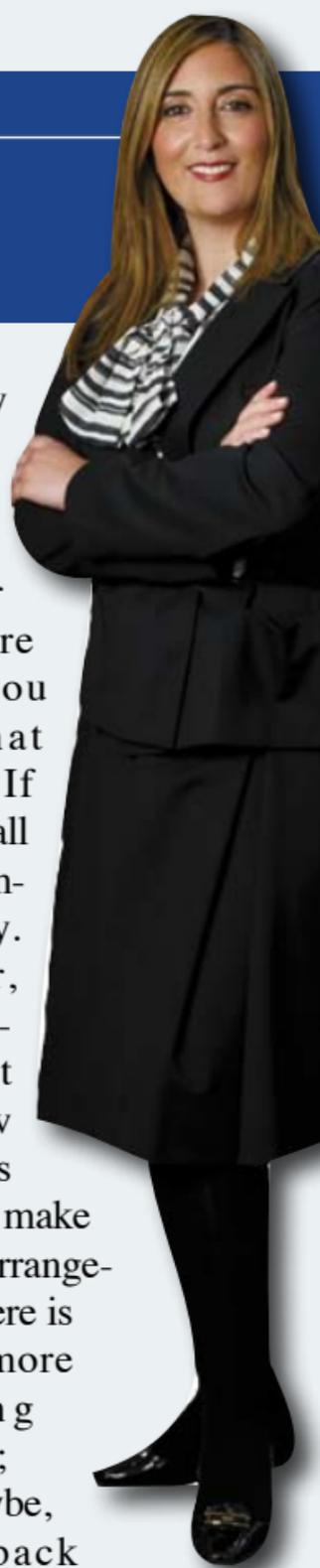


# Pregnant and professional

EQUAL RIGHTS

## Sandra Ziskind

PERSONAL INJURY LAWYER



**W**hen you are a woman in a business meeting, it is often awkward enough. You can sometimes feel like the odd one out in a room full of guys on your best day. Now walk into a business meeting eight months pregnant. It is like you have literally become the elephant in the room.

It is often amusing to watch reactions. The men usually stumble and try saying things like; “oh you look great,” “when are you due?” and my personal favourite, “I didn’t even notice.” What they are really thinking is: “How long are you going to be taking off?”, “How will this affect whatever we are doing today?” and “Why are you doing this to me?”

I usually start off with some self-deprecating comment and try not to let it take up the majority of the conversation. It is often hard for me to try and ignore it completely as my daughter usually decides when I am sitting and speaking to kick me so hard I have to yell out (this is likely indicative of things to come).

Now, being a pregnant employer and actually having a pregnant employee, I can tell you the best way to deal with these awkward situations, in my opinion, is to be forthright about it. People are loath to ask questions, but businesses still need to continue on. Being aloof or quiet about it I can tell you as an employer myself is just annoying.

If you want to take your

maternity leave, then take it - an employer cannot fire you if you make that choice. If they do, call a lawyer immediately. However, as an employer, let us know your plans so we can make alternate arrangements. There is nothing more annoying than the; “well, maybe, I’ll be back after six months.”

That does not help anyone.

For myself, I told people when they can realistically expect me back, who is going to cover for me in the interim and where I can be reached in case of emergency. Clients and business partners appreciate that as they know what they can expect.

If all else fails, or you just want to mess with them, resort to my famous line; “What baby? I drank too much beer when I found out hockey is coming back!” ■

*Sandra Ziskind provides an educational article for viewing, it should not be construed as legal advice. If you need Legal advice, please contact a lawyer or Sandra Ziskind at 416 850 PAIN*



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