

# Shayla Strapps

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## *Lawyer, CEO, Advocate & Keynote Speaker*

Shayla Strapps extensive career in the law is a story of determination and tenacity. She has been recognised for forging a successful career in a non-traditional legal path and through constantly questioning and challenging the best ways to practice law. Shayla is a changemaker and her 20 years as a lawyer have been spent giving a voice to the voiceless and in finding newer and better ways to solve complex problems. Her immense passion for equity and social justice have seen her be one of the very few lawyers to be awarded both the Lawyer of the Year Award and Woman Lawyer of the Year Award in Western Australia.



## **More about Shayla Strapps:**

Shayla was the 2022 Woman Lawyer of the Year; 2011 Lawyer of the Year; Vice President Law Society 2021; Chief Executive Officer and Family and domestic violence advocate.

Shayla speaks frankly and courageously and inspires people to do better, to think differently and to challenge the systems and processes which do not work for society and community. Her work as a CEO is defined by her ability to drive effective and significant change and being teams along with her and to get passion and commitment towards a unified goal.

Shayla is a regular guest on radio and in the media and provides a measured and knowledgeable voice to a range of current topics.

Early in her career, Shayla worked with women as a Family and Domestic Violence solicitor, garnering a deep understanding of the barriers to justice for women and in gender equity in our community. Shayla's work with refugees in 2007-2014 was career defining and saw her visit many of Western Australia's most notorious detention centres. She set up the state's Judicial Review Asylum Seeker project and recruited Perth's legal profession and courts to support it, resulting in huge change in processes and outcomes, garnering the respect of the legal profession and resulting in being awarded the Lawyer of the Year in 2011.

At her time as CEO at Ruah Community Services and Ruah Legal Services from 2017 to 2022, Shayla led WA's first merger between a legal service and a community service and has changed the delivery of legal services to disadvantaged clients. She mentors young lawyers, regional lawyers and is a voice for change in the profession. For this work Shayla was awarded 'Woman Lawyer of the Year' in 2022.

Shayla is currently Campaign Director for the Ruah Centre for Women and Children, the largest project in Ruah's history and the first of its kind in Australia. Shayla is using her deep knowledge of gender inequity and gender inequality in this project. The Centre is the embodiment of Ruah's vision and mission, a place for Ruah to lead a visionary change to end violence against women. It represents a bold step in challenging very complex systems and problems to face them head on.

She is committed to the development of community organisations and has volunteered for numerous not-for-profit boards and committees including Vice President and Treasurer of The Law Society of Western Australian in 2021.

Shayla is a much sought after speaker who offers a range of presentations designed to motivate, stimulate, inform and entertain any audience. These include leadership, inspiring change, equity and justice and law.

### **Shayla Strapps talks about:**

- How to be a changemaker: inspiring change and innovation – how to inspire and lead teams to do great things.
- How bravery and tenacity define good leadership.
- From Courtroom to Cause: How Perth's Woman Lawyer of the Year found her path to make lasting change and her tips for career fulfillment.
- The Rule of Law – why every Australian must understand what this is and how easily we can lose it.
- Making hard decisions when it matters most.
- Think like an entrepreneur – Challenging your beliefs and considering innovative change to our community's most complex problems.
- Work/Home life balance including the challenges of motherhood.
- The new workplace – what an inclusive and equal workplace must do in 2022 and beyond.
- The dangers of letting politics interfere with justice – what is your role to play?

### **Client testimonials:**

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“ In a world where we experience crowded channels bursting with public speakers, thought leadership forums and podcasts, really communicating and getting cut through is competitive and not automatic. Shayla Strapps as a communicator of ideas, speaker, influencer in decision making forums and as an advocate, achieves cut through and influence whenever she speaks. Her professional experience, empathy, precise language, exposure to diverse people and

perspectives, commanding presence and an ability to tell a compelling and targeted narrative, provides the powerful components to being a standout and memorable public speaker. I have seen Shayla speak in public forums, at Board meetings and as a surprised award winner on the podium and in each case, she speaks, we listen and we reflect. She is measured, thoughtful and human in her communications. There are too many 'professional' speakers who are formulaic, repetitive and sometimes with little to say. In these current times, this delivery is bland and unprogressive. Shayla Straps provides an opportunity to engage and re-engage with ideas, issues and people in a fresh, compelling, inclusive and powerful manner. Highly recommended.

**- General Manager Marketing, Business Development & Community Engagement**

“ Shayla is a powerful speaker, able to articulate the action required by each of us in achieving social equity. As an award winning lawyer she knows the justice system and has seen first hand how our vulnerable experience disadvantage. And while her message is powerful in regard to the systems level changes that are needed, she also has a message for all of us. That we each need to embody the change we seek.

**- Marketing Director, Huddle**

“ Shayla is an exceptional public speaker. The way she presents is appealing and engaging, using her extensive experience in the field of law and translating it into practical lessons. It is the way Shayla translates her story and presents her experiences which really make her presentations stand out. Shayla maintains a humility that is refreshing despite her impressive background and she is always truthful, open and clear. Shayla leaves a lasting impression and after hearing her speak I am often reflecting on how I can best implement her learnings into the work I do as a leader.

**- General Manager Housing & Homelessness - Ruah Community Services**

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