

### Addressing Challenges Faced by Racialized Licensees

I attended the discussions on 25 February at the LSUC and I would like to thank the workgroup and the LSUC for making the discussion possible. It was very thought provoking and I would like to give you some of my thoughts.

One must be careful not to rely solely on the definition of "racialised" because who is really racialised? Are we not all racialised and discriminated in some shape or form? Personally I feel racialised because; I was born outside of Canada; I have an accent; I am nearly 60; I am a paralegal new to the profession; I do not have many connections; and I am White! The scales in many ways are tipped to far in favour of minority groups. Minority groups have a better chance of breaking into the legal environment and earn a living from it as they have their own communities as the Asians, Black, Chinese, Jewish, First nations and other such entities tend to go with their own rather than with the likes of me a White Caucasian, English born and English speaking.

To eradicate racialism we should all just stop talking about it and start to work together through better education. We tend to abuse and use the term racialization too loosely along with feminism. We all co-exist in the world and we should simply understand that we need to live life and work and play in harmony and promote the bigger message that it is better together rather than racially separated. The LSUC should concentrate their efforts on educating the general public and within the legal profession that the services offered regardless of colour, creed, gender, sexual orientation or religious beliefs will be treated and respected in the same way as everyone. Racial profiling and discrimination may then be diminished somewhat.

PRP courses for both paralegals and lawyers alike would hopefully produce the same standards and maybe change the thinking of some lawyers that paralegals are not stealing their jobs and that we are trained to a high level of professionalism in our practice of scope and that we can all work together in harmony helping each other and for the best interests of who we serve the general public.

The LSUC should be more proactive in supporting newly trained licensed lawyers and paralegals by providing more networking opportunities and mentorship programs that are clearly advertised and should not be lawyer orientated but more legal professional orientated. Of course this must be attractive and cost effective to newly trained professionals as the newly trained person is more likely to be in debt from student loans, LSUC fees, Insurance, and many other hidden costs. Not everyone wants to work as a sole practitioner and would often lack the experience to be one.

Maybe some form of job database through the LSUC where firms, companies and licensees can advertise their needs. This could assist with forming a clear database of racialised licensees and how well businesses are performing in this area. However databases are all very well and you can get it to say whatever you want it to say. Databases and data collection is only effective if everyone participates and is on board with the concept of the reasoning behind it.

So to recap I believe networking, mentoring and cost effective education is where the LSUC should focus and data collection to a lesser extent. We all pay a lot of money for our licensees and just to keep asking for more and more without getting something back can produce lethargy and the why bother nothing changes attitude, racialisation, discrimination and lack of co-operation will continue. We all need to understand when you cut yourself your blood red just like everyone else and that is the attitude we should all promote.

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