



June 2, 2020

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE BOUSFIELDS TEAM

Hi everyone,

On behalf of the partners, I wanted to apologize for the lateness of this message to you. A lot has happened over the past few days with respect to the anti-racism protests and the tragic events that led to them. We, collectively and individually, have taken the time to try to figure it all out and how best to respond. Please know that it does not in any way diminish the importance and gravity of the matter and that it sits heavily on our hearts and minds as it does on yours. There is no one response that will incapsulate everything we are thinking and feeling, we have just scratched the surface on an issue that runs generations deep. But as a starting point, we wanted to remind you that we are all here for one another.

While some of these thoughts and experiences are my own, know that in speaking with the partners, they are all fully supportive and endorse the overall message of equality, inclusivity and diversity that I am advocating on their behalf.

There is a lot going on in the world today, a lot to navigate through, and in a time where it is too easy to feel alone and isolated, there are situations and events that compel us to want to come together to talk, speak out and have our voices heard, which makes it all the more difficult to deal with in these strange times. Such an event occurred last week and for me, personally, it has been a slow buildup of thoughts and emotions to a point where I am now ready to speak out. To be honest, I had been wrestling with whether or not I should be more vocal, whether I even had the proper platform to do so. Even as a visible minority having faced my fair share of racism, watching, hearing and reading the systemic racism that Black and Indigenous people have endured and continue to endure, has made me feel sad and angry, but also guilty or even worse, relief, that my own experiences have not been to that level. Who am I to speak out about issues that do not directly impact me? You may also be feeling angry, scared, sad and/or confused or all of the above, but at the same time, perhaps you yourself are feeling the same anxiety, nervousness or guilt about whether or not to speak out. For me, I have decided that how I am feeling is okay and that I should still speak out, to at least comfort those that are feeling just as overwhelmed with all their emotions as I am and to let them know that it is okay to feel what they are feeling, that they are not alone and that I am here right beside them.

I have also been on the fence on whether I should compel others to speak out. I appreciate and understand that everyone has their own timeline on how to approach such sensitive matters. Take the time to read, listen and talk so you can take the proper and informed position(s). If you do have something to say, I encourage you to speak out in any form and to anyone you feel comfortable with. Knowing that we are all in this together is not only comforting and reassuring, but is strengthening and empowering. Any guilt and anxiety about being vocal on an issue that impacts you, even indirectly, is festered from fear. So do not let fear prevail. Overcoming your fears will be one major step in overcoming hate. Hate impacts us all.

We as partners have built and continue to build a place of inclusivity, acceptance and tolerance. Bousfields has and will continue to be an equal opportunity employer. We always recruit the best individuals regardless of religion, age, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, race or colour. We value the talent and abilities of you above all and seek to foster an open, cooperative and dynamic environment. It is our policy that we do not promote or accept any form of discrimination, your safety and well-being is always top of mind for us. So, if you ever feel discriminated and unsafe, whether it be in the office or off-site at a meeting or what not, please report any incident and be assured that it will be dealt with the utmost importance and discretion.

That said, we are not perfect. We can always be better and we as partners know this and will continue to strive to reach your highest standards when it comes to these issues. One such commitment is improving and celebrating our diversity. Over the past few years, as our firm has grown in size, we have been so fortunate to find such talented and diverse individuals that not only bring their own skill sets and capabilities, but also bring their own unique backgrounds, experiences and insights. You are all a huge part of our firm's ongoing success. We will continue find ways to better support diversity and inclusion so that we can celebrate our differences and our successes together. We welcome your thoughts and ideas on how to improve these aspects of our firm.

I find it timely that in what feels like a pinnacle moment for humanity, that this moment coincides with the beginning of Pride Month. Pride Month has and will always be about loving and celebrating our diversity, accepting and elevating one another and having a positive outlook to the change that is occurring in the world. It is easy for all of us to think the worst of humanity when events such as the ones from the past week occur. It is okay to feel all your feels, whether they be good, bad or even ugly. It is from those darkest moments that we can find the light to lead us to the end of the rainbow to a better world.

Over the next few days, weeks and months, I hope that you are all able take this all in and find your own way to be the change for a better world. The partners and your Bousfields family are here to support you in any way you need as you try to figure it all out. You are not alone.

Be safe and take care of yourself and each other.

Love,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Huynh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

David Huynh