



Trending upwards

In the past few weeks, *Lawyers Weekly* has featured a slew of articles which have profiled the capability and willingness of Australian law firms to reinvent themselves as flexible, resilient and proactive employers.

It's not the sort of thing that we feature in the magazine all the time. Like all publications we do tend to find the adage "if it bleeds, it leads" a useful guide as to what makes an article worth reading. However, I personally also believe in the philosophy of "seek and you shall find"; I tend to type a bit that way too.

In all seriousness though, I, personally, and *Lawyers Weekly*, collectively, do subscribe to the theory that we serve our readership and that we should therefore aim to do what little we can to better the lives of all who read our publication.

While shining the light of truth into dark places is always going to be one of our key motivators, finding as many hero stories as we can is another great way for us to help Australia's legal community.

It's something of a professional joke that people don't feel a lot of sympathy for the legal profession. Indeed we've run our share of articles from such prominent people as shadow Attorney General Nicola Roxon imploring the profession to lift its game; for its members to take their collective noses out of the trough.

Overwhelmingly, though, the feeling we get is that the profession is beset by practitioners leading lives of quiet desperation. Overworked, okay not so much underpaid, but nonetheless leading largely unfulfilled lives, it's no wonder that we are constantly reporting on a skills shortage despite a huge amount of students graduating law every year. Indeed one of the comments we often receive from people is that they'd like to see more good news stories and less doom and gloom.

So, it's refreshing to report on that much sought after good news when we can.

Indeed the front-page of this very issue features Holding Redlich's determination to take part-time partners very seriously. The Law Awards profile, this week featuring Truman Hoyle, lists a string of initiatives that that firm has undertaken to make the lives of its lawyers that much better. From involving them in the overall strategy, to training, to providing pleasant surrounds to work in, the firm is a shining example of making the practice of law a profession to be aspired to.

Interestingly, I was particularly impressed by the way that firm learned from its clients in the adoption of technology. Often the solutions to our problems are right in front of us if we only open our eyes to them.

And while I've singled out Truman Hoyle and Holding Redlich for the purposes of this column, they are not alone in forging new paths towards a better profession within which to practice. As I noted at the outset of the column; there has been a definite trend in the past few weeks, long may it continue and we will endeavour to make sure we seek them out.