

HOW TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY AT WORK

READ THIS HANDOUT TO YOURSELF BEFORE YOU START THE ACTIVITY

Not being taken seriously is a problem

Many women in the trades find it challenging to be taken seriously at work, no matter how much experience they have. They may feel underestimated when they arrive at a new jobsite. Members of the crew may discount or ignore their experience and skills. They may be mistaken for apprentices, even though they are journeymen. These issues highlight a big problem for many tradeswomen—that others doubt their skills and ability to contribute.

Why is this a problem for tradeswomen?

While these experiences are not unique to women in the trades, they are often more pronounced because of the nature of their work. Jobs in the trades are traditionally seen as belonging to men, so tradeswomen have to work even harder to prove their abilities. Others may judge a tradeswoman based on assumptions about women at work, rather than on her own skills and experience. And workers in the trades tend to change jobsites or crews frequently, which means tradeswomen constantly need to earn respect from new crews.

Long-term effects of not being taken seriously

Not taking women seriously can mean that partners or crew members don't invest time or energy in tradeswomen's careers, which can cause tradeswomen to get less out of their work experience—and in some cases even jeopardize their safety.¹

To learn more and access key research, visit leanin.org/tradeswomen.

DIFFERENT CIRCLE MEMBERS SHOULD VOLUNTEER TO READ THESE QUOTES OUT LOUD

Voices of Tradeswomen



Even as a journeyman, it kept occurring. They would ask me, 'What stage are you?'—assuming I was an apprentice. I guess it was hard for the men to see me as a journeyman."

Janet, 36, a drywall finisher with 17 years' experience



I have had to work with several men on different occasions who just did not take me seriously. I would ask them to do the same tasks as another journeyman and they would just question me until I got mad."

Amanda, 31, an electrician with 4 years' experience

