

TIMESHEETS AND DEPRESSION GO HAND IN HAND: MARQUE LAWYERS

TIMESHEETS AND the way in which law firms are structured are driving high rates of depression in the legal profession, according to the managing partner of Marque Lawyers.

Speaking to *Lawyers Weekly*, Michael Bradley credited the creation of Marque - which is seen by many as a new age law firm - with a deep dissatisfaction with the law, the way it's practised and the way in which firms operate.

And at the forefront of this dissatisfaction, said Bradley, is timesheets.

"It's just a horrible way to work and an awful way to think about yourself and measure your own value. Nobody likes it. You won't find a lawyer who actually enjoys filling in a timesheet," he said.

"It's kind of insidious and it actually, over time, changes the way you measure success. You end up measuring success by reference to time units, regardless of how you have spent that time. That's not why any of us studied law."

The problem, said Bradley, is that timesheets provide an extremely efficient business model and one which is deeply entrenched in the way the vast majority of firms operate.

But this model, said Bradley, is coming at the expense of employee satisfaction.

"It's a really ... spiritually unsatisfying existence. It's a very efficient business model, but it's basically inhuman and, at an individual level, it's just not satisfying," he said.

"Everyone's destiny is driven by their personal contribution and their success is measured in financial terms against targets. It drives behaviours and attitudes which are really dysfunctional. It's not designed to make people happy. It's not the way we operate in our normal lives. It's just a deeply, ultimately depressing, way to operate."

Read a full profile on Michael Bradley and his firm in next week's edition of *Lawyers Weekly*