



Rice Global E&C Forum  
Engineering &  
Construction

# RICE GLOBAL ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION FORUM



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***“Attracting and Retaining Women in  
Oil and Gas Engineering”***



# It's not just a talent gap – it's a gender gap



The global focus on attracting more women into the oil and gas industry is not just about creating a more diverse workforce, it is of vital importance if we are to continue to serve the world's growing energy needs.

- Demand for engineering expertise is far outstripping supply and half the experienced engineering workforce is set to retire in the next decade.
- While more is being done to encourage young women to study the STEM subjects this gender disparity continues to exist.
- In order to power future energy projects, the oil and gas industry must act now to fully tap into this enormous potential talent pool.

# What should the sector do to solve the problem?

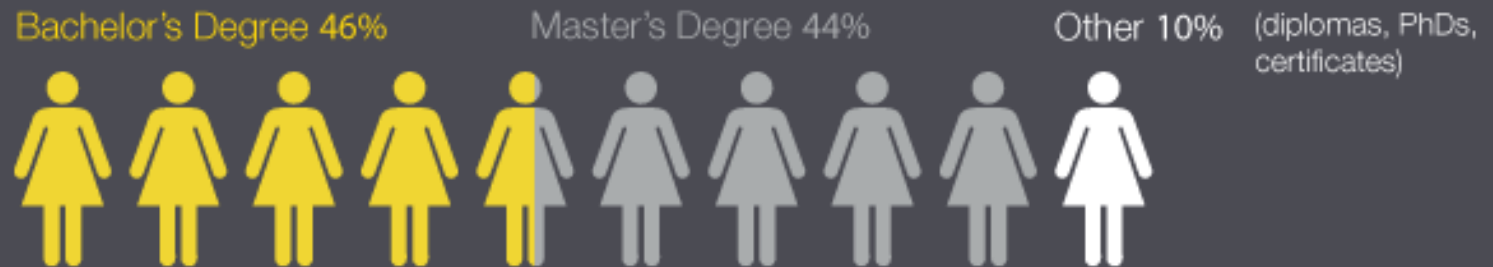
We conducted this survey to find out more about women working in the oil and gas industry, their career path and the challenges and opportunities of working in the sector.

Key findings:

- 75% said they felt welcome working in the oil and gas industry, yet 45% said they do not feel they get the same recognition as their male colleagues.
- 95% said mentors were important for career advancement, yet 42% said they were neither a mentor nor a mentee.
- When asked what companies could be doing to attract and encourage women employees suggestions included: educating women early about careers in the oil and gas industry; giving women a chance to take on more challenging offshore roles; and providing equal benefits and opportunities.

# Path into oil and gas engineering

‘What is the highest qualification you hold?’



## Path into oil and gas engineering

‘Did you work in a different industry / profession before moving into oil and gas?’

yes  
44%



no 56%

## Path into oil and gas engineering

‘Why did you choose to work in the oil and gas sector?’

“

*Because it provides an opportunity to travel, offers interesting and varied work, good career prospects and earning potential.*

”

## Path into oil and gas engineering

‘Why did you choose to work in the oil and gas sector?’

“

*I loved challenging myself right from when I was young. I grew up always wanting to compete with boys in maths and sciences, which I did. I was told that geology is a course for men, but that comment alone drove me to want to see what made it a career for men. Here I am, a female geologist in a man’s world.*

”

## Path into oil and gas engineering

‘Why did you choose to work in the oil and gas sector?’

“

*It is an attractive sector in which I can expand my knowledge and meet different people. In the oil and gas sector, there are always changes and you don't have to do the same task every day like a teacher for example.*

”



## Working in the oil and gas industry

‘As a woman, do you feel welcome in the oil and gas industry?’



## Working in the oil and gas industry

‘Would you encourage a female friend to pursue a career in oil and gas engineering now?’

yes  
89%



no 11%

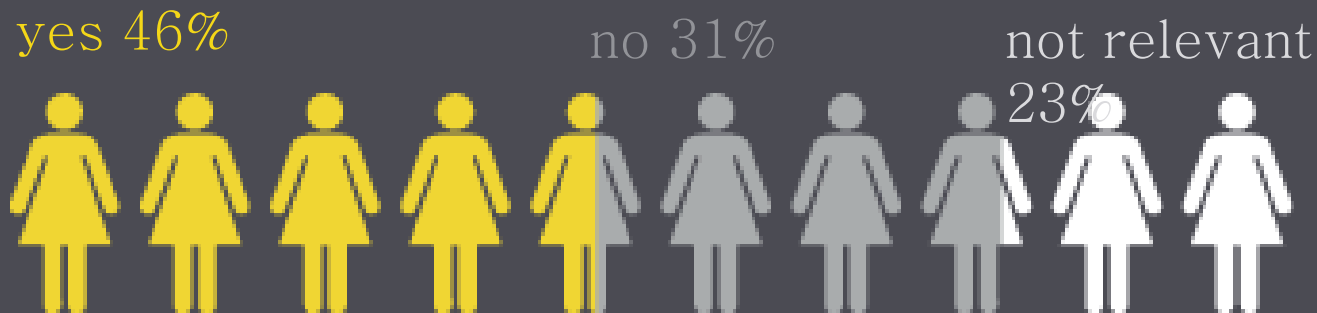
## Working in the oil and gas industry

‘Would you encourage a female who is due to complete her studies in 10 years’ time to pursue a career in oil and gas engineering?’

yes 82%  no 18%

## Working in the oil and gas industry

‘Does your work currently provide you with adequate benefits to meet the needs of you and your family (e.g. childcare, flexible work hours, telecommuting)?’



## Working in the oil and gas industry

‘What could your company do to be more welcoming and encouraging of its women employees?’

“

*Reach out to potential candidates and show that there are already women in the company so you're not alone. Inform people about the industry because many people still think of oil covered roughnecks when speaking of the oil and gas industry. Inform people about the benefits and the challenges of the industry. Support a women's network so there are actually other women to go to if information is needed or problems have to be solved.*

”

## Working in the oil and gas industry

‘What could your company do to be more welcoming and encouraging of its women employees?’

“

*We need more senior female role models, both in technical and managerial positions. A lot of women drop out of the workforce before they reach those levels.*

”

## Working in the oil and gas industry

‘What could your company do to be more welcoming and encouraging of its women employees?’

“

*Increasing the field visits to develop our field backgrounds, enhancing women’s participation in leadership, giving women wider space in decision making and providing more accommodation for kids care during work time.*

”

# Mentorship

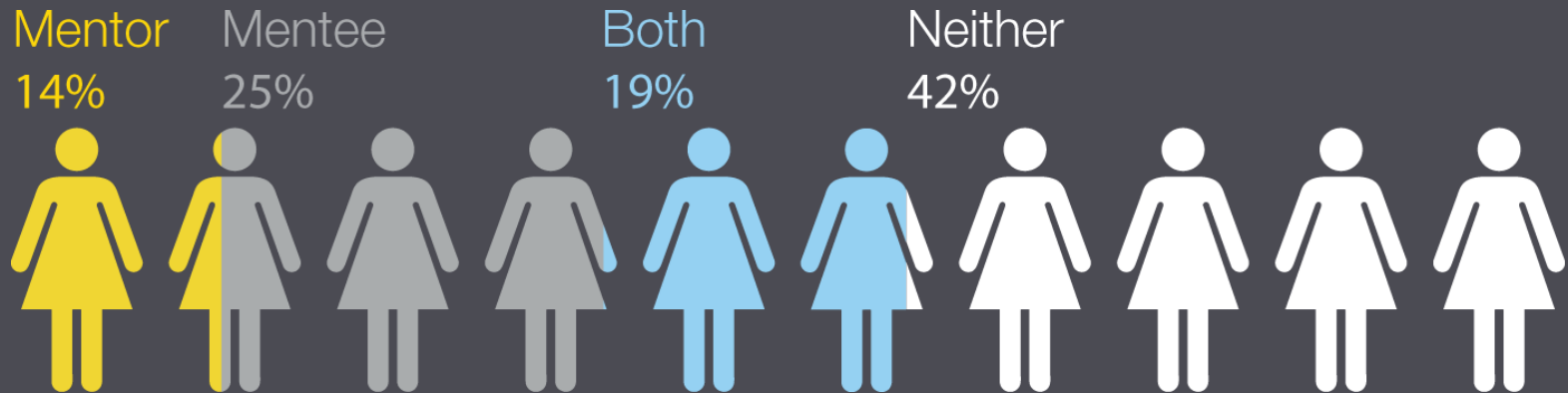
‘How important do you think mentors are for career advancement?’





# Mentorship

‘Are you currently a mentor or a mentee?’



## Career advancement

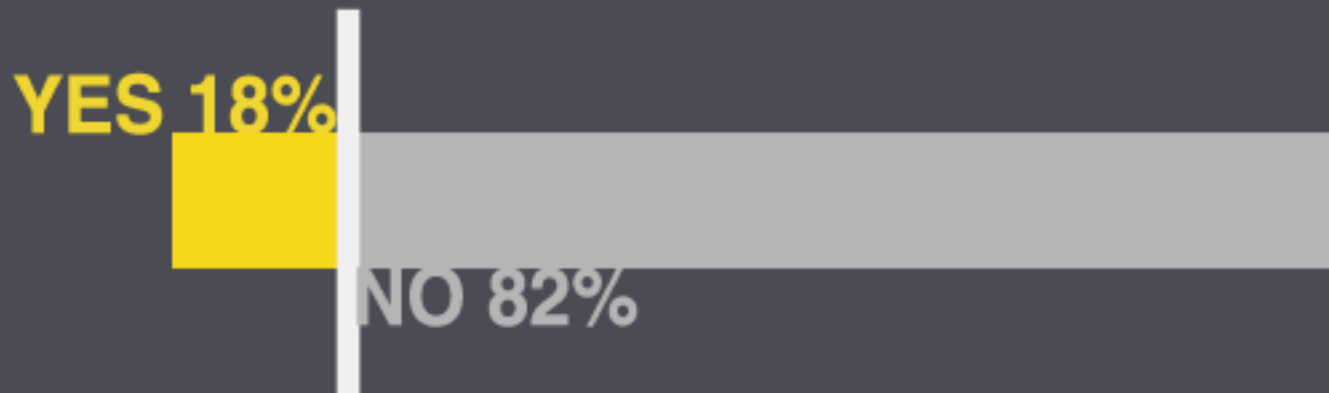
‘Do you feel you get the same recognition for your work as male peers?’

**YES 55%**

**NO 45%**

## Career advancement

‘Are you thinking of leaving the oil and gas industry in the next 2 – 5 years?’



## Career advancement

‘What are some of the challenges you see inhibiting your job growth / career trajectory?’

“

*A lack of mentorship - I would have been in a better position today if I had a mentor. Family - my current job does not provide a childcare facility. Lack of suitable roles - being a women, I have always felt this bias in every company I have worked for and also the remuneration for women is less than for men.*

”

## Career advancement

‘What are some of the challenges you see inhibiting your job growth / career trajectory?’

“

*The most challenging aspect I find is getting an opportunity to work at restricted locations like offshore. These exposures and opportunities mean male peers are a step ahead. Another challenge is handling male peers or juniors who refuse to cooperate due to ego.*

”

## Career advancement

‘Would you consider taking less money for more work flexibility?’

yes 39%  no 61%

# Conclusion

The oil and gas industry is working hard to attract more women into the sector, but there is still a great deal more that must be done and done quickly.

- The industry needs to improve its image – it needs to show it is a place where women are welcome and can achieve great success.
- Mentorship is a key area of opportunity - only by supporting women into more prominent roles can the industry create the female role models it needs to inspire others to join the sector.
- Oil and gas engineering is an exciting and rewarding career – the industry must better promote its benefits.



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