

# Legal Leaders for Diversity

## A Statement of Support for Diversity and Inclusion by General Counsel in Canada

**We commit to promoting diversity in the workplace.** We value the range of perspectives, ideas and experiences that diversity provides, whether grounded in gender, race, sexual orientation, disability, cultural background, religion or age.

**We believe diversity and inclusion create a broader, richer environment** that enhances creative thinking, innovation and problem solving. Inclusive organizations attract and retain top talent.

**We will therefore encourage greater diversity and inclusion** in our own businesses and co-operate to foster these same values throughout the legal profession and the larger Canadian business community.

**We undertake to practice and advance diversity and inclusion by:**

- Promoting diversity within our own departments;
- Considering diversity in our hiring and purchasing practices;
- Encouraging Canadian law firms to follow our example;
- Promoting diversity initiatives at all levels in the legal and business community;
- Measuring the effectiveness of our efforts.

**We, as advocates for diversity and inclusion,** will demonstrate our commitment through specific actions including one or more of the “Be an Advocate” initiatives.





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## Be an Advocate

1. Create a “diversity-friendly” law department through actions as well as words. Know your organization’s diversity plan and talk to your groups about it to make sure they understand how important it is. Be visible in your support; attend your organization’s diversity events.
2. Hire from a diverse pool. Establish a diversity intranet website to show role models for career progression.
3. Make diversity and inclusion a standing item on quarterly team meeting agendas.
4. Build diversity and inclusiveness plans into employee reviews.
5. Create a mentoring program within your law department where lawyers mentor people from diverse backgrounds. Consider two-way and reverse mentorship programs, and also mentoring outside your organization.
6. Make coaching in diversity and inclusiveness part of all leadership training. Educate your organization’s leaders to ensure they understand, champion and effectively communicate the business case for diversity and inclusion.
7. Consider establishing an External Diversity Advisory Committee to guide business leadership. Find ways to measure success and hold leaders accountable for progress in diversity and inclusiveness.
8. In dealing with outside law firms, make sure they know diversity is one of your organization’s core values and that you expect to see diversity and inclusiveness on your legal teams.
9. Retain minority or women-owned law firms whenever possible.
10. Support vendors and suppliers whose ownership or employee base reflects a commitment to diversity and inclusion.
11. Be an Advocate. Speak with other CLOs about diversity and inclusiveness and share best practices.
12. Join with law schools to support initiatives.
13. Help develop Diversity Employee Networks and act as an Executive sponsor of one of them.
14. Participate in or host a meeting of Legal Leaders for Diversity and Inclusion.
15. Find and support an organization that promotes diversity.
16. Participate in programs where you host internationally trained lawyers in your law department.
17. Use your general counsel networks to support diversity and inclusiveness initiatives.

