

THE LEADER

Melbourne-based Stuart Fowler, M.AIRAH, is the newly announced CEO of Norman Disney & Young.

Responsibilities

As chief executive officer at Norman Disney & Young, I have responsibility for all of NDY's operations.

Passions

Consulting engineering is a people business. I'm passionate about providing exceptional client service, by developing a deep understanding of client business needs and requirements, and responding accordingly. Our business focus is very much about the customer because, without them, we don't have a business.

I also have an absolute commitment to excellence in everything we do as a business – if you're going to do something, you do it well, or don't bother.

I'm passionate about growing and developing our own people, investing in them, supporting them and providing them the opportunities to fully realise their potential and to excel in their own careers. It's always incredibly rewarding to see young professionals enter our business and develop, grow and become industry leaders in their own right.

Outside of business, I'm devoted to my family, and love music, food and wine, and travel. I also get pretty passionate whenever Carlton is playing football.



Finest professional hour

I've been very fortunate to have been involved with great people and fantastic projects over many years now, so there have been many, many positives.

Being promoted to NDY Australian Regional Director in 2011 was a major highlight, and a significant change in role for me. Handing over the leadership of the NDY Melbourne office at that time – my baby – after nurturing and growing the business for 16 years, to my colleague and friend Sam Aloï, was a genuine highlight. I knew that the office was staying in great hands and that Sam was the right person to take it forward.

From a project perspective, my recent involvement in the very successful 700 Bourke Street project for NAB has been an absolute high point – just a wonderful project to be involved with.

Important lessons

Never stop learning. Consulting engineering is a team game. Always listen to what the customer says. Always treat people with respect. Seek to understand issues from other people's viewpoint. Focus on growing professional relationships and your client network. Be excellent at what you do. Don't be afraid to have a go. Family is the most important thing. Take time-out to re-energise. Look after your own well-being to enable you to be at your professional best. And most importantly, enjoy the journey.

Whom do you most admire?

I've admired no one more than my own father, Wayne Fowler, who sadly passed away in 2010. He was incredibly hard-working, honest, humble and just a great, very genuine person.

Dream sabbatical?

Something involving food, wine, music, travel, a warm climate and great beaches.

What is your motto?

"Don't die wondering"

What has been your greatest personal achievement?

Having a family and experiencing my children growing into wonderful young adults. I think that really brings true happiness.

Favourite book

You probably wouldn't believe me if I said the AIRAH technical handbook . . .

Favourite film

The Shawshank Redemption.

Favourite website

Twitter (you can follow me @SWF_engineer)

How would you describe yourself?

I think it's best to leave that up to others.

Define success

Being healthy; getting the balance right between family, career, friends and personal interests, and being truly happy with each; Making a positive contribution to the world; and having the means, and the freedom, to choose what I do, and when.

What does AIRAH membership mean to you?

AIRAH is a really important communication and advocacy conduit for our industry. It's a great industry organisation, sharing a wealth of information and providing leadership, promotion, representation and broad industry support. As a design professional, I've been really pleased to be a member of AIRAH for many years, and I trust for many more to come. ■