

# Work hard, play hard, the Jeffreys' way

SA corporate identity, Jane Jeffreys offers a model for sagacious corporate progress.

After studying HR management at the SA Institute of Technology Jane worked in the public sector. She was one of three women among 100 students in her class.

After six years in the public sector Jane got her big break, being appointed Director of Personnel and Training at the Hilton International Adelaide.

"I was part of the opening team in 1982 and I recruited all the staff and helped set up the first international hotel in Adelaide. That put me in an executive role in the private sector very early in my career," she says.

"Later, I was appointed Area Director of Training with Hilton when the company was opening up new business around Australia and in Asia. I was based out of Adelaide – even though they wanted me to move to Sydney, I negotiated to stay here – I just travelled a lot.

"My next move was to the Adelaide Casino as Director of Human Resources. I was responsible for recruiting all the staff, overseeing training, industrial relations, wardrobe, uniforms...anything to do with staff.

"Both the Hilton and Casino jobs were terrific experiences because at that time there was a lot of growth in the economy, they were new businesses and it was a very exciting time for Adelaide. I had the opportunity to work with international corporations, getting really good executive experience."

Promoted to executive director at the Casino, Jane oversaw everything but gaming.

"I was acting Chief Executive on occasions. Again, I was the most senior woman in the organisation – probably the youngest, too," she says. "Those leadership positions gave me a wonderful opportunity to hone my business acumen; to understand what happens at a corporate level. It also enabled me to develop a business profile in Adelaide, and not just in my sector, but more broadly.

"I've always had a view that if you live and work in Adelaide then you need to be very connected to

where business is being done and be across what's happening in the world.

"In an Australian context, that means being in Sydney and Melbourne as often as you can, or being in touch, especially now there are a lot of head offices in those cities."

In the mid '80s Jane began taking on Board roles starting with directorships in the HR sector, in Adelaide and nationally, and later in the arts sector, in theatre, and with the Adelaide Convention and Tourism Authority.

"In 1992, with a lot of encouragement from people whose opinions I trusted, I decided to go out on my own – and just after that I had my first child," she says.

"I'd decided it was time to have a change in career direction and the opportunity do so some consulting came up. I was asked to do some work for consortiums setting up casinos elsewhere in Australia and overseas – they wanted help putting together their proposals. That's what really led to me setting up my consulting business.

"My consultancy work initially evolved through my contacts in business, particularly around reviewing organisations and looking at effectiveness and HR strategies. From that grew my skills and training and as a facilitator.

"Now I specialise in developing strategies for organisations, with particular emphasis on performance at board and executive level.

"Over the years I've built up a lot of experience at Board level."

Jane was on the board and chaired St Peters Girls' School and joined the Independent Gambling Authority Board. Further board credits are Tourism Australia, SA Tourism, more recently Chair of ECH Inc (Elderly Citizens Homes), and chair of the Adelaide Convention Centre (since 2006).

"And of course, now I'm on the Port Adelaide Football Club, a significant milestone in being the first woman on an AFL Board in SA," she says. "Sport has always been a part of my life – and my family's. I've always been interested in the way sport develops skills

around teamwork and leadership – skills you can use in other parts of your life.

Clients value her experience extending from SME to enterprise level.

"I think one of the most important things I offer my clients is experience in all the key sectors – public, private, corporate and consulting. I understand how they all work, and how they all work together," she says.

"I'm not the sort of person who sees barriers. I'm a glass half full person. I think we all face realities; sometimes there might be blockages and other times there are opportunities.

"I suppose I work on the basis, as a lot of people do in Adelaide, that reputation is extremely important. To make sure that I have ongoing work, I need to do good work – do my best for my clients and do it in a way that builds respect. (That) has probably been one of things I've worked hardest at.

"That has included contributing more broadly to the community beyond my day-to-day work – in the arts, sports, education and business."

Jane considers herself no different to the millions of working woman in the world, saying she "has always worked hard at both parts" of her life.

"I've always worked full time on my business. At the same time, I'm very involved with my family (daughters, 13 and 18) and have a supportive partner.

"I think I've always been good at making sure that at work I put in a huge effort to get results and then I like to think that I have appropriate time away from work that deserves equal effort and is also rewarding. I've done that since before I had children.

"That 'away from work' time includes my family, of course, but also things like travel, cooking and my other interests, like going to the football.

"I think it's fair to say one of the advantages of my husband and I working the way we do is that we have the wherewithal to give our children some special experiences, particularly involving travel.

"When our eldest was 16, she went to the Everest base camp with her Dad while I took our 13-year-old to see the orangutans in Borneo. They're both examples of real quality time together."