

* SCENARIO CARDS *

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"When a woman overlooks an accounting error, she is incompetent; when a man makes the same mistake, it is considered a little slip up."

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"Why is it that when an Asian-American woman does a fabulous job, she's given more back office work? It's not considered evidence of leadership potential."

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"At a performance review, I asked for a salary raise. During negotiations, my boss blurted, 'but, I can't pay you more than I pay Greg!' Greg's role was totally different from mine, but my boss insisted that he'd 'been here longer,' (10 days longer) and so I'd have to settle for something under the Greg threshold. I stuck to my guns and got my raise. But the kicker is: SO DID GREG, without negotiation, to pull him equal with me again."

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"As a volunteer firefighter, the rule that required us to have updated certifications was very rigidly applied to the three women in the group while there was a "wink-nudge" understanding that the guys could still go out on calls with expired certifications as long as they were 'scheduled' to have the recertification within the next month. Women in that same situation were sidelined to domestic chores around the firehouse if we were a day past expiration."

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"When I was denied a promotion by my female boss, I was told that it was because I did not have an MBA. Two months later, my male colleague in the same department without an MBA was granted the promotion."

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"In my first year of training in my engineering job, I made my share of mistakes. Six years later, I notice that I am the only one who gets continually reminded of my mistakes. I am also the only woman from my training group; I have never heard anyone 'tease' any of the men about their mistakes as a new trainee."

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"My male colleagues seem to do one grand thing every five years or so, and they are considered exceptional. I am constantly over-producing and there seems to be no individual or institutional memory of my contributions."

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"I have stopped paying attention to recommendations from him. I just can't believe that all his male students are 'brilliant' while all his women students are 'reliable and detail-oriented'."

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"Each time I get a promotion, I am told that it is because I was in the right place at the right time, that I was fortunate to be on a high-revenue project, etc. I wonder why they never think that I actually deserved it because I am talented and hard-working!"

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"Women superstars do fine here. But they are the only ones who do. Women who are just one notch below the superstars get much poorer evaluations than their male colleagues do."

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"I organized our team retreat for six years in a row. I finally said, 'I enjoy doing this, but it's taking me away from developing the skills I need to get promoted.' Then people faulted me for not being a team player."

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"Everyone expects me to be the office mom. I'm the shoulder they cry on, the one they expect to organize the office parties, to remember everyone's birthday. I want to say: 'Hey, I'm a mom at home, not when I come to work.' But I know I would get pushback if I tried to change things."

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"Women in my office who speak up are called pit bulls, or worse. Often the comments are not directed toward the woman herself, but are used to prevent her access to certain committees. But if you are demure and retiring, then of course you don't get on important committees either."

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"I have routinely been told by administrators and supervisors I am a strong faculty member - dedicated, hard-working, smart, productive. At the same time - I have heard that "but" - BUT the WAY you say things, it is hard for people to hear... BUT people find you intimidating... BUT you are your own worst enemy because you make people angry."

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"I'm transgendered and lived the first 45 years of my life as a female. I've often been labeled as aggressive just for speaking my mind or standing up for myself. I've been discouraged from taking shop class (no girls allowed!), told I shouldn't 'talk back' to men, and called a slut when I made the first move with a guy. I've been fussed at for cursing in situations where it was ignored when men did it, told it was okay to fail math because 'girls aren't good at it anyway', and generally discouraged (especially by other women) from showing any kind of competitiveness where men are involved. Now that others see me as a man, I receive no such comments."

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"God forbid I ever get annoyed! Men can get furious, and people around here just see them as someone who won't be pushed around, But if a woman shows any anger—she 'just lost it.'"

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"I'll never get promoted if no one knows what I do. But when I try to share a success, I get hostile responses: 'Well, you think highly of yourself.' When a man does the same thing, he's seen as someone who knows his own worth."

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"I noticed that the other senior staff all had their diplomas, awards, certificates, etc., in visible locations in their offices. When I moved offices, I put mine up, too, only to be told by a female colleague, 'I guess some of us prefer not to show off.'"

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"At a conference a few years back, I joined my (all male) team for dinner and even went with them to (I kid you not) a strip club. I didn't know how to gracefully leave so I stayed with the group. I think they were as appalled as I was that I was there and have never looked at me the same since then. I am pretty sure I will never be included again, so there goes my promotion!"

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"I have no idea what happens when all of my male colleagues go to lunch, but they must talk about work. I know I am missing out on important information, but I can't figure out how to be invited to join them."

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"My boss was horrified when I returned to work full time after the twins were born. He said, 'You'll find it doesn't work. My wife stays home full time and even then she finds herself overwhelmed. Women need to be realistic.'"

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"A colleague I barely know told me that he perceives women who 'try to get ahead when they have young children' as 'power hungry at the expense of their children.'"

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"When I returned from maternity leave, I felt I had to prove myself all over again."

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"After I went part time, the interesting assignments disappeared, and I started getting a steady stream of rote work."

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"When some colleagues and I were discussing how horrible it would be to be laid off, my female boss said to me, "Oh, no. I know you. You'd get over it and in, like, a week be doing all that mommy stuff you do. After a month you'd never work again."

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"One of my grad school professors (a full professor older female who later became department chair) said, in a small group research meeting, that she thinks any female professor who has children is not taking her job seriously enough and obviously doesn't really want to get tenure."

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"A senior colleague who has always been supportive and considerate, now calls out 'You need to get home to your babies!' when he sees me working late. My kids are doing just fine, and when I'm at work it's because I've chosen to be there!"

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"I am a key member of the technical team that solved some ongoing issues with a product that was sold to a client in Europe. Although the VP described me as 'perfect' to join the team on the client visit, she excluded me. She later explained that she assumed that I would not want to go because I have small children."

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"My coworker is a project manager (and also a mother) who regularly attends off-site meetings. When she returns to her office in the afternoon, even though it is before 5pm, she regularly receives comments indicating that colleagues are surprised that she is still at work rather than with her children."

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"Anytime I am out of the office for a day for an off-site meeting, I am frequently asked, 'which child isn't well?' or 'Another school holiday?'"

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"I have been very concerned that if I have to run and get my son from childcare that it is going to be frowned upon, so I try to make it look like that whole part of my life does not exist."

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"I worked at my current job for years before anyone knew that I had kids. I didn't even put up a picture of them in my office until I got my promotion. It wasn't worth the risk!"

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"I can't win! When our son is sick, my colleagues and boss hassle me for taking time off work to parent and my wife hassles me when I don't."

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"He must know that he has zero chance of getting promoted if he takes off a month after his child is born. People will wonder who wears the pants in that family."

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"When I bring my son to work, my colleagues rib me by asking me if I am babysitting again."

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"After I yelled at a meeting, I was sure I would never live it down. Expecting a reprimand, I was shocked when Paul said, 'Around here we appreciate it when people stick to their guns.'"

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"During the hiring committee meeting, when Joanne said that one male candidate had 'potential,' I reminded her that we need to be consistent because we agreed in advance that all candidates are to be judged the same - based on achievements."

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"My first instinct was that Lucy would not want this project because it was so time-intensive, but then I thought, Why not just ask her?"

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