



People of energy:

Adrian Brown

positive energy



From Middlesbrough to Aberdeen by way of the USA and West Africa, our next People of Energy case study introduces Adrian Brown – who came to Teesside at a young age and found a career that has led him on a thrilling journey which continues to excite.

Not every industry allows you to see the world. Oil and gas, though, is truly international in nature. I'm a good case in point.

I was born in Wales and moved to Middlesbrough when I was just four years old. I grew up in the market town of Guisborough and went on to earn a degree in Mechanical Engineering from UMIST, which is the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology.

My first job was as a Graduate Engineer for Schlumberger, and I started my working life in Nigeria – on a swamp barge drilling unit in the Niger Delta. That was just the beginning of my journey. After a few roles, I became a Rig Manager, working in Aberdeen and Nigeria, before taking a director-level role at Transocean's headquarters in Houston, USA. From there, I became General Manager in charge of Deepwater Offshore rigs operations in West Africa.

I then decided to embark on a new kind of journey, founding my own company – Fennex – in 2015. Building on the experience I gained over 20 years in oil and gas, we provide cutting-edge digital solutions to companies operating in the sector – helping them to solve problems, enhance operations and improve safety.

As someone who has worked within multinational companies and, now, runs his own business, I know the how strong an anchor oil and gas is for the entire UK economy. Teesside is no different. It plays a vital role in ensuring domestic supply of energy for transport, heating and electricity generations, and its importance cannot be understated.



Ours is an industry which thrives on talent, and we are striving to attract and retain the very best. The North East of England, with its strong industrial roots and manufacturing base, is well placed to nurture and train young talents with the technical and engineering skills that are so sought after. The wider energy sector is shifting to low carbon economy, with more focus on renewables, and that means we need more and more people to support that expansion.

Teesside itself is well placed to support the energy transition, particularly when it comes to offshore wind. Innovation will be key to the dynamic growth of the sector, and investment in digital, automation and manufacturing will be crucial.

My advice to younger people is to seize any opportunity you have to access technical training, whether that's through education or apprenticeships, so you can play your part in the energy sector.

You never know – it may take you to places you never imagined.

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