

A 19 year ascent from desk to Principal.

If you had told a teenage Lara Gill growing up in Canberra that she would one day be a Principal and Senior Financial Adviser in regional New South Wales, she probably would have laughed. Back in high school, she didn't even know what a financial planner was. She was a city girl with big plans to build a career in a major metropolitan center.

Lara's entry into the world of financial planning was a happy accident. While completing her Certificate IV in Administration via TAFE during Year 12, she was placed with a local financial planning business for a two-week work experience stint. By the end of those two weeks, she had impressed the team so much they offered her a full-time position.

After two years of learning the ropes in a smaller office, a friend working at Forsyths recommended she apply for a position, so Lara took the leap and applied for a role in Forsyths' superannuation administration team. Recognising her existing financial planning experience, the firm placed her in the financial services team as an administrative assistant.

Climbing every rung of the ladder

Built on a foundation of ground-up experience, Lara's career at Forsyths spans every operational and advisory role within the financial planning ecosystem, giving her a complete, end-to-end understanding of the discipline.

In 2012, Lara decided to take her career to the next level and pursue the studies required to become a certified advisor. Navigating higher education while working full-time is a big commitment, but the level of backing she received from Forsyths was a total game-changer. The firm threw its weight behind her ambitions, supporting her with study leave provisions and direct financial assistance.

With that backing, Lara went on to secure an Advanced Diploma, a Graduate Diploma, a Master's degree, and several highly sought-after industry specialisations.

The reality of regional success

While the academic qualifications laid the groundwork, Lara credits her professional ascent to Forsyths' hands-on approach to mentoring. Early on, she was given the space to stretch her wings, tackle real-world client complexities, and build the confidence to realise she was genuinely good at her craft.

Today, Lara's day-to-day schedule looks vastly different from her administration days. As a Partner, her life is a dynamic mix of leadership team strategy meetings, director-level discussions, and face-to-face client catch-ups. Because Forsyths services a sprawling network of communities, she regularly travels to different office locations, client homes, and even capital cities like Sydney, Newcastle, and locations up into Queensland.

When asked about the benefits of regional life, Lara immediately points to the time saved. Instead of battling grueling city traffic to travel a mere 20 kilometers, she enjoys a breezy 15-minute commute home from the office. That ease of living has allowed Lara to integrate her life and her work seamlessly.

Reflecting on her nearly two decades with the firm, Lara says the biggest surprise was discovering just how connected a large regional firm could feel. Starting at a single-office practice, she was amazed by Forsyths' annual Firm Days. Seeing all the locations come together as one massive, united group to celebrate achievements completely redefined her view of a workplace.

Lara's journey is proof that you don't have to sacrifice a high-flying career to enjoy the lifestyle, warmth, and balance of regional Australia. Sometimes, the perfect fit is right in your own backyard.

Lara Gill

Financial Services
Principal

