

## Essential Skills Intensive for New Litigators

### Civil Litigation



In person



Live Online



**Date:** Friday, September 25, 2026 | 9:00 am to 4:00 pm  
**Location:** OBA Conference Centre 20 Toronto Street, 2nd Floor, Toronto  
**Agenda:** 8:30 am Registration  
 9:00 am Program Commences  
 4:30 pm Program Concludes (Reception to follow)

This program contains  
 3h 45m of Substantive Content  
 1h 0m of Professionalism Content  
 0h 45m of EDI Professionalism Content

*The OBA has been approved as an Accredited Provider of Professionalism Content by The Law Society of Ontario*

**Attention New Calls and Licensing Candidates!** Don't miss this opportunity to learn the critical skills you need to thrive as a litigator. By now, you know a lot about the law. But as any practicing lawyer will tell you, that's only a small part of practice. Historically, new calls would bridge the gap through trial and error: making mistakes and getting feedback by a partner or judge and vowing never to make that misstep again! This program is your opportunity to skip those pitfalls and hit the ground running. Our expert faculty will walk you through dozens of skills that seasoned litigators know but may not have time to teach, including how to write a proper letter, how to interact with clients, how to prepare basic court documents, how to structure settlements, and courtroom decorum.

Program Chair: **Adil Abdulla**, Sotos LLP

<p>9:00am Welcome and Opening Remarks</p> <p>9:05am <b>Written Communication: Essentials of Style and Substance</b>  <b>Alicja Puchta, Torys LLP</b>  <b>Caroline Bedard, Low Murchison Radnoff LLP (Ottawa)</b>  <b>Matthew G.T. Glass, Van Dusen Law (Ottawa)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional formatting, tone and etiquette for internal and external communications</li> <li>• Letters vs. emails: strategic decision-making and timing</li> <li>• "With Prejudice" vs. "Without Prejudice" communications explained</li> <li>• Avoiding inappropriate content under the <i>Rules of Professional Conduct</i></li> <li>• When and how to follow up and respond</li> </ul> <p>10:15am Networking Break</p> <p>10:30am <b>Working with the Client: Building Trust and Managing Expectations</b>  <b>Faren Bogach, Construct Legal</b>  <b>Hailey Abramsky, Fogler, Rubinoff LLP</b>  <b>Sara McGregor, BMO Financial Group</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who is your client</li> <li>• How to talk to clients</li> <li>• Conducting effective intake calls</li> <li>• The advice-instruction cycle</li> <li>• Managing expectations</li> <li>• Updating clients and timely communication</li> <li>• Dealing with uncooperative or emotional clients</li> <li>• Respectful meeting etiquette</li> <li>• Best practices for collaborative problem-solving</li> </ul> <p>11:30am <b>Accommodations and Cultural Competency</b>  <b>Adil Abdulla, Sotos LLP</b>  <b>Kathryn Marshall, Marshall Law</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing cultural competency in legal practice</li> <li>• Identifying and addressing unique needs</li> <li>• Accommodations for clients, counsel, and opposing parties with disabilities</li> <li>• Improving access to justice and ensuring equitable treatment of all clients and counsel</li> </ul> <p>12:00pm Networking Lunch</p>	<p>1:00pm <b>Court Documents: Drafting, Formatting, and Filing in the Digital Age</b>  <b>Alexander Evangelista, Fogler, Rubinoff LLP</b>  <b>Ian Matthews, Borden Ladner Gervais LLP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drafting with/without ACL</li> <li>• Uploading documents in Case Center</li> <li>• Creating bookmarks and hyperlinking citations and footnotes</li> <li>• Service and filing requirements under the <i>Rules of Civil Procedure</i></li> <li>• Navigating practice directions and differences in different regions</li> </ul> <p>2:00pm <b>Settlements: Strategy, Structure, and Ethics</b>  <b>Dave Morin-Pelletier, Sicotte Guilbault (Ottawa)</b>  <b>Jessica Byles-Nolet, Sicotte Guilbault (Ottawa)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When to initiate negotiations and strategic considerations</li> <li>• Key elements of a strong settlement agreement</li> <li>• Releases: scope and enforceability</li> <li>• Discontinuance vs. dismissal</li> <li>• Understanding cost consequences under Rule 49</li> <li>• What you need to know about settlement privilege</li> </ul> <p>3:00pm Networking Break</p> <p>3:15pm <b>Courtroom Etiquette: Professionalism that Persuades</b>  <b>Cady Dreger, Waddington and Pottinger Law LLP (Thunder Bay)</b>  <b>Paul-Erik Veel, Lenczner Slaght LLP</b>  <b>Samantha Green, Fogler, Rubinoff LLP</b>  <b>Ted Brook, Norton Rose Fulbright LLP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Courtroom dress and gowning protocol</li> <li>• Seating and procedural variations between courts</li> <li>• Rules around decorum, devices, and conduct</li> <li>• When to use printed materials vs. PDFs vs. Case Center</li> <li>• Oral advocacy essentials and live demonstrations</li> </ul> <p>4:30pm Program Concludes and Networking Reception</p>
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