

Employment tribunal dismisses claim in Apprentice case Lord Sugar brands case a "a sham and a total abuse of the tribunal system"

The employment tribunal proceedings brought against Lord Sugar by former Apprentice winner Stella English have today been dismissed and labeled as "a claim which should never have been brought".

Following the hearing, which took place in east London last month, employment judge John Warren today issued his judgment, in which he rejected Stella English's claim that she was constructively dismissed from her roles with Lord Sugar. In his judgment, Judge Warren ruled the following:

On the claim:

"There was no dismissal of the claimant – the claimant resigned. Therefore the complaint...fails and is dismissed"

"We have found that the conduct complained of...did not occur. We do not find that any of the conduct...was conduct which destroyed or seriously damaged trust and confidence entitling the claimant to terminate employment"

On the job:

"What was clear and what did happen was that the claimant...was given a 'real job'. It was a real job with scope for advancement and learning for the claimant"

"The tribunal rejects the claimant's argument that she was given demeaning work"

On comments made by Lord Sugar:

"Lord Sugar should have let the claimant walk away – Lord Sugar did all he could to support the claimant."

(in response to allegations Lord Sugar said "he did not give a sh*t") "Lord Sugar was certainly not using those words referring to the claimant."

"The Respondent had gone out of their way to ensure the claimant was placed in a role...from which she could learn new skills, job which she agreed to and which she enjoyed doing"

Lord Sugar said in a statement:

"I am pleased that the tribunal has returned this verdict and feel vindicated in the judgment that myself, my companies, the BBC, the TV production company and my staff acted properly throughout Ms. English's employment. There was never a case for us to answer but her need for money and fame meant that the whole system was subjected to this charade.

I have been cleared of a derisory attempt to smear my name and extract money from me. The allegations were without substance, and I believe this case was brought with one intention in mind - the presumption that I would not attend the tribunal, that I would not testify and that I would settle out-of-court, sending Ms. English on her way with a tidy settlement.

I'm afraid she underestimated me and her reputation is now in tatters. I have principles and I am not going to be forced to compromise them, no matter how much time and money they might cost me.

This case was a sham and a total abuse of a tribunal system, which is there to protect employees who have been mistreated. It is not there to aid those chancing their arm at landing a big payday. I hope that other companies will learn from this example and also fight off derisory claims.

What has happened here is representative of a new wave of claim culture where some employees file spurious actions regardless of whose reputation it may smear in the process. I have spoken about this subject in the House of Lords and will continue to campaign to put an end to this practice, which has developed in recent years and is seemingly spiraling out of control. This has to be stopped."

For further details and interview requests, please contact amshold@frankpr.it