

Skills Viewpoint:

Stuart Broadley EIC

Learn and
progress,
then do
it again



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Stuart Broadley is CEO of the Energy Industries Council (EIC) and is founding co-chair of the UK Energy Supply Chain (UKESC) ministerial taskforce.

We each have career journeys with well-oiled stories, with highs and lows, all wildly different, but I've been asked to share mine, so here goes. If you are career planning and can garner a few tips from this, all good.

Studying Design & Technology at Loughborough University, a lightning bolt struck me as I saw my future wife across a crowded refectory for the first time, truly I was love struck, she had no idea that day, corny I know. We married when I was 22, she 21, before graduation, with no job, no car, no house, no kids and no career plan.

In need of a job and some money, I visited a library, the old-fashioned type on the



street, researched engineering companies in the UK, typed and sent out 100 CVs. Two interviews, one job offer, that's how I started. That first full time job was as a graduate engineer on a Cook's tour at Lucas Aerospace in Wolverhampton. Trained as a manufacturing systems engineer – Lucas was at the forefront of Japanese factory optimisation techniques in the '90s.

Here I had my first union experience – I remember a scrawled poster during a strike, "Due to management cuts, the light at end of the tunnel has been turned off". I've never forgotten that sharp wit, intended to make a serious point.

I heard about a Lucas-funded, limited places option for an MSc in Manufacturing Systems at Warwick University – being ambitious, I rattled the HR cage until they withered and accepted me.

Quickly it was two kids, two degrees, learning a lot, not earning a lot. I visited a library again, 100 typed CVs were sent again, one interview. Turns out I had accidentally sent 6 of my

CVs to the same company which had many legal entity names. Curious about my obvious enthusiasm, little did they know, they interviewed me, I got the job.

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The MD became the first of many great mentors I had over my career, Barry Morgan at Rolls-Royce's Clarke Chapman in Gateshead. I was to shadow the existing General Manager of the manufacturing business unit, before taking over a year later. Long story short, it was tortuous shadowing someone who had not recruited me and did not want me there, but I survived and proved my tenacity.

Second union experience – the day I took over as GM at Rolls-Royce, I was 27 and had never run a team or business before, the convener slapped a 14% pay

demand on my desk. Long story short – 6-week strike, Rolls-Royce Chairman flew in his trusted HR expert to coach me, no capitulation, 3-year pay deal agreed, strike ended.

Two years later, we won North-East Company of the Year award. How? Sink or swim situations focus the team and the mind. Having worked so hard to re-unify the team after the strike, we still had to find a new, profitable product line or risk closure. We combined our strength in crane assembly with some new manufacturing systems techniques, to then diversify into defence, building what became the award-winning assembly line for BR90s bridging trucks and tanks.

Somehow, it was now four kids, and my first-time being head-hunted, by Wood Group Gas Turbines. My first overseas placement in Calgary followed, to start-up a 50-50 JV with TransCanada Pipelines. Employee #1, Wood Group flew in lawyers and gas turbine experts to coach me. Built the factory, hired the team, grew the business, got it profitable, and learnt the key to customer satisfaction, that the best teams give the best service.

Second time head-hunted, second overseas placement, five kids, moved from gas turbines to wind turbines with REpower in Hamburg, now part of Siemens Gamesa. Tried to learn German, wow that was hard.

Idea was to bring oil & gas knowledge to short-cut the start-up of the offshore wind business – did not work. The oil & gas industry refused to share, how they rue that bad decision today, so the wind industry had to start from scratch and find its own way, which we did, very successfully.

Renewables, compared to oil & gas, had a much younger, more optimistic culture, accustomed to 40% business growth each year. It was clear even then, more than 10 years ago, that the future was green.

In 2014 the oil crisis to end all oil crises hit, and there was no escaping it's devastating impact on the entire energy sector. Inflated costs, arrogant leadership behaviours, deep redundancies. Rather than stay on the merry-go-round, after 20 years in global O&M, I also sought a new challenge, to learn new skills again. You've worked it out I guess, what motivates me is to learn and progress, and then do it all again.



That brings us up to date. For five years, I have been privileged to be CEO of the EIC, the UK's largest energy trade association, covering all energy sectors, working globally, in a fast-changing energy environment, high on the government's agenda.

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The amazing EIC team gives back, dedicated to helping our member companies identify and win new energy projects. Every day is a new experience of learning on a broad scale, from innovative growth strategies to disruptive energy transition and the important role of government.

I've managed to find a way to convert this desire to learn and progress into annual research work, that we call EIC Survive & Thrive. Privileged every year to interview top business leaders about how they survived and thrived after the oil crisis, and how they have continued to do so, in the most difficult trading conditions since the great depression. We promote and award these entrepreneurial leaders and their inspiring visions every year. Striking how, when one thinks bigger, opportunities come thick and fast. Wish I'd known all of this when I was younger.

COVID, for all its horror, has also been a catalyst for change, forcing business leaders to switch to planning for uncertainty rather than predictability, being resilient and super-alert to the next shock, and realising that they have a bigger role in the world than just to make profits. The best businesses are profitable, yes, but also take responsible for diversity & inclusion, sustainability, mental wellbeing, helping those less fortunate than themselves and, most importantly, the health of our planet.

What have I learnt looking back?

Priorities change over time – from love and idealism, to career and progression, from needing to be coached to enjoying coaching others, from success to failure and then success again, from good to bad days and learning to be philosophical, from results-focus to team-focus and learning to be self-aware, from taking to giving, from believing you know everything to realising you know so little.

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Businesses are now looking into the eyes of a new industrial revolution and, like the 'dot com bubble' of 20-25 years ago – 'global net zero by 2050' means £trillions of opportunities for countries, businesses, communities and entrepreneurs, each year, requiring new technologies, new skills, new ways of thinking, leading, working and living, and new levels of caring and collaborating, but...

Caution is needed – during the 'dot com bubble', thousands of businesses attempted to take advantage of the new market, the internet, but in the end only a few survived and reached the top – you know who they are – and the same may happen with net zero. Elon Musk is truly a phenomenon – he has reached the top of both the dot com and net zero trees, the world's richest man. Who is next, maybe you, but how many thousands of businesses and entrepreneurs will fail this time in the pursuit of riches and a new world?

...“And in case you're wondering, yes, I'm still happily married to that girl I first saw across the refectory 35 years ago.”





Stuart's Bio

“Stuart joined EIC, the Energy Industries Council, as CEO in 2016. He recently founded UKESC, the UK Energy Supply Chain taskforce, which he co-chairs with the UK Export Minister Graham Stuart MP and the UK Energy Minister Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP.

UKESC aims to amplify the voice of the entire UK energy supply chain to support policy development, to increase the pace and scale of investing, seeding and rooting of the UK energy supply chain in the context of energy transition, and to step change internationalisation and exporting success.

Prior to joining EIC in 2016, Stuart enjoyed a successful 25-year career leading global O&M and engineering businesses in oil & gas, power, renewables and defence with Rolls-Royce, Wood, REpower and Hoerbiger.

He is architect of the Energy Exports Conference which brings 20 inward delegations to the UK each year with \$500bn of project opportunities, and he is author of the renowned Survive & Thrive annual report which highlights

successful growth strategies in challenging markets.

Stuart has various non-executive director roles and in 2019 was invited to become a Fellow of the Energy Institute.

The EIC is the UK's largest energy supply chain trade association, a not-for-profit with 750 member companies, across oil & gas, power, nuclear, renewable and new energy transition markets that, for 78 years, has advised governments and boardrooms, and helped companies to grow at home and around the world. The EIC team's real passion is helping companies to export, diversify, and grow – and their members benefit from EIC's unique suite of products and services – namely, energy market CAPEX, OPEX & supply chain capability databases, 250 events p.a., industry & government networks, international launchpad offices and extensive market insights.”