

## **Louise Jenkins**

### **How did you get started out in your career?**

From school I went straight to Melbourne University and studied law arts which I really enjoyed and I really did it because I got in and people said you might enjoy it. So I went to college, had a fantastic time. I was in Newman College the first year it went co-ed which was unbelievable. I then did articles through a family friend at a school firm called Ford & Company and I worked there for a year after articles as well and applied for a job at Hedderwick Fookes and Alston as this firm was then known or one of its predecessors. I have done general work at the small firm I was at, litigation but a whole array of odds and sods and came here and took up a litigation job at what was then Hedderwick Fookes and Alston and stayed in litigation ever since.

### **How do you define success and being successful?**

Being successful is being constantly stimulated and challenged by life in a way that is rewarding in intellectual terms as well as satisfying in social terms.

### **Did you or do you have mentors?**

I've only had mentors inside the firm, not so much outside the firm, and I was lucky enough to have Peter Hogday as my principal effective when I first started at Hedderwick's. He really didn't care less whether I worked long hours or short hours as long as I got the job done. He was intellectually fantastic and really just looked after people in the firm if he thought that your work was of an appropriate standard. There weren't any senior females at the firm when I started, there were no female partners for example, so there were no mentors really internally to look to, except that Peter really took me under his wing. I had some difficult times in the early years. There were some unpleasant issues that I had to deal with and Peter was an absolute stalwart. Without him and with people who cared more about whether you were female or male or pink or black or whatever, it might have been a much tougher road, so I'm very grateful for his assistance.

### **How do you balance work and life?**

Not very well. I have two stepchildren, four children and quite a busy life outside with other commitments. So it is quite difficult and you really have to go after what you want and make decisions all along the way about what's important. I spend a lot of time with my kids on the weekend, not so

much during the week, and sometimes they get it completely wrong and I have days when people complain that I'm not at work, my kids complain I'm not at home, but by and large if you work hard at it and don't apologise all the time for not being perfect, then it seems to work. A couple of years ago I had my transmogrification when I just decided I wasn't going to apologise to people all the time for not being all things to all people. And it was fabulous. I felt so much better after.

**What has worked for you and good advice for someone coming up in their career?**

You have to choose your own goals and do what's important for you, so if you're going to feel sick about not being home when your child takes its first step, for example, then be home. I think it's really, really important. For me, the first step and the second and the 26<sup>th</sup> are all about the same and it's not a priority. But other things are a priority. So I think it's important to set your own goals in terms of being a female in the workforce and not to be guided by what you've seen others do.

**Apart from the Law, what would your dream career be?**

Oh sadly I really wanted to be a rock star! But my voice is quite flat.

**Who is a women you find inspirational? Why?**

I've always admired Anne Sherry from the former CEO of Bank of Melbourne who I think is absolutely fabulous, and seems to have a rounded life and works hard and has achieved really interesting things with her career. On a different front I've always admired Cate Blanchett, a good Melbourne girl who has taken on the world and been an amazing success and I think she's a fantastic actress.