

# WINLPG

## Women in LPG



### Barbara Brookes

**Operations Manager  
Camel Fuels Pty Ltd  
Cape Town, South Africa**

““LITTLE GIRLS WITH DREAMS  
BECOME WOMEN WITH VISION”  
– I SUPPORT WINLPG BECAUSE  
AS WOMAN WE NEED TO REAL-  
ISE THE STRENGTH WE CARRY  
WITHIN OURSELVES AND DIF-  
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SOCIETY. IT’S NEVER TOO LATE  
TO LEARN AND EDUCATION IS  
POWER.”

**Barbara Brookes**

## Meet the Role Models

**WINLPG Role Models introduce successful individuals in the LPG industry and gives an insight into their career path, their challenges and their advice to fellow WINLPG members.**

My journey to where I am today started when I graduated from technikon with a diploma in Financial Information Systems. I was fortunate in that I was awarded a bursary for these studies but the downside was that the financial assistance was only for the first year. To finance the rest of my studies I found employment as a telesales consultant with ad hoc bookkeeping responsibilities in the timeshare industry. This allowed me to complete the rest of my studies part time. After completing my studies, I progressed to become the bookkeeper of an industrial printing company. During my time at the printing company, my daughter fell ill and I then decided to sacrifice my career to care for her. After my daughter had overcome her health challenges, and I had also given birth to our second child, I decided that it was time to restart my career and re-introduce myself to the corporate world. An opportunity arose in the tourism industry and I started out as the bookkeeper of the company reporting to the financial director. During my time at this company I was awarded an opportunity to work in the product division and gain complete knowledge of the industry and combine that with my IT skills to become system administrator. I was encouraged to study IT and later became qualified in hardware and networking. At this time, I had all the knowledge of operating the business, via the business systems, but it was the operational side that intrigued me the most and it was at this time that I realised my passion. I wanted to be involved in the operations. I then made becoming Operations manager my primary focus. The one and only obstacle for me, was that, because I was efficient in my existing roles, exposure to the operational side of the business was nonexistent. The only alternative I had, that would empower me to realize my goal, was to seek alternative employment. It was at this time that I learned that a company by the name Camel Fuels, was looking to recruit an Operations Assistant. After interviews and recruitment formalities, I was the new Operations Assistant for Camel Fuels, the perfect position to grow in and fuel my passion. As the company grew within itself my role grew to Operations Manager. To backup my change in career and achieve my goal, I pursued Operations Management through UCT GSB as well as a course in Management through CPUT. Currently I am responsible for the full function of the operations department, oversee the company's IT infrastructure and also am responsible for the company's B-BEE compliance. Today I am a proud wife, mom to two teenagers (daughter aged 16 and a son aged 13) and head of Operations of a renowned company in the petrochemical industry.

**“A strong woman stands up for herself, a stronger woman stands up for others” - it is important that we as woman support one another to take the step and the stand to be heard in what’s generalised as a male dominated society.”**

**Barbara Brookes**

# SIX KEY QUESTIONS

## What is your goal today?

I have two primary goals everyday, the first would be to maintain a healthy balance between my work and my family responsibilities, and be the best at it. The second, which is equally important, is to build highly effective people through motivation, training and empowerment.

## Did you have a mentor and how did this help?

My husband is my mentor. He's spent endless hours encouraging me to be the best that I can be and making me realise my self-worth. He continues to provide a level-headed environment in which he challenges my thinking and reasoning. It helps because I know he has my best interest at heart but he is also able to provide an objective opinion.

## Describe your Pathway?

I've always been a numbers person and therefore the logical choice of career was accounting. From starting out as telesales/bookkeeper to being encouraged to study the field of IT in the tourism industry which formed the basis of becoming a System Administrator and then studying toward my position as Operations Manager by completing Operations Management through UCT GSB and Management through CPUT.

## What does leadership mean to you?

Leadership is the ability to influence your team toward achieving departmental and organisational goals. Providing direction, igniting fellow colleagues with a passion for their purpose and obtaining their commitment to your goal. A leader creates a vision and encourages others to work toward the goal.

## Did you face any specific challenges?

My greatest challenge was entering an unknown industry and being intimidated by a male dominated workspace. As a woman it requires 100% more work to win over their respect but this has been achieved by continuing to be inquisitive and hungry for knowledge. After continued support from my family I have managed this through long working hours but am now in a position whereby I can appropriately apportion my work and family life.

## What three pieces of advice would you give to someone embarking on their career with LPG?

1. Never forget that hard work pays off with success. If nothing is ventured nothing is gained.
2. Never underestimate yourself and your ability to make a difference in the world.
3. Men and woman were created as equals to move forward beside one another.



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Women in LPG Global Network

[www.wlpga.org](http://www.wlpga.org)