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MIND OVER MATTER: Diane Kalendra after receiving her doctorate.

Picture: SARAH REED

Top mind for any challenge

ALEXANDRA
TREDREA

A FULL-time job, outside business interests and health problems did not prevent Diane Kalendra from completing her doctorate in business administration.

Dr Kalendra was one of six people who have graduated with either a DBA or a doctor of philosophy (PhD) in management from Adelaide-based private higher-education provider Gibaran Learning Group.

Despite working long hours in her job as Australia Post's SA/NT commercial division marketing manager, Dr Kalendra spent 10 to 15 hours each week, over four years, working on her thesis about market-oriented organisations.

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Diane can put her mind to meet any challenge

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"I tried to snatch about one or two hours (of study) in the morning before I got to work," she said.

She said Gibaran's flexible learning environment suited her busy schedule.

"One of the reasons I enrolled at Gibaran was that I believed academic study means nothing if it can't be practically applied in business," she said. "Gibaran offered a way of bridging the academic with the practical."

Dr Kalendra's endurance was also tested by ongoing health problems, which she recently learned stemmed from being an undiagnosed coeliac - a person who cannot tolerate gluten in the diet.

"Studying is a journey of self discovery and you have to deal with a lot of negative and potentially

limiting self-beliefs," she said.

Also graduating with Dr Kalendra at the Adelaide ceremony last month were 150 local and overseas students from a range of programs.

Gibaran Learning Group chairman Selva Abraham said many graduates worked for government or private organisations in their native countries overseas.

"Students around the world are hungry for Australian business and management courses and we have created a niche in the market through our work-based learning model," Dr Abraham said.

"Many overseas students aren't fortunate enough to be able to come to Australia to study."

To meet the demand, he said Gibaran had built alliances with education institutions in overseas markets.