

# BALFOUR MOSS

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February 2, 2005

To: Potential Articling Students

Re: **Articling at Balfour Moss**

Like most law students, almost everything I knew about the practice of law I had learned from television – and most of that was wrong. Law school certainly provides you with some grounding in substantive law, but it doesn't provide much insight into the everyday practice of law. On my first day, I walked into Balfour Moss not knowing what to expect, where to go or who to talk to. Looking back, my first day on the job was quite an intimidating experience.

Thankfully, the lawyers at Balfour Moss made the transition to the work environment as smooth as possible. Even the most senior lawyers have been available to answer the most mundane of questions (which I ask on a regular basis) without losing patience in me. That is unless of course they are simply good at laughing behind my back when I'm not around.

All kidding aside, my articling experience at Balfour Moss has been very rewarding. From day one, I've had the chance to work in almost all areas of law. There is no doubt that articling requires a great deal of hard work. However, the past 8 months have been positive in the sense that every day presents new challenges and an opportunity to broaden my horizons.

The lawyers at the firm, especially my principal, have made sure that I get an opportunity to experience as many aspects of the law as possible. Here is a sample of some work I have done:

- Interviewing clients and discussing matters with other lawyers and on my own;
- Drafting a separation agreement;
- Drafting a petition for divorce;
- Active participation in the preliminary stages of class action proceedings;
- Introduction and research into emerging privacy law issues;
- Preparation of several pre-trial briefs and attendance at pre-trial conferences;
- Observing at examinations for discovery;
- Small Claims actions for both the plaintiff and defendant;
- Mastering the art of pretending to understand complex and incomprehensible instructions from senior partners;

- Provincial Court appearances and adjournments;
- Preparation of trial briefs and attendance at a civil trial where I participated through the reading-in of transcript evidence;
- Attendance and participation in mandatory mediation; and
- Currently involved in the administration and probate of estates.

Balfour Moss is not just about legal work. During my articles I've also been encouraged to take part in non-work related professional associations and community groups. Thankfully Balfour Moss recognizes that as young professionals, most articling students will want to involve themselves in these types of activities. As an example of the legal enrichment provided to me, I recently attended a Saskatchewan Trial Lawyers Association conference, and I have taken part in several CBA legal education seminars. I have also been encouraged to represent the firm at community events and fundraisers in the community. For instance, the firm has maintained my membership fee for Saskatchewan Young Professionals and Entrepreneurs. More recently I was encouraged to volunteer as a judge in the Regina High School Debate competition.

One thing I noticed about the firm shortly after joining was the upbeat firm culture. Throughout the year, the firm hosts a number of social events, like wine and cheese functions, an annual golf tournament, Christmas Party and summer barbeque. From a purely individual level, the lawyers have made my transition to the practice of law easier by including me in less formal events like lunches, events outside of the office and day to day social interaction. As an articling student, the informal relationships I have developed with lawyers has made it easier for me to interact with partners and senior associates and generally made articling a fantastic experience.

Overall, the positive work environment has been the one thing that has impressed me the most about Balfour Moss. Without any sarcasm I can say that I enjoy the company of the lawyers I work with on a daily basis. Trust me, when you are working on the 15<sup>th</sup> version of a brief, you're frustrated and feel like Professor Flanagan's lectures really ARE useless and have taught you nothing, it is invaluable having genuinely friendly and knowledgeable people to ask advice.

I realize that this summary can only skim the surface with respect to my articling experience. If you have any further questions or would like more information regarding the firm, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

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