

Women in Aviation



2021

Yesterday we sat down with Karen, Senior Accounts Receivable Officer at Pacific Turbine Brisbane.

Coming with a wealth of experience in aviation, Karen joined the PTB Finance Team in Feb of 2019. Today she manages accounts receivable across almost all the companies within the group- PTB, IAP, PTL & PTUSA.

Growing up in a family of four, Karen was the youngest. With her father an aircraft maintenance engineer and her mum a hairdresser, this opened a door towards a variety of careers (although clearly that aviation blood ran strong!).

Despite being obsessed with animals and having a childhood dream of becoming a Veterinarian, her first job landed her as a Photo Developer at Rabbit Photo. Don't know what a photo developer? (Read the fun fact below)

Fun Fact: A photo developer- remember those really old cameras with the cylindrical tape role. Where you couldn't see the photos you were taking until they had printed, and just had to take a random stab at it by looking through that tinsy hole. Yeah- those cameras. And those rolls of tape were what Karen would touch up for customers.

This was followed by being a Pool Technician, a Flight Attendant, a Personal Trainer and eventually Karen found herself falling into Finance.

We ask Karen about her life and what her experience has been, being a working woman & mum.

Is there anything you wish you had done differently in your career?

"Taken more risks and applied for/done the things that I thought were unattainable at the time."

How do you maintain a work/life balance?

"Terribly (laugh). I have always been terrible at keeping work within work hours. I would go into work on weekends and even now will log on at ungodly hours of the night to do work. But that's fine, it works for me!"

Interesting Fact: 66% of people say that don't truly have work/life balance. Unfortunately, this means that around 77% of people experience chronic burnout.

What are the most memorable family vacations or trips you recall?

Camping at Fraser Island. Really beautiful.

Do you think women entering the workforce now are better off than when you entered and why?

“In aviation, definitely yes. I had looked at studying engineering at the same school I ended up training to be a flight attendant at. My father was actually the one who told me I probably shouldn’t because the one girl who was studying engineering then had such a hard time. It took her close to two years before she got an apprenticeship. These days more women fill the classrooms and there are more opportunities for them to learn.”

Interesting Fact: A 2018-2019 report found that women only make up 31.47% of those working within the aviation industry. With the highest percentages of women being in Cabin Crew or Customer Service roles.

If you could do one thing differently in your life, what would that be?

Travelled more to the places I wanted, instead of following the lead of others at the time.

What did you learn at school that you would like to pass along to the next generation?

Don’t spend your time seeking acceptance from others.
Spend that time being happy with yourself and working towards the person you want to be.

