



Alison Best

Alison joined byrne-dean in 2012. Having spent twelve years as an employment lawyer, initially at City firm Herbert Smith, and later with national firm Mills & Reeve, her work now focuses on making a difference to working lives on a human level.

Alison brings a range of skills to her role as Head of Purpose, Design and Innovation. She spends a lot of time with the byrne.dean team developing our approaches and ensuring, as we grow and innovate, changes are always aligned with our mission and who we are. She's been described as a 'brilliant' and 'superb' facilitator and takes a creative approach to designing our training. Working with clients across a range of sectors and cultures, listening closely to their needs and objectives, she provides bespoke training solutions to meet their particular requirements. As well as traditional face-to-face sessions, she creates effective, interactive blended learning. Alison easily adapts to new technologies and leads the development of our virtual and online training delivery.

Her recent workshop facilitation has centred around workplace inclusion. Her warm and personable approach builds connection with participants, enabling them to feel comfortable to reflect, challenge, and share their views. Alison strongly believes in growth mindset. She knows from experience that people rarely change their workplace behaviour or leadership approach because they are told to; they change because they connect on an emotional level with the concepts, reflect on the ideas and have an actionable toolkit for implementing meaningful change.

Experience

Training design and facilitation – Alison has extensive experience of designing and facilitating impactful training. She covers a wide variety of subject areas specialising in inclusion (respect, unconscious bias, privilege, micro-aggressions, and appropriate behaviour), effective communication, conflict resolution, managing within the law, and leadership fundamentals.

Digital and online training – Alison has been building online learning for over a decade. She has contributed to the creation of compelling digital learning in relation to topics including harassment, mental health and racism. She uses our in-house software, Articulate.

Drama-based learning and effective communication skills – Alison is adept at delivering immersive, experiential workshops - working with professional role-playing actors, in person and virtually, to build participant skills and confidence.

Employment law – As a former solicitor, Alison has in-depth experience across the range of employment law subjects (from TUPE and redundancy to dismissal, harassment and discrimination).

Global experience – Alison works with individuals across a wide range of cultures, geographies, and backgrounds. She has worked in Asia (Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong), Australia, North America, and across Europe.

1:1 work – Alison has expertise, and spends a considerable amount of her personal time, as a listening ear in 1:1 conversations with individuals in need of support. Less frequently she conducts 1:1s with leaders where there is a risk situation (arising out of conduct concern/complaint).

What counts most – Alison is most proud of having two teenage daughters and, through some tough times, has honed the invaluable skills, stamina, resilience and determination single working parents develop while juggling commitments and meeting competing demands.

Qualifications

BA Law (Queens' College Cambridge) and LPC (College of Law)

EQ Certified Practitioner

Mental Health First Aider