

Australian Lawyer Lied about Charges against Him to Obtain Character Reference



Summary: *A judge's associate in Australia deceived his mentor, a retired judge, in order to get a character reference that got him off of a drug possession charge.*

An Australian lawyer was charged with perverting the course of justice after lying to a retired judge. James Cowled, 32, used a character reference from his mentor, retired Federal Circuit Court Judge Michael Lloyd-Jones, to escape a drug conviction.

Cowled, a judge's associate, was found snorting cocaine in a Sydney cocktail bar bathroom. Instead of a drug possession charge, Cowled got away with a 12-month good behavior bond. That is until Judge Lloyd-Jones found out.

Judge Lloyd-Jones was under the impression that Cowled was only facing a low-range drunk-driving charge. When he learned the truth, he filed a complaint with police. They charged Cowled for using receiving the character reference under false pretenses.

At his court appearance last May, Magistrate Lisa Stapleton asked him about the character reference. She said, "You were found in possession of cocaine. If the person says this was out of character for you they don't know you very well so why shouldn't I convict you of this offence?" His only claim to his character was that he was a judge's associate.

Cowled later admitted that he was embarrassed to tell his former mentor about the cocaine charge. "I must say telling my former judge was one of the most difficult things I've done in my life."

Cowled will now face up to 14 years in jail if he is convicted.

Have you ever disappointed a mentor before? Tell us about it in the comments below.

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