

MONTH 4

# NAVIGATING BIAS

THE "ONLY" EXPERIENCE

INSTRUCTIONS

LEAN IN



# INSTRUCTIONS

## Activity (60 minutes)

1. Set a timer for 60 minutes and place the **Situation Cards** in a pile.
2. Pass one pack of **Strategy Cards** to each Circle member.
3. Ask Circle members to read **Strategy Cards 1–7** to themselves and set aside the rest. (5–10 minutes)
4. To start, one Circle member picks up a **Situation Card** from the pile, reads the front and back out loud, then places it where everyone can see it.
5. All Circle members pick 1 or 2 **Strategy Cards** that they would use in that situation and place their choices in front of them. There are “in the moment” and “long-term” strategies, and we encourage choosing one of each.
6. As a group, take a few minutes to discuss the strategies that members chose.

(Flip card)

## INSTRUCTIONS

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7. Take turns reading out a **Situation Card**, choosing **Strategy Cards**, and discussing as a group until you've completed the deck or there are 20 minutes left in the meeting.
8. Be sure to return all **Strategy Cards** to the Strategy Card box for future meetings.
9. A digital version of these cards is available at [leanin.org/tradewomen](https://leanin.org/tradewomen).

### Meeting wrap-up (20 minutes)

Close the meeting with the Wrap-Up and Reflect and One Action (refer to the Moderator Guide for instructions.)

## SITUATION

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Your supervisor singles you out to assign you a challenging task. As you are completing it, your crew turns and watches.

CHOOSE 1 IN THE MOMENT AND 1 LONG-TERM STRATEGY THAT YOU WOULD USE IN THIS SITUATION AND PLACE THESE CARDS ON THE TABLE.

## WHY IT MATTERS

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Being watched in a situation like this might reinforce common feelings for women who are Onlys that they are standing in for all women and are under increased pressure to perform.<sup>1</sup>

This is often even more complex for Black women, who are significantly more likely to feel closely watched and to think that their actions reflect positively or negatively on other people like them.<sup>2</sup>

## SITUATION

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You're given safety equipment that doesn't fit because it's too large or designed for men.

CHOOSE 1 IN THE MOMENT AND 1 LONG-TERM STRATEGY THAT YOU WOULD USE IN THIS SITUATION AND PLACE THESE CARDS ON THE TABLE.

## WHY IT MATTERS

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The most important aspect of any job is safety. If proper safety equipment isn't available, it may be impossible to perform key tasks. This issue also cuts deeper than that—it can signal that women don't belong on a jobsite.

## SITUATION

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At your jobsite, the women's restroom is inadequate—it's really far away or nonexistent.

CHOOSE 1 IN THE MOMENT AND 1 LONG-TERM STRATEGY THAT YOU WOULD USE IN THIS SITUATION AND PLACE THESE CARDS ON THE TABLE.

## WHY IT MATTERS

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Having a safe restroom is important for women's health, but it's also an issue of fairness and equality. Lack of proper facilities can undermine a woman's ability to perform—if women have to walk farther to find a suitable restroom, they lose time instead of completing tasks and demonstrating their skills.

## SITUATION

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You're repeatedly assigned tasks like cleaning up or getting coffee.

CHOOSE 1 IN THE MOMENT AND 1 LONG-TERM STRATEGY THAT YOU WOULD USE IN THIS SITUATION AND PLACE THESE CARDS ON THE TABLE.

## WHY IT MATTERS

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Housework-like tasks can be seen as “women’s work” due to stereotypes that women are more communal and giving than men.<sup>3</sup> When women are assigned these kind of tasks, it steals valuable time away from core responsibilities and can keep them from fully participating, practicing their skills, or learning new things.

In keeping with deeply held gender stereotypes, people expect help from women but not from men, so when women do favors at work, they don’t earn points for doing so—but when women say no, they are penalized. Men, on the other hand, gain points for saying yes and face minimal consequences for saying no.<sup>4</sup>

## SITUATION

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A crew member makes a comment about how the men on the job have to “be on their best behavior” because a woman is around.

CHOOSE 1 IN THE MOMENT AND 1 LONG-TERM STRATEGY THAT YOU WOULD USE IN THIS SITUATION AND PLACE THESE CARDS ON THE TABLE.

## WHY IT MATTERS

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This kind of comment reinforces the perception that women at the jobsite are outsiders and do not belong. It also suggests that offensive behavior would be the norm if women weren't around to witness it.

## SITUATION

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A tradesman expects you to speak for all women, saying something like, "Ask Carla, she's a woman."

CHOOSE 1 IN THE MOMENT AND 1 LONG-TERM STRATEGY THAT YOU WOULD USE IN THIS SITUATION AND PLACE THESE CARDS ON THE TABLE.

## WHY IT MATTERS

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Being singled out as the only woman and being forced to speak for all women can be uncomfortable and isolating. It shines a spotlight on the ways women are different from others working alongside them. Similar things can happen to people of color, who may be called on to represent their race.<sup>5</sup>

## SITUATION

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You notice that your supervisor is talking to crew members who are men but either ignores or interrupts you.

CHOOSE 1 IN THE MOMENT AND 1 LONG-TERM STRATEGY THAT YOU WOULD USE IN THIS SITUATION AND PLACE THESE CARDS ON THE TABLE.

## WHY IT MATTERS

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This disrespectful behavior minimizes a woman's role on the crew and sends the signal that men matter more than women on the jobsite. When women are routinely ignored or interrupted, they are prevented from sharing their ideas and showcasing their expertise the same way that men do. And, unfortunately, both of these are common for women.

On average, in a group setting with men, women speak 25% less than men—and speaking less is associated with less influence.<sup>6</sup> Women also get interrupted (by both men and women) far more often than men do.<sup>7</sup>

## SITUATION

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Tradesmen you work with often make jokes that are sexual, racist, or somewhat offensive, and these jokes make you uncomfortable.

CHOOSE 1 IN THE MOMENT AND 1 LONG-TERM STRATEGY THAT YOU WOULD USE IN THIS SITUATION AND PLACE THESE CARDS ON THE TABLE.

## WHY IT MATTERS

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Jokes like these are demeaning to women. Despite this, women often feel pressured to accept or ignore sexual or inappropriate humor used by men at work, especially in the trades. Women may fear earning a reputation that they are uptight or out of sync with the culture.<sup>8</sup>

## SITUATION

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A tradesman on your crew keeps doing tasks for you. You appreciate the help, but you want to be sure you're learning, too.

CHOOSE 1 IN THE MOMENT AND 1 LONG-TERM STRATEGY THAT YOU WOULD USE IN THIS SITUATION AND PLACE THESE CARDS ON THE TABLE.

## WHY IT MATTERS

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When women get this kind of help, it undermines them—even though it may be well-meaning. Not being able to take on tough tasks may prevent women from learning new skills and may cause others to perceive them as weak. And women who are Onlys face this challenge frequently, as working with a woman may activate a feeling in some men that they have to prove their own masculinity and strength.<sup>9</sup>

## SITUATION

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The people you work with don't include you in after-work activities.

CHOOSE 1 IN THE MOMENT AND 1 LONG-TERM STRATEGY THAT YOU WOULD USE IN THIS SITUATION AND PLACE THESE CARDS ON THE TABLE.

## WHY IT MATTERS

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Friendships at work are valuable. People who work together often build relationships and share key information over pizza or beer. When women are routinely excluded from outings like these, they can miss out on informal opportunities to connect and learn.