

# All guns blazing

Katie Tomlinson is the general manager at the Gold Coast Blaze. While the team is looking to notch some early wins and bolster its balance sheet after a lackluster season last year, it's all guns blazing for the woman behind the scenes as she strives to create a force in the NBL.

## **How important are mentors today and what's the one key piece of advice that has helped you in your career?**

Mentoring is incredibly important in all aspects of life, not just in your career. I think from a young age I was mentored by all my aunts and uncles – they were the ones you could say things to you would not say to your parents. As an adult I have always been attracted to older people – like my husband — just kidding Owen.

I was brought up to respect older people and their opinions and I still tend to call anyone older than me either Mr or Mrs. But I think mentoring comes in different guises. Gavin Dunn, the chairman of the Blaze board, is a great mentor to me and he is younger than me.

Both Gavin and our Blaze board consultant John Quinn, give me the praise I need sometimes to bounce back from a hit and they are always happy to listen when I need to talk.

**Naomi Lawrence from Career Intelligence** works with our basketball players as a career adviser and she also helps me a lot with structure and planning at the office. Paul Broughton from the Titans is someone who often gives me a pat on the back and tells me I am doing a good job. I am not sure if Paul knows just how much I value that gesture as he is one person who knows exactly how tough it is for us. And then there is Dave Claxton. Dave is the best. He is the easiest person in the world to work with and when there is a crisis you can absolutely count on Dave to be calm and take the right direction. I couldn't do my job without his mentoring.