

The Women in Energy series is a joint project between USEA and USAID that was developed out of USEA's Engendering Utilities Partnership, a program funded by USAID to improve gender policies and gender outcomes at their respective organizations.



Every month we feature a woman who has shown exemplary leadership. We want to showcase your story this month. The women among you come from diverse backgrounds and roles, and they bring with them a unique perspective to gender equality within the energy sector.

Women in Energy Interview Questions

1. How have your education and career path led you to where you are now?

"I feel fortunate to have spent my career at Dominion Energy – a large company with so many opportunities. I have worked in different areas and at different levels of the company, including Finance, Budgeting, Human Resources, Supply Chain Management, Information Technology, New Asset Acquisition & Integration, and Power Generation. I have spent most of my career on the generation side of the company, which has been challenging and rewarding."

2. Over the course of your career, have you witnessed changes in the sector that have launched more women into leadership positions?

"When I started my career in 1981, the energy industry was male dominated. It still is, but over the years, more and more women have gravitated to the industry because of the unique opportunities it offers them.

Dominion Energy is committed to recruiting, retaining and developing diverse candidates. Each time I moved into a new position, I was fortunate to have peers and teammates who provided support and encouragement. Today, I am pleased to see so many other women in leadership positions and to be able to mentor other diverse leaders. All companies need strong diverse leaders."

3. Technology is transforming the traditional utility business model into a more modern interactive grid. Some utilities view this transformation as an opportunity to focus on change management and diversity. Research provides compelling evidence that inclusion and diversity unlock innovation and drives better business performance. What, if anything, is your organization doing to attract, retain, and promote more women into senior management positions to respond to the dramatic industry transformation?

“Dominion Energy has always been committed to diversity and inclusion. The company has improved diverse hiring practices by increasing diversity on interview panels; making job postings gender neutral (line worker instead of groundman) and decoding technical language (field services technician instead of FMS helper); keeping a keen eye on the results of every stage of the hiring process for every job requisition and addressing instances of non-inclusion; and ensuring employment branding materials reflect the diversity of our communities. In addition, the company continues to work tirelessly to create an environment of inclusivity where diverse employees feel supported and positioned to thrive, which ultimately enhances the chances they will stay and grow their careers.”

4. Are talented women within your organization making it to top leadership positions? Why/why not?

“Yes, Dominion Energy has talented women at all levels of the organization, including on the executive leadership team and board. The company believes that diversity and inclusion is a business imperative, and innovation stems from having people with different experiences and backgrounds.”

5. Companies that embrace diversity outperform their competitors. What type of diversity programs does your organization have in place to mentor future women leaders? How does your organization measure and report gender diversity? Is the data publicly available?

“At Dominion Energy, we believe our workforce should reflect the changing demographics of the communities we serve. In fact, we were the first in the industry to host a diversity student conference for minority and women talent which has proven to be a valuable source of talent for our workforce pipeline and allows us to recruit the best of the best. In our inaugural year of presenting the conference, Dominion Energy hosted students representing 74 colleges and universities, and the 2020 conference will be held virtually.

Our company has found that mentoring naturally comes from opportunities sponsored by employee resource groups such as We3 (Women Engaging, Educating and Energizing). We3 is the largest employee resource group across the Dominion Energy footprint with more than 1,800 participants. The mission of We3 is to connect, empower and support women at Dominion Energy. Among the successful We3 programming is Lunch with a Leader, which provides an intimate forum for employees to spend their lunch hour talking with a female

member of the executive team. In addition, We3's Smart Tours offer women the opportunity to provide other women with tours of their facilities, and the Ambassador Program empowers women at field offices to reinforce We3 messages with leaders and individual contributors.

In addition to We3, Dominion Energy has the African American, Asian Pacific Islander, Latino, DiverseAbility, LGBTQ+, Veterans and Young Professionals employee resource groups. All of these groups give employees with shared interests and backgrounds the opportunity to create communities, enhance the work environment, develop networks and encourage professional development.

Dominion Energy measures and reports social and workforce metrics. This information, which is available in our Annual Report and Sustainability & Corporate Responsibility Report, shows women and minorities as a percentage of our workforce, management and board, and by business unit and tenure. In 2019, 45 percent of our new hires were diverse — women and minorities. That is up from 31 percent in 2015.”

6. What actions should the energy and electricity sector be focused on to accelerate change, increase diversity, and foster a better gender balance in the boardroom?

“At Dominion Energy, we believe that diversity is a strength that gives us the competitive advantage we need to better serve our customers, foster innovation and position the company for long-term success. Workforce diversity, workforce inclusion and a culture of inclusivity are included in our strategic plan, and we feel that diversity is deeper than just gender or color. We promote diversity at every level through diversity councils at both the executive and business-unit level and through employee resource groups. Now is the time for our sector to recognize that diverse workforces are stronger and perform better. We should all build on our progress and strive to make our workforce even more representative. We should also be more intentional about developing and promoting diverse talent into leadership positions.”