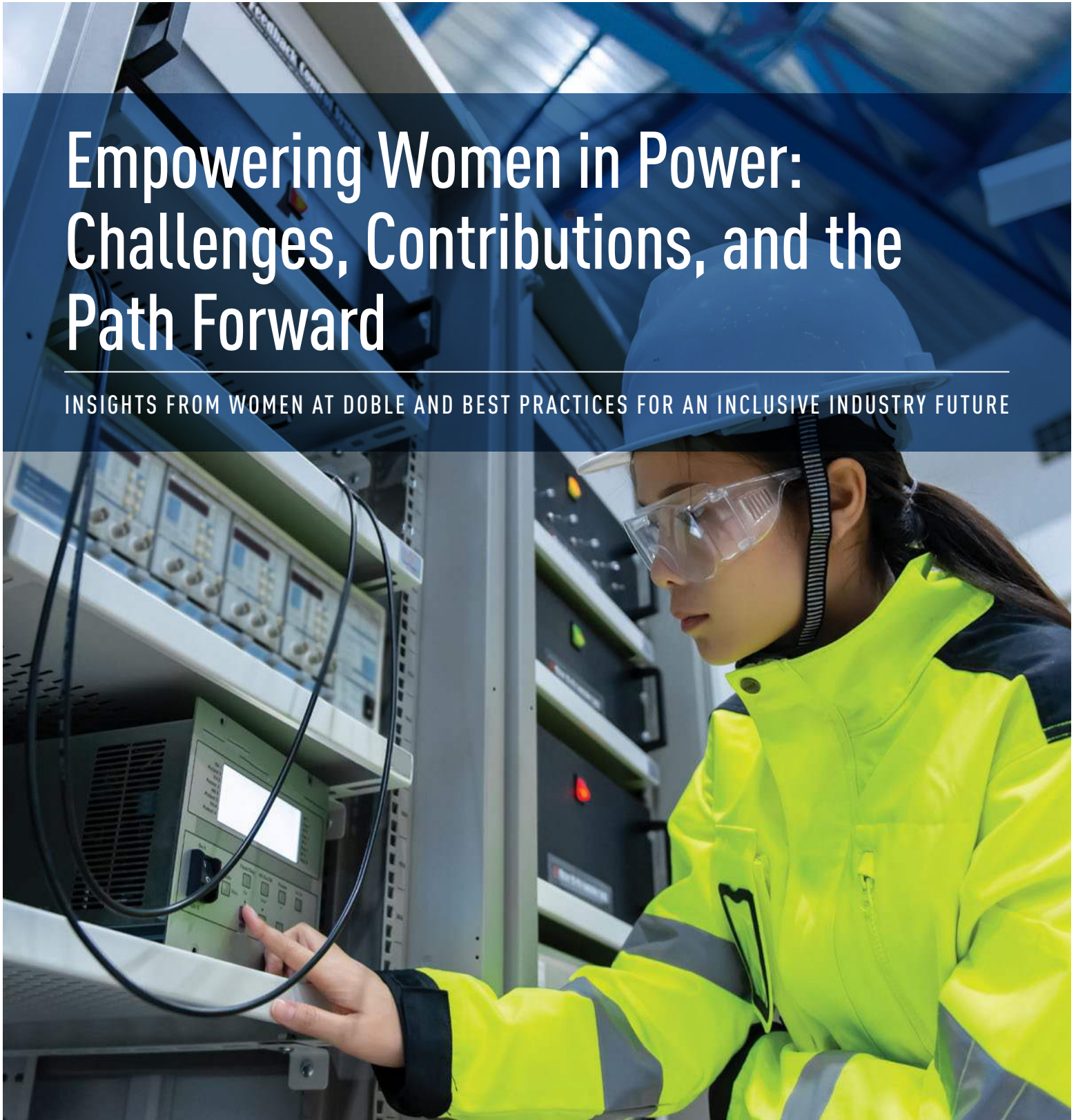


Empowering Women in Power: Challenges, Contributions, and the Path Forward

INSIGHTS FROM WOMEN AT DOBLE AND BEST PRACTICES FOR AN INCLUSIVE INDUSTRY FUTURE



DOBLE ENGINEERING COMPANY





INSIGHTS FROM WOMEN AT DOBLE AND BEST PRACTICES FOR AN INCLUSIVE INDUSTRY FUTURE

Despite notable progress in gender equity across many industries, the power and utilities industry continues to reflect significant gaps in female representation, leadership, and wage equality. Women [hold only 16.3% of C-suite positions](#) and just [under 27% of board roles](#) within U.S. and Canadian power and utilities companies, with even fewer stepping into core industry leadership roles. Beyond the boardroom, representation remains low with women making up [around 22% of the overall workforce](#) in the electric power sector—a stark contrast to the [global workforce average of 48%](#).

This disparity extends to wage equity as well: women in energy, including electric utilities, earn [approximately 19% less](#) than their male counterparts, even when factors like education and experience are taken into account. The innovation landscape tells a similar story: only [25% of energy-related patents listing a female inventor](#), pointing to an untapped pool of ideas, perspectives, and talents that could be pivotal to the industry's future.

Addressing these gender gaps is vital, not only to create a more inclusive and equitable workplace, but to harness a full range of ideas and talents that can strengthen the power sector's resilience and growth. This report explores the impact women have within the industry, shares insights from female leaders at Doble, and outlines best practices for companies aiming to increase female participation at all levels.



“Women’s advancement isn’t the glass ceiling, it’s the broken rung.”

– May Scally



The Role of Women in Power: Contributions and Challenges

In the power and utilities industry, gender diversity is not only a matter of equity but a proven driver of business success. Research highlights that companies with strong female representation, particularly in leadership roles, tend to see better financial performance. For instance, Fortune 500 companies with the highest representation of women on boards [outperform those with the lowest](#), and gender-diverse teams [consistently report higher sales and profitability](#). These findings suggest that increasing gender diversity in the power sector could significantly benefit organizations facing today’s complex challenges.

INNOVATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

Diversity, particularly in STEM fields like engineering and chemistry, often [leads to more creative and effective problem-solving](#). Teams with varied backgrounds and perspectives approach challenges from different angles, generating unique solutions. In the power industry, this advantage can translate into innovative strategies that enhance performance and resilience.

The sector itself faces a pivotal juncture: aging infrastructure, rising climate risks, the rapid pace of technological change, and cybersecurity concerns all demand fresh approaches. [With 40% of the current workforce projected to retire by 2030](#), the need for innovative ideas is greater than ever. Encouraging more young women to step into roles as asset managers, engineers, and technicians can help the industry meet these demands, bringing much-needed diversity of thought to ensure the electric grid’s reliability and stability in a changing landscape.

LEADERSHIP IN SUSTAINABILITY

When more women are represented in industries like power, they make notable contributions to sustainability efforts, often leading initiatives that prioritize renewable energy and efficient practices. [Studies show that women are more likely to](#) champion environmental action and sustainability within organizations, and companies with more women on their boards are more likely to invest in renewable energy and adopt carbon reduction strategies. Historically, [women have been instrumental in environmental social movements](#), and as their presence grows in positions of power, they continue to advocate for practices that protect and sustain resources.

In fact, there’s a broader trend: governments and organizations act differently when women are well-represented in leadership roles. [Nations with greater gender equality](#) are more likely to implement policies that support environmental protection. By supporting female leaders in the power industry, companies can reinforce their commitment to sustainable practices and foster a culture of environmental responsibility that aligns with societal needs.



OVERCOMING PERSISTENT CHALLENGES

Despite these benefits, women in the power sector still face significant challenges, from workplace biases to a lack of mentorship and inflexible work cultures. At the entry level, women are often overlooked, being hired and promoted at lower rates than men. In 2023, for every 100 men who received their first promotion to manager, [only 81 women advanced](#)—a disparity that underscores the “broken rung” in the corporate ladder. This issue is even more pronounced for women of color, who hold just 7% of C-suite positions despite incremental gains since 2017.

Compounding these challenges, many companies have scaled back programs designed to advance women’s careers. [According to McKinsey](#), fewer organizations now prioritize gender and racial diversity, and critical initiatives such as mentorship, career development, and sponsorship for women are in decline. The STEM field itself, still heavily male-dominated with [women comprising only 28% of the STEM workforce](#), tends to perpetuate a rigid and exclusionary culture that can deter women and minorities.

The lack of role models exacerbates this issue; with few female scientists and engineers represented in media or popular culture, young girls are left with limited examples to inspire interest in these fields. For Black women, this disparity is even more pronounced, contributing to the industry’s difficulty in attracting a diverse workforce.



Women in Power at Doble

ADVICE AND INSIGHTS FROM DOBLE’S FEMALE LEADERS

Navigating the male-dominated power industry presents unique challenges, but also opportunities to drive meaningful change. Women leaders at Doble are not only advancing the industry but also challenging longstanding biases, building resilient support systems, and fostering inclusivity. Their voices and experiences offer insights and practical advice on confronting bias, self-advocacy, mentorship, and paving the way for future generations in power and beyond.



OVERCOMING BIASES AND EMBRACING SELF-ADVOCACY



Nicole MacLennan

In male-dominated sectors, gender biases are often subtle but pervasive, manifesting in everything from assumptions about authority to microaggressions that undermine women's contributions. For women leaders, overcoming these biases requires both assertiveness and resilience. **Nicole MacLennan**, Doble's VP of Global Finance, emphasizes the importance of advocating for oneself: *"One of the biggest challenges has been advocating for myself in environments where gender bias is often present. In male-dominated fields like finance or the power industry, it's important to know your worth and make sure you're considered for the right opportunities...It's about knowing what you want and putting yourself in a position to succeed."*



May Scally

May Scally, COO, Canadian Operations, has long recognized the importance of confronting bias and recalls facing surprise reactions due to her gender, a reminder of the industry's deep-seated assumptions. *"I've encountered instances where simply walking into a room in the U.S. and other countries has led to surprise reactions because I'm not a 'Mr.' Scally. I learned early on to tune out what they used to call the 'glass ceiling' and just keep focused on the job to be done."*



Charis Campbell

Navigating these biases requires a keen awareness of the double standards women often face. For other Doble women professionals, who have navigated gendered double standards throughout their careers, learning the importance of self-advocacy is critical. **Charis Campbell**, Laboratory Manager and LIMS Administrator at Doble, reflects on the double standard women often face when balancing assertiveness and emotion: *"Women often face a double standard where being assertive is seen as harsh and showing emotion is perceived as weakness. It's a balancing act, and I've had to navigate these perceptions carefully...I stand my ground firmly, making it clear that if I set a policy or make a decision, it stands."*



Michelle Rybak

Michelle Rybak, Director, Client Service Engineering, underscores the importance of self-confidence when facing these obstacles: *"In a male-dominated field, having an extra layer of self-confidence is crucial. You really have to say to yourself, 'I can do this.'" It's a lesson echoed by Nicole MacLennan, who stresses the importance of never underestimating one's abilities: "Don't go into a new challenge assuming you can't do it."*

ADDRESSING UNCONSCIOUS BIAS AND BUILDING RESILIENCE

Many of the biases women encounter in the workplace are unconscious, emerging as microaggressions or assumptions that can undermine a woman's authority or contributions. Scally emphasizes a constructive approach to addressing these biases: *"Many of the microaggressions we encounter are unconscious. Engaging in divisive behavior and anger won't solve the underlying issues. Instead, it's crucial that both men and women take notice of gender microaggressions and address them through coaching and awareness training."*

Navigating these unconscious biases requires resilience and the support of a strong foundation. Doble's women leaders understand that true resilience is built not only on individual effort but also on a community of mentors, peers, and advocates who uplift one another.

BUILDING RESILIENCE THROUGH SUPPORT AND MENTORSHIP

Success in any industry is often not only about individual performance but also about the support systems in place to help you grow. This is especially true for women in male-dominated sectors like power, where balancing career and personal life demands can be overwhelming. As May Scally emphasizes, building a career in the power industry goes beyond technical skills; it requires the right environment to foster growth. **“Solid support at home is key, especially if you’re married. Choosing the right partner who’s on board with your career goals is crucial,”** she says. Unfortunately, [women often bear the lion’s share of household duties](#), regardless of their professional ambitions, making the need for support even more critical.

Scally also highlights the importance of mentorship in shaping one’s career. **“You can’t do it alone. Even though I didn’t have a formal coach, I learned the importance of allowing yourself to seek mentors for advice and support. Their guidance was invaluable, especially when it came to pursuing new job opportunities and navigating challenges.”** By relying on mentors, women can access not only valuable advice but also the emotional resilience needed to navigate the complexities of a male-dominated industry.

Mentorship is a powerful tool for fostering personal and professional growth: **“Mentorship provides a space for individuals to gain control over their emotions and develop essential skills. By offering guidance on communication techniques, such as avoiding phrases like ‘I don’t know but...,’ mentors can help women maintain credibility and confidence in their abilities.”** This emphasis on improving communication skills is crucial for women in the power industry, where their voices may be overlooked or undervalued if not communicated assertively.

Charis Campbell shares her belief in the power of camaraderie, especially among women in the field. **“One of the most important lessons I’ve learned is the value of camaraderie and support among women. Attending conferences where there are only a handful of women, including myself, has shown me the importance of helping each other,”** she reflects. Building these networks of support is essential for creating lasting change in the industry, and when women lift each other up, they ensure that everyone has access to the tools and guidance needed to succeed.

Resilience isn’t just about individual strength; it’s built through collective support and shared experiences. Mentorship and allyship are invaluable for women, providing guidance and a network of encouragement in the face of challenges. By lifting each other up, women foster resilience and create lasting, positive change in their industry. As May Scally puts it, **“When you foster those mentorship relationships, you’re not just helping yourself—you’re lifting others too. It’s like unlocking a world of potential, where everyone has the tools and support they need to reach their full potential in their careers.”**

Leaning on mentors and support systems also plays a critical role in navigating career challenges, helping women build resilience and thrive in their fields. By fostering these connections, women not only enhance their own success but create a foundation for lasting, positive change in their industry.





LEADING WITH INCLUSIVITY TO EMPOWER FUTURE GENERATIONS

True leadership in male-dominated fields is about more than technical expertise; it's about creating an environment where everyone, regardless of gender, can thrive. The women at Doble who have made strides in the power industry understand that inclusive leadership is not just a personal responsibility but a collective one. It's about nurturing others, creating opportunities, and breaking down the barriers that have historically held women back.

As May Scally puts it, *"Ultimately, my goal is not to point fingers or assign blame but to work towards creating a more inclusive workplace where everyone can thrive and contribute fully, regardless of gender or any other differences."* This mindset of inclusivity is key to creating a sustainable future for women in the power sector.

Charis also emphasizes the importance of communication and transparency in leadership, noting that *"As a leader, I believe in the importance of open communication. When team members approach me with their goals or concerns, I take the time to discuss their options and provide guidance. This open dialogue is crucial because, without it, things can quickly go south."*

Nicole MacLennan's leadership approach is rooted in understanding the strengths and needs of individual team members. *"By managing people according to their strengths and needs, we get better performance and a more engaged team. It's not about applying one management style to everyone but adapting to bring out the best in each person."*

Together, these leaders exemplify the power of inclusivity and mentorship. They don't just pave the way for their own success but actively create pathways for others to follow. In doing so, they contribute to a future where diversity is not just accepted but celebrated, fostering environments where diverse ideas can flourish and creating a more vibrant and sustainable industry for generations to come.



Best Practices for Companies to Increase Women's Participation

Increasing women's participation in male-dominated industries like power and STEM calls for deliberate, measurable actions that go beyond hiring strategies. To foster a genuinely inclusive environment, organizations need to implement policies that address the unique challenges women face while creating meaningful pathways for growth. Flexible work policies, equitable advancement opportunities, and mentorship programs can significantly impact women's success and retention.

FLEXIBLE WORK POLICIES AND BENEFITS

Flexible work policies are important for retaining women in the workplace. [A recent survey](#) found that paid time off, healthcare benefits, paid leadership development, flexible schedules, and advancement opportunities topped the list of benefits women prioritize. However, women are often [less likely than men to receive this needed flexibility](#). Offering equitable access to flexible work arrangements signals that an organization values work-life balance and employee well-being. Policies such as job sharing, remote work options, and flexible hours can help companies retain talented women by allowing them to adapt their schedules to personal and family commitments.

A company's culture plays a pivotal role in retaining women and fostering an environment where they can thrive. Employee engagement, recognition, and open communication create workplaces where women feel valued and supported.



Julie Crisafulli Brown

"At Doble, we know that how we value and support our employees directly impacts how they show up for our clients. A genuine 'thank you' can go a long way. By creating a culture where people feel heard, valued, and comfortable sharing their challenges, we strengthen morale, improve retention, and create stronger, more productive teams—ultimately driving success."

– Julie Crisafulli Brown, VP of Global Human Resources & Engagement, Doble

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT WITH EQUAL SUPPORT

Both women and men show similar interest in promotions, raises, and leadership roles. Yet women are often more hesitant to accept these roles due to concerns about inadequate support, confidence in their qualifications, or fear of failure. This hesitation is not unfounded; research shows that companies [typically require higher qualifications](#) from women and [offer fewer resources for women's leadership development](#). This unequal footing can create a sense of isolation and vulnerability, sometimes [called the "glass cliff,"](#) where women are placed in high-stakes, precarious roles.

To counter these challenges, organizations should provide all genders with equitable access to promotions, raises, and leadership training. Leadership development programs that offer practical challenges with clear rewards can empower women to confidently take on roles of greater responsibility. Additionally, structured mentorship programs and sponsorships can be vital to providing women with networks of support and guidance, helping them build skills and navigate potential obstacles.

EQUITY IN COMPENSATION AND RECOGNITION

The gender pay gap remains a significant barrier, particularly in STEM fields. Men in STEM positions typically earn [nearly \\$15,000 more per year than women](#), and the disparity is even greater for Latina and Black women. To address this, companies need to establish pay equity practices and value contributions based on skills and performance, free from gender bias—as women, importantly, should feel they earned the right to be there based on their merit and unique attributes, not to fill a diversity quota. This includes promoting transparency in pay structures and ensuring recognition for contributions, which can shift organizational culture to more inclusively reward talent.



BUILDING INCLUSIVE HIRING PRACTICES AND EARLY ENGAGEMENT

Bridging the gender gap in industries like power and STEM should start long before the hiring process. Educational institutions and companies must work together to encourage young girls to explore careers in these fields, providing early exposure and fostering passion. Representation matters. When young students see women succeeding in technical roles, it challenges stereotypes, expands possibilities, and broadens aspirations for future generations.

As Michelle Rybak, Director, Client Service Engineering at Doble points out:

“We need to reach out to young students and show them that this career path can be fun and fulfilling. Representation is key—when young girls and boys see someone like me in a hard hat, it changes their perception of what’s possible. It’s about opening doors and showing the intriguing aspects of our work.”

CREATING PATHWAYS FOR CAREER GROWTH AND PURPOSE

To retain top talent in the power industry, companies should help employees find purpose and satisfaction in their roles and emphasize the opportunities for impact. Employees who view their work as a “calling” report [higher levels of job satisfaction and commitment](#). For many women, roles that align with their values, provide a sense of purpose, and allow them to make a meaningful impact, [are particularly important](#).



Eileen Finnan

As **Eileen Finnan**, Doble’s Senior Director of Professional Services, notes *“The most exciting aspect for women in the power industry is the sheer amount of opportunity available due to growth and change. From the shift toward more climate-friendly power sources, such as wind, solar, and other clean energy alternatives, to the advancements in AI for enhancing reliability and data analysis, the industry offers numerous and important opportunities for innovation and making a difference.”* This dynamic environment allows women to contribute directly to society by ensuring the reliability and resilience of essential infrastructure.

Managers can foster this alignment by taking the time to understand employees’ strengths, values, and personal goals and shaping roles that resonate with their passions. Companies that prioritize this alignment and recognize the contributions of women build a resilient and diverse workforce that thrives on a variety of perspectives and ideas. By making employees feel valued and connected to their roles, organizations can empower women to pursue fulfilling careers while advancing the industry’s impact on society.

The power industry itself is evolving through new technologies and climate adaptation challenges, making it a perfect environment for women to make impactful contributions. With a significant portion of the workforce set to retire in the coming years, fresh perspectives are not only welcomed but needed. This change brings unprecedented opportunities for women to step into vital roles—such as asset management, engineering, and technical positions—that are central to maintaining essential services and ensuring grid reliability for society.



The Future of Women in Power



Rhonda O'Grady

“The power industry is undergoing transformation, creating exciting new opportunities for both men and women. While opportunities used to be primarily in engineering, the increasing reliance on data and other advanced technologies has opened doors for a broader range of talents. There's room for everyone to contribute.”

– Rhonda O'Grady, Senior Business Development Manager, Doble Engineering

The power and utilities sector stands on the brink of transformation, and women are poised to lead the charge. Through inclusivity and gender diversity, the industry holds enormous potential for growth, resilience, and innovation. The voices within this report demonstrate that women's contributions extend far beyond their technical skills—they bring innovative solutions, resilience, and a deep commitment to sustainability that drive the industry forward. Their stories reinforce that when women are given equitable opportunities and support, they not only succeed but also uplift the entire sector.

With clean energy shifts, rapid technological advancements, and nearly 40% of the workforce approaching retirement, the power industry offers unprecedented opportunities. But unlocking this potential requires breaking down barriers in a traditionally male-dominated field through mentorship, advocacy, and systemic change. Addressing unconscious biases, building support systems, and fostering a culture of inclusion, organizations enable women to thrive and lead in roles critical to society.

Empowering women in the power industry isn't just beneficial—it's essential for a resilient, sustainable future. By committing to inclusivity, Doble and the broader sector can shape an industry that thrives on diverse perspectives, ensuring the stability and growth of the power infrastructure that society depends on daily.



Empower Change. Join the Movement.



At Doble, we're committed to advancing the energy industry while breaking barriers for women through our EmpowHer TOGETHER program. Whether you're looking to make an impact, join the movement, or grow your career, there's a place for you here.

To learn more about the EmpowHer TOGETHER program and how to create a more inclusive future in the power industry, visit the EmpowHer TOGETHER [site here](#).

Ready to power your career? [Explore our current job openings at Doble](#) and join a team dedicated to innovation, inclusion, and impact.

ABOUT DOBLE ENGINEERING COMPANY

The team at Doble ensures reliable, safe and secure power for all. We do this by providing comprehensive diagnostics and engineering expertise for the energy industry.

Founded in 1920, Doble Engineering is committed to the continuing education of our customers, and the support and training of the next generation of power industry workers – uniting the utility sector for an innovative future.

Doble is part of the Utility Solutions Group of ESCO Technologies Inc. (NYSE: ESE). For more information, visit: www.doble.com, follow us on Twitter [@doble](https://twitter.com/doble) and connect on [LinkedIn](#).

