

Clint Harding

Arnold Bloch Leibler

Clint is a partner at Arnold Bloch Leibler. He is The Tax Institute's 2018 Corporate Tax Adviser of the Year.



Member's name

Clint Harding, CTA

Company

Arnold Bloch Leibler

State

NSW

Member since

2006

Clint is the winner of The Tax Institute's 2018 award for Corporate Tax Adviser of the Year.

Can you tell me about your career, and how you progressed towards your current specialisation?

Tax has been my speciality ever since I started out as a graduate lawyer in New Zealand, 20 years ago. I left NZ for London in 2001 and, instead of taking what I saw as the easier route of simply becoming another banking and finance lawyer, I threw myself at the challenge of learning a different tax system.

When I moved to Australia 13 years ago, I knew full well that I'd have to get my head around the tax laws of a third jurisdiction but by that stage I'd realised that constantly challenging myself in this way brought out the best in me.

In the eight years I've been at Arnold Bloch Leibler, I am incredibly proud to have built the Sydney tax practice from scratch to become a highly regarded team with an outstanding market profile and large revenue base.

What keeps you motivated on the most challenging of days?

Clients and colleagues tell me that my multi-jurisdictional experience and my

ability to do both transactional and dispute work is very unusual among my peers, and that point of difference continues to motivate me on my journey to be the best tax practitioner I can be.

Challenges come up of course, but most tasks are easy when they're focused on something you enjoy. I enjoy the academic rigour of taxation law, and the combination of technical excellence and instinct that combine to make a great tax adviser.

To be an effective commercial tax lawyer, technical excellence is a given. The ability to put yourself in the client's shoes, to be a trusted adviser who can identify and achieve the best outcome, involves a range of other qualities, including business acumen, empathy, communication skills and unquestionable ethics.

The constant creativity is highly motivating, as is the overall reputation of Arnold Bloch Leibler's national tax team, led by the esteemed Mark Leibler.

How important is being active in the profession to you, ABL and your clients?

Through the various professional bodies that I'm involved in, particularly The Tax Institute and the Tax Committee of the Law Council of Australia, which I chair, I'm also able to help shape the legislative environment in which we practice. I consider this aspect of my work to be both a great opportunity and a great responsibility. Australia is in dire need of genuine wide-ranging tax reform and it is the profession's responsibility to continue to advocate for this.

I'm such a "tax nerd", as my children put it, that I listen to Television Education Network Tax Podcasts in the car on the way to work!

Congratulations on your award from The Tax Institute. What does winning this award mean to you?

There are many professional award schemes around but, as a tax lawyer, being recognised by The Tax Institute really means something and it's a great source of pride for me, and for the firm. I have had many messages from clients and colleagues congratulating me and so the award is certainly well-recognised.

How has the Institute assisted and supported you throughout your career?

I have been a member since I first arrived in Australia and have been actively involved with The Tax Institute ever since. The Institute provides a network of Australia's top tax practitioners, and through conferences, journals and the hard work of its committees, I have met many fantastic people who have helped shape my career. In the immortal words of the epic rock band Journey ... "don't stop believin'".