



Royal Reed, Prestige Law

WALK THE TALK FINALIST



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A recruitment process that aims to understand both an employee's personal commitments and career ambitions means staff at Prestige Law don't have to fit in with the legal industry's traditionally rigid requirements of long hours and a competitive culture.

Prestige Law is a boutique multilingual law firm specialising in providing legal services to migrant clients in areas of immigration, property and business, family, employment, and international litigation. It has a staff of 21. When she began the firm in 2006, founder and partner Royal Reed was committed to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace, leading by example and with kindness.

Many cultures are represented in the office with staff coming from China, India, Brazil, Japan, Korea, Thailand, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, the Philippines, Vietnam, Cambodia, Fiji, Sri Lanka, and New Zealand.

Royal has an unconventional approach to recruitment. Former staff solicitor and current contracting Marketing and Business Relations Manager - UK Region Sarah Her-Lee says rather than advertising for specific positions, opportunities are available year-round for applicants who are willing to door knock and put themselves forward.

"Once on board, arrangements are made for newcomers to be part of the team and benefit from ongoing guidance and support from senior members," she says.

“Royal’s commitment to empowering each individual is demonstrated in her recruitment process. She discusses and explores [an applicant’s] study, family or other personal commitments, and tailors the working arrangement to suit the candidate and creates a pathway for long-term career advancement.”

Having a diverse team means everyone brings a different set of circumstances and there is no one-size-fits-all approach.

“Royal never questions their commitment, but instead always offers flexibility in terms of hours and remote work options, and looks for ways where both employee and client satisfaction are able to be achieved simultaneously,” says Sarah.

For example, one staff member was offered an extended lunch break so he could continue to help at the family business. A legal consultant was offered a flexible work day so she could return to university to complete professional studies to become a practicing lawyer in New Zealand, while maintaining her role and income at Prestige.

Flexible working arrangements introduced by Royal have allowed staff to continue to progress their careers after becoming parents.

When one of the firm’s support staff found the logistics of juggling motherhood and work difficult, Royal invited her to bring her four-month-old baby to the office. “A room for babies and children was created and the team was able to work together while enjoying the company of a little one in the office, which made a huge difference on a stressful day,” says Sarah.

Royal sits on the board of On Being Bold, an initiative created by female leaders and entrepreneurs to encourage professional women at all stages of their careers through the sharing of best practices and insights on becoming a successful woman leader. She regularly shares the initiatives introduced at Prestige and offers insights on how to overcome workplace cultural challenges to create a harmonious environment.

Her philosophy of leading by kindness in the workplace includes making the office a welcoming place where everyone feels included. A staff kitchen and dining area is a space where staff can get to know each other over a provided lunch, and social activities such as yoga and table tennis are offered to strengthen team bonds.

Sarah says Royal’s leadership has led to a productive and dynamic team. “These leadership initiatives have enabled the employees to enjoy an inclusive working environment without sacrificing their personal commitments and goals. It has great impact on the firm’s overall performance as staff are more motivated and self-responsible for their own tasks, thus freeing up the supervisor’s time for more productive work.”

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