

Priti Pasupuleti

Company Secretary & Senior Legal Counsel,
Indara Digital Infrastructure

Antonia Wayne-Boyle, Intellectual Property and Technology lawyer at Clayton Utz, speaks to **Priti Pasupuleti**, Company Secretary and Senior Legal Counsel at Indara Digital Infrastructure, about what it's like wearing 'two hats' in her role and the importance of equity in the workplace and beyond.

ANTONIA WAYNE-BOYLE: Priti, could you explain your role and what a typical day looks like for you?

PRITI PASUPULETI: I'm an in-house lawyer and company secretary with Indara Digital Infrastructure.

For me a typical day starts with getting 3 children out the door and off to school or before school activities on time. Depending on the degree of success with that task (and the weather), I'll also fit in a run or swim before starting work. After this point, there is no such thing as a "typical day"!

Following a major acquisition last year, our business has changed enormously in the space of 10 months. That and the reality of wearing the two hats of lawyer and company secretary means that thankfully, no two days are the same. My work is a mix of ongoing projects and day to day advisory work, which broadly cover M & A, regulatory, IP, governance, general corporate and commercial.

We also have a busy board calendar, so there are days that are all about planning board or committee meetings, preparing agendas, papers, minutes and the like.

Some days can be full of meetings whilst other days are spent immersed in a contract, regulatory application, submission or board papers.

No matter how the day plays out though, it always involves connecting with my team and colleagues – my favourite part of any work day!

ANTONIA: What recent events in the Australian media and communications landscape have most affected your organisation/role?

PRITI: The first thing that comes to mind is not so much an event but a recent trend, which is the sell down of tower portfolios by mobile network operators (MNOs) in Australia and globally. The sale of such assets allows the MNOs to divert capex back to their core business whilst the infrastructure companies now holding the assets (such as Indara) can deliver maximum value to the community, access seekers and shareholders through a shared tower model and more efficient use of facilities.

Another major event on our landscape is the Federal Government's Mobile Black Spot Program (MBSP) to invest in greater mobile coverage for regional, rural and remote Australia and encourage multi-carrier sharing in these areas. Infrastructure companies have an important role to play in this program and providing connectivity to all Australian communities. Indara has recently been selected to construct a series of towers in a black spot area in Victoria under the Connecting Victoria Mobile Program. Another opportunity under the MBSP is the current Improving Mobile Coverage Round which will allow us to deliver service and competition to other unserved or underserved areas in Australia.

Last, but by no means least, is the increased focus on management of ESG risks which remains an important movement in our sector. Like so many other industries and sectors, ESG is a key driver towards shareholder value, customer appeal and competitive edge.

Indara's ESG strategy is shaping our goals and driving the way we do business, from setting clear and transparent targets to encouraging innovation and long-term thinking in achieving those targets.

ANTONIA: What's the best work-related advice you've ever received?

PRITI: Building up your career is important but knowing your worth outside of work is crucial, regardless of age or stage in your career journey. It helps you achieve and maintain balance in your life which enables resilience and creativity at work.

This advice was given to me at the start of my career by a senior partner I worked for, who was close to retirement. Although his words struck a chord with me at the time, I think the true value of the advice was lost on me because it seemed like it would be so easy to put into practice. Over the years though, I've realised it's actually an active and deliberate process to remember who you are outside of your work and career!

ANTONIA: The 2023 IWD campaign theme is #EmbraceEquity. What does this mean to you and how might that be implemented in our readers' work and personal lives?



PRITI: Personally and professionally, I am thrilled about the 2023 campaign theme of #EmbraceEquity! Both equality and equity are important in a modern society and equality gets a lot of air time in conversations about women's empowerment, particularly in the workplace.

As someone with a profoundly autistic sibling, I'm acutely aware of how equality, with its objectively impartial approach, doesn't always benefit everyone in the same way. In fact, sometimes equality alone fails so much as to nudge the very barriers we are seeking to remove. It's actually equity, and addressing individual circumstances and challenges, that breaks down barriers and allows diversity to thrive in the workplace and beyond.

In a commercial sense, equity goes hand in hand with innovation – it's hard to imagine how an organisation can be innovative in every sense if it is not championing and practising equity. Similarly, it is hard to imagine a truly inclusive society without equity as a core value.

There is so much we can do, but I think the starting point to implementing #EmbraceEquity at work or in our personal lives is to remember that conversations about equality must also include equity.

ANTONIA: What advice would you give to the next generation of female leaders in the industry?

PRITI: Surround yourself with trusted mentors and friends. Be real with each other about your goals and needs, but also your challenges and insecurities. This transparency is key to building trust and knowing how to best help each other. Also, be open to the advice received, particularly the tough love!