

## Indigeneering a solution for industry and engagement in energy

**Presented by: Deanna Burgart**

### The ConocoPhillips IRIS Seminar Series

Written by: Eva Peng, Haskayne School of Business MBA alumni

## Executive Summary

Deanna considers herself as an Indigeneer, which means she has a passion to combine western scientific principles with Indigenous perspectives. She wants to apply the Indigeneering concept to benefit the energy industry as well as Aboriginal people.

Although Indigenous people are the fastest growing demographic in Canada, they are facing challenges, including lack of representation, poverty, access to education and systemic racism. This can be seen here in Alberta by the disproportionately small percentage of APEGA members who identify as Indigenous.

Deanna stresses it is important to understand the Indigenous history and the barriers they are facing today to truly connect with them. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) follows the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a reconciliation framework and a driving force behind the Calls to Action. This includes calling for corporations and societies to create respectful relationships with Indigenous people through meaningful consultation and providing informed consent before economic projects are started within Call to Action 92.

## The Message

### How can the energy industry benefit from incorporating Indigenous knowledge?

Deanna explains that one of the potential benefits to including more Indigenous people is increased collaboration and innovation. The Indigenous concept of interconnectedness and sustainability can be applied to solve some of the complex challenges that the energy industry is seeing today.

### What can individuals do to be more inclusive?

Regardless of your background and job title, everyone in society can work towards creating a more inclusive environment. This can be done on an individual level starting with listening and asking questions to learn more about each other. Deanna recommends not being afraid to say the wrong thing as long as you are willing to learn. It's important to remember that no one can speak for an entire group and different groups in different locations and cultures may identify themselves differently.

**What can be done to close the gap and increase Indigenous participation in the energy industry?**

Deanna recommends engaging Indigenous youth and creating opportunities for them to learn about energy production. Another way is to recruit and retain Indigenous people through inclusion initiatives, so they are properly represented and can be looked up to by Indigenous youth.