



# Summer Clerk Testimonials

by Ehson Shirazi

You've spent the last few years driving through your law degree. The sweet air flows through your hair and the sun shines high in the clear blue sky. Everything promises of a successful and inspiring career in the legal profession.

"Harmers Workplace Lawyers emerges as a refreshingly unique and promising law firm"

However, traversing the popular highway that is the clerkship application process can be a somewhat taxing and terrifying time. The roads are chaotic; filled with law students from across Australia vying to get ahead in the race for a clerkship offer. Large billboards with flashy lights assault your vision from all sides; one promotes the work/life balance at some law firm, the other advertises the open-door policy of another. All of a sudden, speed bumps appear; numerous rounds of interviews for you to scale, various cocktail events which you feel obliged to attend. Cruise control no longer has any value. And far from discovering your calling in life, you become even more confused and disoriented than you originally were.

It is from this scenario that Harmers Workplace Lawyers emerges as a refreshingly unique and promising law firm. The firm hosts a single half-day assessment centre that includes the opportunity to hear more about Harmers from the Chairman and Managing Partner of the firm, and to mingle with other solicitors and partners who are respected professionals in their chosen fields. The informal and comfortable nature of this event is reflective of the culture that Harmers has adopted across the firm. Everyday is casual Friday, and everyday presents an opportunity to learn more about the Harmers staff. Whether through the numerous coffee breaks, full firm morning teas, after work drinks, or from simply being drawn into someone's office to discuss anything from legal issues to social engagements, you quickly come to know everybody on an intimate level.

The philosophy of Harmers has always been focused on "Full Firm" decision making. This is exhibited by the fact that all staff members are permitted access to all information relevant to the management of the firm, including all accounts information. As a summer clerk you will also be encouraged to attend meetings of various committees created to address everything from business development, to work and well-being, and the Harmers pro bono scheme. It is an elating feeling to observe the ideas which you were discussing in these meetings being put to team leaders and the firm as a whole for feedback and assessment.

Consistent with this ideology of openness and consultation is the great emphasis that the firm places on sharing knowledge. For instance, all legal staff members, including summer clerks, meet every Wednesday morning to discuss recent developments in the law and any interesting matters that they are currently working on. All summer clerks are also allocated a buddy and team leader, both of whom are easily approachable when you are in need of assistance.

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It is important to emphasise that at Harmers you will be a workplace lawyer. The firm services individual and corporate clients in areas such as employment law, industrial relations and OH&S. Needless to

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say, the material is ideal for those who have a particular interest in labour law. Others may be apprehensive about confining themselves to a specialist law firm and thus forgoing the opportunity to rotate through different practice areas. However, much of this fear is unwarranted; the legal issues arising from an employer-employee relationship readily traverse contract law, corporate law, taxation and superannuation, property law, and equity.

Furthermore, the Harmers solicitors are quick to involve summer clerks in work which actually goes towards informing the advice that is given to clients. You are never left to work in the abstract since solicitors always describe the context and the reasons behind the task. The solicitors also give you the opportunity to experience the practical side of law through numerous visits to courts, commissions, client meetings and training sessions, community legal centres, and even senate submissions.

A summer clerkship with Harmers Workplace Lawyers is a challenging yet fulfilling experience. Relationships will be forged, skills will be learnt, and with their help, the road back to the sweet air and the clear blue skies stretches openly and invitingly to the horizon.