

Whistleblowing Canada Research Society

WHISTLEBLOWING – CHANGING THE NARRATIVE

- evidence-based Talking Points for those wanting to help change erroneous beliefs about whistleblowing

- ❖ Whistleblowing is necessary for democratic governance and the rule of law.
- ❖ Whistleblowing is a demonstration of loyalty to the mission of the organization and the rule of law, a value of the people of our country.
- ❖ Whistleblowing – truth-telling - is compatible with loyalty and should not be regarded as disloyal in Canada. The fact we have legislation- provincial and federal - to protect whistleblowers demonstrates that it is a value of Canadian society.
- ❖ Whistleblowers are a reliable warning system for corruption, fraud and regulatory failure and should be encouraged in the interest of maintaining accountability, public safety and public trust.
- ❖ Loyalty to the organization one serves and its mandate takes precedence over any duty to persons who are acting illegally or unethically, even if they are senior officers or managers of the organization. Many professions recognize this by requiring members to report illegality and wrongdoing or risk losing their licenses to practice – lawyers, engineers, nurses etc.
- ❖ There is no imperative either legal or ethical/moral to be loyal to a person or organization involved in wrongdoing.
- ❖ The Whistleblower is not responsible for harming an organization’s reputation. That is the responsibility of the organization’s leaders, for either perpetrating the wrongdoing or allowing it to happen and then not dealing with it appropriately when they are informed.
- ❖ Reprisals against whistleblowers are aberrant behaviour and against the law.
- ❖ Retaliators should be penalized not the whistleblower.
- ❖ Legislation should promote a culture where honest disclosures are respected, valued and rewarded.
- ❖ Failure to protect whistleblowers equates to the promotion of the protection of misconduct and wrongdoing.
- ❖ Whistleblowers should be openly encouraged, lauded, assisted, and compensated for any harm - psychological, career or financial.
- ❖ Discriminating against whistleblowers in hiring practices (i.e. blacklisting) is not acceptable and should be enshrined in law with penalties for those who engage in it.
- ❖ Governments and organizations should take necessary action to prevent harm to whistleblowers, rather than wait till the harm has occurred before acting. This means attention to culture change and legislative change.