

# Judy can eat her cake too

**Q: Where do you work?**

Cakes By JudyC, Ashgrove

**Q: How did you earn your first dollar?**

As an apprentice hairdresser in Casino, northern NSW.

**Q: What standard of education did you reach?**

Fourth Form, which is today's equivalent to Grade 10. I left to start a hairdressing apprenticeship.

**Q: What was your first full-time job?**

Same as my first dollar - apprentice hairdresser.

**Q: Is your current job the career you envisaged for yourself when you finished studying?**

Definitely not, I always wanted to be a hairdresser and if not that either an interior designer or lawyer.

**Q: What made you choose this career?**

I realised at 29 I had absolutely no money, and it was something that I initially did to get some cash coming in. Baking was something I knew and could do with no investment other than my time. I grew up around wedding cake makers, bakers and pastry chefs; they are on both sides of my family. I learnt a lot from watching what they did when I was young.

## FACT FILE

**Name:** Judy Cook/JudyC  
**Date of birth:** February 5, 1958  
**Suburb of residence:** Red Hill  
**Job description:** Specialty cake maker

**Q: How many times have you changed career?**

Three times so far.

**Q: Is there another career change in you?**

Perhaps. I'd love to be a food consultant and also author a book.

**Q: What would you do if you were forced to give up your current job?**

That's a tough question as I love to decorate and I get to do that every day with my cakes. I could always apply for a job with Martha Stewart - that would suffice.

**Q: What has been the biggest success in your career?**

Backing myself enough to open Cakes By JudyC. Opening my own place was scary, but totally worth it.

**Q: What has been your biggest regret?**

No major regrets just small day-to-day

niggles like wishing I learnt to manage time better earlier. I'm still learning.

**Q: What is the most pleasing aspect of your job?**

Seeing the smiles on customers' faces and the squeals of delight from the children when they see their cakes. Knowing that I have made their special occasion more exciting and memorable is so rewarding.

**Q: What is the most difficult, yet necessary aspect?**

Getting the cake right, understanding the customer's visual idea.

**Q: Are you actively grooming a successor for when you decide to step down?**

No, not at the moment, I have no plans to go anywhere anytime soon.

**Q: What tips do you have for people starting out in their careers?**

If you are not passionate about what you do and not willing to do the hard yards then you have the wrong career.

**Q: What tips do you have for those just starting a business?**

It's essential to have a very clear understanding of what you want to get out of the business and what your expectations are of the staff you employ. Good staff communication is imperative, as is flexibility.



CUT ABOVE: Judy Cook from Cakes by JudyC at Ashgrove.

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