

INFRASTRUCTURE WOMEN IN FOCUS



WIN NZ has been established to increase the visibility of women in the infrastructure sector. Every month we profile a different woman working in a different part of the industry. If you would like to be profiled, or would like to nominate someone to be profiled, please answer the questions below and send your picture through to [Natasha](#).

We'd like to introduce Linda as our next Woman of Focus. In addition to her role at Deloitte, Linda also sits on the WIN Advisory Board.



LINDA MEADE

LEAD PARTNER, CORPORATE
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Deloitte.

1. What company or organisation do you work for and what is your role there?

I'm a partner at Deloitte in Wellington. I lead the part of the business we refer to as Corporate Finance Advisory. In general terms this covers financial, commercial and economic advisory services.

2. Tell us about your career background and how you got to this position/role?

I fell into professional services as a graduate and have somehow never left! Actually, I did have an 18 month secondment to a government department, the State Services Commission, about 5 years into my career and this proved to be highly influential since I've continued to focus on the public service ever since. Not long after that secondment I moved to London and it was there that I got involved in large infrastructure projects and I found that I enjoyed working on those too. I think the reason is the emphasis on value for money - investing our tax payer dollars wisely!

3. Tell us about a project are you currently working on and why it interests you?

My favourite projects are the ones where I really feel like my input could make a genuine difference to the lives of New Zealanders. Sometimes that just means shining a spotlight on what's important so that others can make better informed choices. For example the study we did for Westpac on the economic value of having more women in leadership roles. In other cases it can be a more direct influence such as providing support to the Ministry of Education as it seeks to allocate capital across dozens of schools all of which need some form of investment to improve the learning environment for our kids. Just today a couple of the women in my team were demonstrating to me a dashboard they've been creating for the Ministry to help them make these decisions and I was blown away by what they were doing. Not only was it great work but I could also see the power of it to improve the decisions that need to be made.

4. What's the hardest job you've ever done and why?

I started my career as an auditor. I could say the three winters in a row I spent in New Plymouth auditing Fletcher Challenge Petroleum for 4 weeks each time but actually that would be a lie since the people I worked with were great and I'm still in contact with two of them. But the job that almost turned me vegetarian was the audit of the Nelson Bays freezing works. I finished that job, jumped on a plane to Switzerland (for a 2 year secondment) and vowed never to do another audit in New Zealand. And I never have!

5. Can you think of one example where your "diversity" has materially affected the outcome of a work situation or project, either positively or negatively?

I have no doubt that being a woman has counted against me in some situations. It can be too easy for some people to become very comfortable with the idea of a woman being there in a supporting role and when this is challenged they can quite quickly turn from being your greatest friend to your biggest detractor.

On the other hand, I have evidence that we have won work over the competition because we are able to show a more diverse face. That is always a satisfying feeling - when clients say we chose Deloitte because your team is more like how we see ourselves and to them diversity is important.

To learn more about opportunities for a career with Deloitte [click here](#).

Or, you can connect with [Linda on LinkedIn](#).

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