



Summer Clerk Testimonials

by Dean Tolkin

Upon first introductions, it became abundantly clear to me that Harmers Workplace Lawyers is anything but a conventional law firm. As a specialist in employment and industrial law, it was refreshing to observe Harmers' progressive, proactive and forward-thinking approach to achieving justice in the workplace. My time spent as a Summer Clerk during 2012/13 was challenging, exciting and memorable - an experience that truly acquainted me to the practical application of the law within a friendly, vibrant and supportive working environment. In my personal experience, there was never a day where I felt like another brick in the wall. I always felt like a valued member of Harmers' highly diverse, skilled and professional team of lawyers who take immense satisfaction in working for the achievement of justice, equality and fair treatment of all.

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My clerkship began with an introduction to the firm's principle ethos, namely, 'the pursuit of worthwhile causes'. This core value is referable to every member of the firm and is inherent in both the nature of the work undertaken and the outcomes achieved for clients. The firm has a unique cultural identity which facilitates the delivery of sound legal advice, promotes collaboration as well as lateral thinking to resolve complex legal issues. In this regard, Harmers operates on a 'one for all and all for one basis' which enables work to be allocated efficiently across the firm and instills a sense of ownership over all client interactions. Harmers is an extremely collegial place to come to work, which as a Summer Clerk is of great comfort knowing that a second opinion is only a door-knock away.

The privilege of working alongside experienced and industry reputed solicitors such as those at Harmers has impressed upon me the importance of discipline, work ethic and professional courtesy. Of significance is the emphasis placed by the firm on delivering superior customer service, staff training and reinforcing good habits early on in one's legal career. It is therefore no surprise that all employees are inducted into the firm with a traditional Harmers welcome, which includes an insightful seminar of the firm's policies, precedents and social constitution. I was also able to attend social functions, family picnics, full-firm meetings, legal staff updates and liaised closely with many solicitors on a raft of interesting matters.

As a Summer Clerk I received stimulating legal research assignments, often venturing beyond the scope of employment law into areas of contract, corporate, criminal, tort and evidence. In addition to research, I was afforded the opportunity to complete a number of other substantive legal training exercises, including drafting settlement deeds, preparing case summaries, attending Federal and Local Court proceedings as well as a mediation in the Fair Work Commission. Each learning experience has been beneficial, allowing me to expand my theoretical and conceptual framework of the law. After completing my Summer Clerkship with Harmers, I am convinced that these experiences cannot be reproduced within a classroom environment, and more importantly, have distinguished me from my university peers.

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A Harmers Summer Clerkship comes highly recommended and I too would encourage all penultimate year law students to apply for a position with Harmers. Not only will you be rewarded with an unforgettable summer, you will make genuine friendships with like-minded people and launch your legal career with the necessary tools, qualities and attributes needed to be a successful young lawyer.

Summer Clerk 2012/13