Starting a consulting business (Part 2 of 2) – Entrepreneurial journey during a pandemic

**Speaker:** Michelle Saquet (M.Sc. P.Geo.), Founder of Athena Subsurface Ltd. and Senior Geologist, Parex Resources Inc.

Michelle Saquet is a professional geologist (M.Sc. P.Geo.) with 15 years of experience in energy. She started her career as a wellsite geologist working in the Western Canada Sedimentary Basin. In 2004 she joined Nexen Inc., where she worked as a production, development, and exploration geologist in a wide range of basins, play types, and countries. After being laid off from CNOOC in 2020, she enthusiastically used the time to discover what work and her career meant to her.

Starting a business from scratch during a pandemic was a brave choice. Michelle decided to start Athena Subsurface, an incorporated consulting company that would connect multi-disciplinary energy professionals who offered a unique set of technical expertise with energy companies who lacked a skilled, functional technical team. The initial concept of Athena was to provide an asset team for hire, an arrangement benefiting both parties: companies would receive guidance on established technologies and best practices while staying agile and lean, Athena’s technical team would gain experience in emerging opportunities.

How does one go about starting a business? This talk will cover the main learnings while building Athena Subsurface.

- Attend a self-employment program to learn business planning, strategy, market research, marketing, and sales.
- Create a personal brand presence through LinkedIn
- Create a company brand and marketing strategy
- Focus on what makes the company different from competitors
- Network inside and outside of the energy industry in a way that best suits you

Entrepreneurial journeys require continual personal growth, passion, perseverance, and a positive mind set particularly during these challenging times in the industry. This presentation will provide a perspective, key learnings, and tools that may assist in navigating the geoscience consulting business path.
Moderator: Amy Fox (Ph.D. P.Geo.), Geomechanics Specialist, President and co-founder of Enlighten Geosciences Ltd.

Amy is a geomechanics specialist with decades (ouch) of industry (mostly oil and gas, but other stuff like geothermal, too!) experience. She was trained at Stanford University and by working at Geomechanics International (and Baker Hughes, after it bought GMI). Since 2015 she's been helping to grow her own integrated consulting business, Enlighten Geoscience, where she spends zero time in management meetings and lots of time trying to figure out better ways to help her clients. At Enlighten, the only company line she has to toe is the one that aligns with her personal and professional values.