



CAREER 101

MAYSAA PARRINO shares the ups and downs of her career.

MAYSAA PARRINO is a partner in the Planning and Environment Team at Colin Biggers & Paisley in Sydney, where she has worked for 10 years. She regularly advises a range of clients on various aspects, including environmental offset agreements, voluntary planning agreements, and contaminated land agreements. Maysaa has had the opportunity to work on innovative projects with clients such as UTS, Holdmark, and Crown Lands. She is also an ambassador of Colin Biggers & Paisley's corporate responsibility foundation, which provides pro bono and community contributions.

What did you learn from your first job (and where was it)?

My first job was working at my parent's food wholesale business from the age of 10. At a very early age I learnt the benefits of camaraderie and business basics. I did learn a lot in those 10 years, but the most enjoyable lesson was how to drive a forklift at 13.

Why did you study law?

I learnt to communicate with a range of wholesale customers and suppliers. I enjoyed price negotiations with suppliers and addressing product disputes. This early exposure to problem solving sparked my interest in the law.

First break?

Having the opportunity to work on an exciting planning dispute when working in strata law. This prompted my interest in planning and development and led to my current role at Colin Biggers & Paisley. This work reignited a long-time passion of mine – I renovated my first house in my early 20s. At the time, my funds were limited and I recycled bricks to renovate. Cleaning the bricks resulted in significant savings and satisfaction. I did suffer many calluses and cuts – but it was thoroughly worth it!

Biggest lesson week one in the job?

In my first week, a colleague pulled me aside and said, "Don't ever bring a briefcase to work again, otherwise it will become a habit to take work home. It's much more important to have a designer handbag." A designer handbag did become my staple accessory. Balance is important.

Best advice so far?

Be true to yourself. It is very easy, whether in the role of advising a client or managing your practice, to make decisions based on what you believe people want to hear. Act on your beliefs and values.

Career turning point?

Joining Colin Biggers & Paisley and working with Anthony Perkins, who encouraged and supported the growth of my career and practice.

When you are 70, where will you be?

Healthy and travelling the world with my husband, children and grandchildren.