



Grow YOUR CAREER IN LANDSCAPING

DESIGN CONSTRUCT MAINTAIN

JAMIE

Landscape Designer
- Diploma of Landscape Design -

What drew you to a career as a landscape designer?

What drew me to the industry goes way back when I owned a company in another industry which was stressful with long hours and had grown over the 10 years I was involved to include 70 employees, 2 business partners and a diverse range of businesses. I would go walking through the amazing Hunter Valley Gardens and the peace and wonder I felt walking those gardens gave me the incentive to retrain as a landscape designer and sell my former business share.

I felt that by hard work and careful planning, I too could design gardens and exterior spaces that delivered my clients amazing memories to sustain them a lifetime.

What study did you undertake and what skills are required?

I studied through the TAFE system which was valuable, however ongoing mentoring, collaborations and a thirst for ongoing self-education continue to be the foundation building skill upon skill.

Skills I have learnt are many. You need to be patient and open to learn from experienced contractors & consultants. You must be passionate and have a clear understanding of why you want to be a landscape designer. A strong overall knowledge of all horticultural aspects is vital, and this of course is the same for construction practices. If you don't know something.... ask!

Learning your chosen CAD software is essential and will be an ongoing evolution. But the greatest skill is listening, to both clients or consultants. That simple but important skill will underpin a very successful business future and life.

Once qualified, did you work for someone else prior to commencing your own business?

I worked for the Vintage Golf Resort in the Hunter Valley for 3 years providing both residential design to new properties being developed in the estate and general landscape supervision duties. A valuable experience in every way.

What do you like about working in the industry and being part of a team?

I love the industry. It's tough and it builds character. Developing strong team relationships is so very rewarding and I'm blessed to work with the best of the best in my opinion across 2 states. I've learnt so much from those relationships and still do to this day.

What is a common myth about working as a landscape designer?

That it's a 9 to 5 job.

What does a typical day look like for you?

I design using an iPad pro which is loaded with some amazing architectural software purchased separately. I grab a coffee and either sketch concepts, answer emails or conduct a discovery session for a new project. In many cases I could be onsite with clients or contractors early mornings as well. Formal drafting of designs will proceed right through to early evening and as we are incredibly busy its not uncommon to still be working well into the night.

What would you say to someone considering becoming a landscape designer?

This career requires resilience and patience but provides opportunities to change people's lives for the better which is extremely rewarding. Be open to learn and not afraid to make mistakes and you'll go far.

Describe your career highlight so far

Working with Jo at Therapeutic Gardens Australia on the Eidsvold Hospital project in rural Qld. It was a great experience developing design drawings for new therapeutic garden and transitional spaces for people of all abilities in this amazing community. The project is still ongoing. Being a part of a winning team at Landscape Queensland Awards was certainly a major highlight to me as the designer. The one that means the most was my very first design ever. It was a simple design for a client that recently lost a son and wanted to create a space reflective of beautiful spaces they both spent time in. With a shaky hand and a tear, she sat with me in the constructed garden with a cup of tea and reflected on how much that space meant to her. A brilliant job by the contractors and a superb client that taught me life is about the memories we make.