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It's hard to escape biases when evaluating 'merit'

Letter - the Vancouver Sun

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Re: Seniority rules! (But it shouldn't), Issues & Ideas, Aug. 30

John Mortimer, president of the Canadian LabourWatch Association, tells us that a large majority of Canadians favour the use of "merit" over "seniority" when considering promotions, transfers, and layoffs in the public service.

However, I have yet to see a method for an objective evaluation of "merit." When I can be assured that managers and supervisors will not be influenced, no matter how subtly, by racism, ageism, sexism, disabilityism, cronyism or favouritism, then I would suggest that meritorious service would be a fine way to pick and choose employees. But we are all human, and life isn't like that.

I prefer to see workers given the dignity of knowing that they were chosen for the job in the first place because they possessed the necessary qualifications, and that, through seniority, they do not have to kowtow to anyone to retain their positions.

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