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My career in the refrigeration field has grown in small steps, beginning from my interest in science. I have also come across role models in the refrigeration sector and, thanks to supportive colleagues, my role as a female refrigeration expert has been realised naturally.

Riina Lonnbald

Project Manager at Combi Cool

Combi Cool

What is your current job title and responsibilities?

 *I work as a project manager for a refrigeration equipment wholesaler. I am responsible for dimensioning and quoting different refrigeration systems from small catering cold room, to refrigerated food storage for our customers.*

What initially interested you, and lead you to this industry?

 *I was interested in mathematics and science in high school. My friends' brothers were studying in the University of Technology and that sounded interesting. My grandfather was also a Master of Science and my mentor in life. In the University of Technology, it was because of my professor that I chose the refrigeration field. I am also grateful to my first employer who hired me as a refrigeration system designer right after my graduation.*

Do you have any insights or advice for other women who may not know this industry as a potential sector for them?

 *Be curious, ask questions when you have a chance to know more. For example, the title of project manager can be found in any field. It is just managing projects with your expertise. Refrigeration sector is not just technology, it also marketing, research and human resources to name just a few.*

Do you have any insights into what could be done to encourage more women into this sector?

 *Our sector should be made known. I had no idea that there is such a refrigeration field. Neither did I know which kind of work I could do when I graduate. Role models are also needed. Everyone should have a mentor in their field, and I have been lucky to have my colleagues as my mentors.*

What do you as a woman bring to the industry?

 *I see that very often I bring a different way of thinking or attitude towards new things and I think I bring respect amongst us. There should not just be men or women on a certain field but both men and women, individuals together. Everyone has their features and strengths and that is what should matter, not a gender.*

Where do you see yourself in five years? What is the big goal?

 *I want to keep my expertise in my field and I also want to hold up my passion for refrigeration. Still, I would like to learn more about sales and marketing.*