

Transcript of Meg O'Neill, President ExxonMobil Canada

The coolest part of my job is... I get to travel offshore.

As the president of ExxonMobil Canada I look after ExxonMobil's business on the East Coast of Canada. I've always participated in team sports, as a kid I played soccer and basketball and when I went to university I started playing ice hockey and there are a lot of similarities between what you do on a sports field and what you do in a business environment. You need to figure out what motivates each of the players on your team or in your organization and get them working together to achieve that common goal. And if that goal is winning games or being successful in a certain project the techniques you use to motivate everybody and get everybody to contribute to the best of their abilities are very similar.

When I was in high school I was interested in both math and science, as well as history, and when I was trying to decide what was I going to study in university and what did I want to be when I grew up, I asked myself, "what am I passionate about?" and "what is the sort of field that would give me the opportunity to have a lifestyle that I found enjoyable?" And for me, the obvious choice was engineering. You know, as an engineer you bring in a good salary, you have a good life and it's something that I find very interesting and I have a lot of passion about.

You know, throughout the course of my career at ExxonMobil the company has asked me several times to do things that I had a lot of uncertainty about and a lot of fear. They've asked me to do jobs where I didn't really know much about the scope of the work that I was doing or to lead people who knew more about the subject than I knew, the company has asked me to move places that I've never seen before, and, you know, that makes you nervous—a lot of uncertainty with that. And, you know, what I learned was to say, "yes," and to recognize that I had the skills and the capability and I had the team around me to help me be successful and help things work out fine and every time I've said, "yes," I've been pleased that I've said, "yes." It's been the right decision and the biggest issue was just me getting comfortable that I could do what the company wanted me to do and to be able to say, "yes."

My advice to you? Understand what you're passionate about, understand what you love doing and pursue that; and pursue that with enthusiasm. And when life throws you a challenge or when life throws you a roadblock and you're feeling uncertain, don't be afraid, I know you can do it.