



Hiring the right people and leaving fear behind have been crucial for shopfitting entrepreneur **SARAH RYDING**

TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS We are a wholly Australian owned and operated shopfitting company, delivering superior retail, commercial and residential fit-outs and custom joinery throughout Australia and New Zealand (and shortly, Singapore), where our expert craftspeople and experienced team manage each project end-to-end for exceptional results.

WHAT'S ONE PIECE OF GOLDEN ADVICE YOU COULD OFFER TO OTHER WOMEN IN BUSINESS? Surround yourself with the RIGHT experts to move you forward – in the right direction – the first time. It's scary backing your skills when you start your own business because you need to be brutally honest about your strengths and weaknesses – admit to being great at some things and not others. Plus, I had to learn to draw different lines for work and home...

WHAT ONE TRAIT HAS HELPED YOU MOST AT WORK? As owners, we walk the walk and we talk the talk. We work really hard with highly skilled and qualified tradespeople to give credit where it's due, encouraging a continued

job well done. They need to know we respect their skills and ability to do what they do because our projects overlap for 48 weeks of the year and each expert plays their vital role in delivering the finished project to the absolute requirements of our clients.

WHAT IS ONE TRAIT THAT HAS HINDERED YOU MOST IN YOUR WORK? Fear. Fear of failure because everything was unknown to us. We had a lot at stake – actually, we had it all at stake – when we sold our home to fund the business. We knew we were essentially gambling our future in this new business venture and that was scary. With a young child and another on the way, we feared failing – ourselves and those around us. This

held us back initially, but we worked hard and our business far exceeded our growth expectations. Whereas before the fear of failure meant we held onto everything (thinking we were the doers and deliverers of all things), now we know it's not only OK – but actually expected – that we outsource responsibility and pass the baton at the right time during the race.

IF YOU COULD DO ANY OTHER JOB, WHAT WOULD IT BE AND WHY? I'm one of the lucky ones – I've found my ideal job! I love waking up every day and I look forward to going to work! While shopfitting is the core of our business currently, with access to amazing people, I am starting to bring my own designs to life with the launch of my own brand of joinery design – i4 Design. This means I can enjoy the main business as well as exercise my creative license to develop and deliver new, exciting pieces of work. **DO YOU BELIEVE WOMEN CAN HAVE IT ALL? WHY OR WHY NOT?** That depends on what it really means to actually "have it all". For me, having it all means a visible, apparent link between work and home life – the perpetual work/life balance so to speak – where I feel safe, have a fantastic partner, beautiful kids, a rewarding career and a quality of work all at the same time. Now don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that everything is in perfect harmony all of the time. I believe I can have it all because I have the capacity to draw on all of these things at any time and for that I feel blessed.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST PUMPED ABOUT RIGHT NOW? Expanding our local, Australian owned and operated design and construction business into the international market when we go to Singapore this month!

NAME THREE THINGS THAT MAKE YOU HAPPY AND WHY Knowing we have the capacity in the business to do what needs to be done, do it well and do it consistently. At home, it's the cliché – the love of my family and friends, hearing my children's laughter and hearing my partner tell me he loves me. ✨