#INWED18

#RaisingTheBar

What's your role at Babcock?

I teach apprentices the academic side of engineering i.e. the Maths and Physics behind engineering principles and processes.

What led you to your current role?

My career history to date has been somewhat varied including PE, beauty therapy, office work and teaching.

After leaving school I did my Physical Education Diploma but after a time wanted a break from education so went travelling around the world for a couple of years. Upon return I studied beauty therapy and found that I really enjoyed the Chemistry side of the subject, however after having a baby I decided that an office job would suit me best at that point in my career so I took office and banking jobs. A role as a Reconciliation Officer re-awakened a dormant interest in Maths within me, so I did a Mathematical Science degree at the Open University. I then went on to do my PGCE and taught at a Secondary School, quickly becoming Deputy Head of Maths.

Following a move to teach Maths at a local college, I enrolled in an Aerospace Engineering course in 2015. I found I hugely enjoyed understanding the processes behind how machines work and the intrinsic connection between Maths, Physics and the real world.

Joining Babcock in 2017, I took up a role teaching the academic principles of engineering to the apprentices that we train for clients, taking them up to Level 3 Maths & Mechanical Principles.

Education History



PE instructor



Post Graduate
Certificate in Education



Beauty Therapy



Aerospace
Engineering Course



BSc Mathematic
Science

What do you most enjoy about your role?

I take a real joy in teaching, especially explaining how electrical and mechanical processes are so inherently interlinked. I'm also personally fascinated by how inventors have applied ideas from machine design and combined them with human science and biology to apply it to the human body, for example exoskeletons that can be used to help those with spinal injuries walk again.

Whilst I'm the instructor, I learn from the apprentices I'm training too. Many are extremely bright and come with great questions, challenges and ideas of their own. I love that!

What advice would you give to young women considering engineering roles?

Go for it! Don't feel that if you weren't academically brilliant at school roads are now closed off to you – they are not. Find something that you're passionate about it and study it, hard. You never know which doors will open if you just push on them a little.

Don't allow gender to hold you back in what's still a predominantly male-oriented industry. A sense of humour so you can laugh along with the men, but know when to tell them if they over-step the mark, is definitely worth having, but don't compromise your personal principals and ethics as a woman.

When it comes to women in engineering how are you Raising The Bar?

I'm ensuring that my kids, male and female, don't grow up accepting long-held gender stereotypes when it comes to working life, home life or general behaviours. I'm teaching them that it's up to each of us to take responsibility for our own actions, choices and ways we treat people; their gender and ours should not be part of the equation. This includes both genders being in the frame when mistakes are made rather than one automatically taking the blame.

I continue to raise my personal bar through ongoing studies and being open-minded to learning from my students as well as them learning from me.

My varied experience shows that there are multiple paths into engineering and a plethora of roles available; what's needed is passion to learn!