

MONTH 6

BUILDING SKILLS

HOW TO ASK FOR WHAT YOU NEED
(AND HAVE EARNED)

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** 13–16 to themselves. (5–10 minutes)
4. Circle members can use all 16 **Strategy Cards** for this activity.
5. To start, one Circle member picks up a **Situation Card**, reads the front and back out loud, then places it where everyone can see it.
6. 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.
7. As a group, take a few minutes to discuss the strategies that members chose.

(Flip card)

INSTRUCTIONS

8. 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.
9. Members may keep their **Strategy Card** packs after this meeting.
10. A digital version of these cards is available at leanin.org/tradeswomen.

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

Your foreman keeps giving you the same easy tasks day after day, and you want to ask for a more challenging assignment.

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

Getting the same assignments over and over can be frustrating and can limit a tradeswoman's opportunity for growth in her trade.¹ Many women in the trades say they have to take their career-advancement education into their own hands.²

SITUATION

You aren't getting as much overtime as your fellow crew members who are men, and you want to request more.

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

Overtime might be a key part of a tradesperson's pay (and ultimately their pension), so part of creating a fair working environment is ensuring that the system for awarding hours treats workers equally.

SITUATION

There's a safety issue on your jobsite, and you want your supervisor to take action.

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

SITUATION

You're pregnant, and you need to ask for additional safety equipment or different types of tasks.

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

During pregnancy, heavy lifting can be dangerous, and other common tasks could be more challenging than usual.⁴ Women may hesitate to disclose their pregnancies to supervisors because mothers are often subject to maternal bias, but requesting safety equipment, modified tasks, or more frequent breaks can help avoid injury or illness.

SITUATION

You begin to worry that your equipment or work is being sabotaged—tools are going missing or something doesn't look right—and you want to address this pattern.

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

Having work sabotaged can be dangerous and can lead to a feeling of isolation. Women are more likely than men to say they're bullied or discriminated against at work—and women who are bullied are more likely than women who aren't to report feeling stress and job strain.⁵

SITUATION

You notice that a tradesman who started at the same time as you is getting more opportunities to learn than you are.

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

Tradespeople depend on their crew members and supervisors to teach them new skills and provide opportunities for them to learn how to handle new tasks, but tradeswomen don't always get the same opportunities. When it comes to access to tools, challenging assignments, and the distribution of job opportunities or hours, 43% of women in trades say they are treated unequally.⁶

SITUATION

You start working on something you've never done before, and you are unsure about asking a more experienced journeyman what to do.

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

Tradeswomen, especially apprentices, depend on their crew to show them new skills or allow them to learn by example.⁷ But women in construction often worry that they'll be perceived as lacking knowledge or skills when they ask for help.

SITUATION

You need to leave work early to handle an emergency with your child or family member, and you're nervous to talk to your boss about it.

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

Having the flexibility to handle family responsibilities is an important factor in whether women in construction are able to stay in the industry.⁸ Also, when workplaces make it easier for employees to balance responsibilities, both men and women are happier, more productive, and more likely to stay at their jobs.⁹

SITUATION

A few tradesmen on your crew often make sexual comments or jokes when you are around, and you want this pattern to stop.

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

Being part of a workplace culture with this kind of behavior can be draining—sexist humor can wear on women over time and cause them to feel isolated and emotionally exhausted.¹⁰ Unchallenged abuse, sexual harassment, or unequal treatment can create hostile work environments, which are associated with lower health outcomes¹¹ and lower employee satisfaction.

SITUATION

You have been a journeyman for some time, and you want to become a foreman or pursue another leadership role.

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

60% of women in trades say they are never or rarely treated equally when it comes to promotions.¹² This limits women's opportunities and leads to fewer women in leadership positions.