



THE **VOICE** OF
THE **CRIMINAL**
DEFENCE BAR

MEMBER PROFILE QUESTIONS

INTRO :

Member Name : Usman Farhat

Year of Call : 2024

LinkedIn Page: <https://linkedin.com/in/usmanfarhat>

QUESTIONS :

1- How did you get into criminal law?

I was drawn to criminal law early in my career because it places you directly at the intersection of people's rights, the power of the state, and the realities of human behaviour. My articling at Hicks Adams and subsequent work on hundreds of criminal files confirmed that this is the area where I do my best work.

2- What type of cases do you enjoy defending the most and why?

I enjoy cases that require careful reconstruction of facts, particularly those involving credibility issues or allegations driven by personal animosity. I like the analytical



THE **VOICE** OF
THE **CRIMINAL**
DEFENCE BAR

challenge and the responsibility of ensuring that the evidence is tested properly and that the client's rights are fully protected.

3- How did the practice of criminal law change you?

It made me more patient, more measured, and far more aware of the impact the justice system has on individuals and families. I learned quickly that my work isn't just about legal issues; it's about people who are often going through the worst moments of their lives.

4- If there is one thing only you would like to see change in criminal law, what would it be?

Greater consistency and clarity around the court and the crown's practices. The vast differences in local policies create real uncertainty for both counsel and clients, and better guidance in this area would make the system more efficient and fair.

5- What advice would you give to your younger self when you first started practising criminal law?



THE **VOICE** OF
THE **CRIMINAL**
DEFENCE BAR

Trust the process, but prepare like everything depends on you. Educate yourself on new matters, and don't be intimidated while doing something for the first time. Everyone starts somewhere. The confidence comes from experience.

6- How do you deal with bad work days?

I remind myself that criminal defence is a long game. One difficult day doesn't define a case or a career. I step back, reset, and focus on what I can improve the next morning.

7- What do you think of Zoom court?

Zoom courts are a revolution in providing access to justice. For the first time, clients are no longer limited to hiring counsel based solely on where they live. It has also expanded opportunities for lawyers by allowing them to engage with legal minds across distant jurisdictions. That said, for trials and substantive hearings, I still believe in the irreplaceable value of in-person advocacy.

8- Any embarrassing court story you're willing to share?

It took me months of (fortunately correct) guesswork, and one memorable incorrect guess, to finally figure out which side of the bar defence counsel is supposed to sit on. You can't really walk into a courtroom and ask, "Where do I sit?", eh?



THE **VOICE** OF
THE **CRIMINAL**
DEFENCE BAR

9- Who is your role model/inspiration in criminal law?

My late grandfather, who was a Judge in Pakistan. I never met him, but the stories of his integrity and fairness shaped my view of what a lawyer should be.

10- What's your favourite song?

“What a Wonderful World”. It's a timeless reminder to slow down and appreciate the things we often overlook.

11- How do you maintain work life balance and how do you deal with the stress of the job?

I try to keep my practice structured and my evenings predictable. I make time for family, small routines, and the things that remind me that life exists outside the courtroom. When the stress builds, I reset by stepping away, even briefly, instead of powering through endlessly.



12- What is your biggest legal inspiration?

My biggest legal inspiration is the principle of the rule of law itself. Our society only functions when people can trust that rights, procedures, and institutions mean something. Seeing how deeply fairness and stability depend on that trust is what motivated me to join the profession. I wanted to contribute to a system that protects people, grounds our communities, and keeps us connected to something larger than ourselves.

13- What do you do outside of the law?

Outside the law, I enjoy exploring new places, taking long walks with my dog, spending time with family, and going on road trips whenever I can.