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How to use this deck:

Draw a card. Relate the story to the rest of the group in the first-person, as if it happened to you personally.

As a group, think about whether the same situation plays out differently for you for any reason.



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1

Told by HR, “But you got promoted without them, why do you need reasonable adjustments?”

It was telling me I couldn't be good at my job and *really* have a disability. I must just be whining and making a fuss about nothing, or maybe my promotion was a mistake ?

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2

Arrived at a Ministry of Defence site with 3 male colleagues. The guard looked at the visitor's list, looked at our passes, looked at us, looked at the visitor's list, looked at our passes, looked at us, looked at the list. Then said, "Which one of you is the woman?"

It was humiliating.

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“My boss had a problem with women. He told me repeatedly not to go for promotion because he'd seen no evidence I could behave appropriately. I'd just got back from detached duty in the US, on work for the Joint Chiefs of Staff that was briefed up to POTUS.

It absolutely destroyed my confidence. I never want to go for promotion again. Just the thought of it makes me want to cry.”

I signed up for two days at sea to observe a trial. The dates got closer and closer and I heard nothing. They'd given my spot to a man weeks ago because three bunks would have to be empty since men and women can't share accommodation. There was never a thought of taking three more women instead.

I got the message that these opportunities weren't meant for me.

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5

Project principle said after a meeting with a US colleague, “I didn’t know he was a g**k.”

I was speechless.

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Told by a colleague, “Women’s stories don’t get told enough.” I said, “That’s because men silence women when they try to talk,” and he cut me off to say, “No no no, it’s because women don’t tell each other their own stories enough.”

I didn’t know whether to laugh, cry, or punch him in the face. He was well-intentioned but completely oblivious.

“Lunchtime Historical Lectures: standing room only to learn from the past. The LGBT history month special? A handful showed up. Nobody straight thought there was anything to learn (from Kitchener, Churchill, most of SF). It's horrible when you're constantly expected to relate to heteronormative media, while straight people don't extend the same generosity. It makes me think my sexuality is tolerated, not accepted or held equal.”

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Asked, "Can't you be normal for an hour?"

I felt so small. Like every single cell of my body was wrong and unfixable and worth nothing at all.

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“In a taxi in the US. The taxi driver was speaking with his dispatcher in Arabic. The project principal started making, “Dirka dirka mohammad jihad,” jokes from the back seat. I had to tell him to shut up so we didn’t get thrown out of the taxi and miss our flight.

I was so ashamed of his behaviour. Telling a principal to shut up as a new grad does not feel at all comfortable.

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“The risk assessment for Gay Pride includes an explicit prohibition on “public sex in civil service colours.” I didn’t know it was an option for non-Pride meetings at Main Building! It’s like people assume being gay is being morally bankrupt.

It’s horrible that to take part in Pride we still have to “promise to act straight” to manage the risk of too many gays in one place.”

“Talking to a 1-star about something from a conference. He didn't remember the method, so I mentioned the presenters' name. He said, “Oh, that one? I wasn't paying attention to what she was talking about, more to the length of her skirt”.

I said, “That's a shame, it was perfect for your situation. Perhaps you should have paid more attention to the material.”

“On an emotional intelligence course. There was a really meek young grad there because they were having problems with their boss, clearly being bullied. The boss was also there.

I felt like someone's response to this grad's problem was, "You two go away and work out how to play nicely," as if they were equals and the power dynamic at work was nothing. It made me so angry.

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“My manager told me I'd made it through the promotion sift and that the independent manager thought my application was very strong. I felt great. Then he said that the independent (female) manager spoke much more positively about the female applicants than the males. I went from feeling confident to *you only got this because you're female*, and it triggered huge doubts about my capability.”

“When I ask a question, the reply is directed to the male colleague next to me. When people have questions about my work, they're addressed to my male colleagues. This happens even when I'm chairing the meeting. Men don't shake my hand at the end of meetings, or shake my hand weakly.

Are they worried that female is catching?”

“ I was the only non-white person in the section. Our superior was right wing and made his opinions known. He got disciplined and assumed it was me that raised the complaint. It wasn't. He hauled me into an office to tell me never to speak to him or look at him again. Which was very awkward as I had to work in his team in the weeks after, and he spoke to me 'through' other people. I put in a transfer request, it was unbearable. ”

“At my last station, my superior made racist comments and ‘jokes’ all the time and nobody ever challenged him. He made a joke and the punchline was “something, something, n****r” and he thought it was hilarious.

Everyone in the crewroom just looked at me as if I was meant to do or say something.

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“At a meeting in the US, our customer pointed out a messy table with left over cups and refreshments, and suggested I clear it up to be fair to our hosts. I pointed out that as it was the table he and his team had been sat at, perhaps he'd like to lead by example?

Kudos to the men who backed me up.



“My children’s school insist on calling me first for anything, even though my husband is the primary contact. They always respond, “Well we tend to like to call the mums first.” I didn’t take kindly to being woken at 2am while on detached duty in Australia, to be told sports day would be finishing slightly earlier than planned. There’s an assumption that all families have a parent at home ready to drop everything, normally the mum.”

I asked for more challenging work for career development and was told that I would have to wait my turn, despite newer (male) grads being given better opportunities. I was told I had poor behaviours for wanting to develop my career. Completely gave up on the annual appraisal process. Totally ignore competencies and feedback (it's often contradictory anyway) and so much more biased than skills experience.

“A more senior (male) scientist did not like my critique of experiments and did not want to work with me. I was told by management to not attend meetings he was present at. I sat outside meetings until being called in after he had left to discuss the project and continue with my work.”

“On a trial I had a customer literally ‘shush’ me and complain to the trial manager about me providing technical advice in too ‘harsh’ a tone, despite the men being far more brash in their criticism. I was given a verbal warning. My colleague told the customer he did not appreciate the way I’d been spoken to, but it destroyed my confidence, stopped me doing my job, and stopped me socialising with the team for the rest of the trial.”

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They were taking photographs of my project. When they saw me, they said, “I think it’s important we get a European face for this.”

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Told, "You need to leave the room, we're about to speak at UK-eyes-only." People assume I couldn't be British with this colour skin.



There wasn't a ladies toilet on the main working site. I had to walk to the main security hut, get a key to use the cleaners changing rooms, return the key and go back to work. This would take 20-30mins - shipyards are big places! It annoyed me.



I'd like to be able to hold my significant other's hand in public, or propose to them somewhat publicly. The fear of ridicule or homophobia is quite suffocating.

I don't feel I can be myself in public.



“I was asked to play the role of an Al Qaeda terrorist for a surveillance exercise because I have the “right skin colour.” I felt pressurised since this was requested by a more senior member of staff and that other government departments and agencies were involved. I felt it would be career-limiting to say no.

I felt ashamed of being a Muslim and Asian.”

I was waiting at the bar to get served. And waiting. And waiting. My white friend came over to say hello and they served him immediately. Talk about feeling invisible.

It's like I don't exist because I'm black and I'm a woman. It makes me so angry.

I was 'asked' in the strongest terms to go into work to deal with an urgent customer enquiry, the day after having an operation to deal with a miscarriage. Would a man have been asked to work the day after a major operation and a bereavement? I was angry at my male line manager for demonstrating no compassion or understanding. And I was angry at myself too for giving in to significant pressure to comply. I felt weak in character.

“Told to “F**k off and make the tea,” by a (male) Army Officer when supporting a trial, despite being the most highly qualified person there.

Why do I have to learn strategies to defend myself against this kind of rubbish? Why is it even happening.



I have dietary needs, which get ignored. My nurse described ignoring the restrictions as being like “swallowing a cheese grater” but people just assume I’m being a fussy eater. I find it so insulting, and I’ve given up trying to explain the issue because I’m rarely, if ever, listened to. I have to spend my own money when others get lunch provided.

I've been asked to fetch the pens, the paper, the tea, to sit back while the men work out what to do, I've been talked over...to name a few. I take a deep breath and hope change is on its way...while there are many wargamers who will appreciate and respect me, there is a group mentality that many of them seem to find hard to consider fighting against.

“ I have participated in wargames many times in my career. Mostly I find it uncomfortable: on one occasion a military officer kept asking me to roll the dice for him, on another a military officer hit on my female colleague and then tried to take photos of us. I'm also often mistaken for an admin assistant. I also find instead of being asked technical questions, I am used as a sounding board for life and personal issues! ”

Seeing the supporting statement that I'd got from a senior fellow for my promotion, my manager asked whether I'd slept with him to get it. The same manager enjoyed photography and had a selection of photos as a scrolling screen-saver. One of them was a close-up of the cleavage of one of my colleagues.

“Ten years ago there would be hard core porn on the walls of the barracks. Today, the pictures on the walls have changed, but the culture hasn't much. While wargaming, the infantry happily shout for three straight days about female body parts. In the breaks, it's all anticipation of activities upon those female body parts in the coming weekend.”

“With a PhD in the pocket and several years of experience, I was sent off to do a consultancy job for the navy and they seemed reluctant to work with me. Afterwards they explained, “Yeah, we asked for a consultant, we were paying a lot of money and then we got you!”

It makes me realise that my starting position as a female researcher is at least ten steps behind my male peers.



I sat in on a management meeting as a stand in for my team leader. I brought up a 'Women in Leadership' conference. I was quickly told by a more senior manager, "It's not really an issue anymore is it?" This was communicated so vehemently it was quite aggressive. I'd never spoken to him before so it was quite uncomfortable.

Of course I was the only woman in the room.

Senior member of staff allocating tasks: “Tom can do X because it’s a really good development opportunity for him. Dick can do Y because he’s been asking for a job doing that. Harriet can arrange the meetings because women are good at organising things.” So, men are allocated work based on their individual needs, wants, skills. Women are allocated work because it’s women’s work. Of course “Harriet” is a very very good scientist.

Here's my problem as a black person: white people have no idea that some words have other meanings or connotations. But I can't challenge the language without it turning into an argument that I'm calling them racist (when they're just being thoughtless), and me being seen as "playing the race card."

So I have to swallow it, and wait for white people to speak out.

“In my mid-twenties, a supplier repeatedly altered their work after liaising with more senior colleagues who had nothing to do with the contract. I wasn't made aware of these discussions. I felt disrespected, and my loss of confidence in the supplier led to termination of their contract. The supplier didn't even go over my head, he was literally taking changes from a different organisation.”

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Asked by a man at interview, “When are you planning to breed?”

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I used to be in charge of keeping the office milk topped up in my building. When going on maternity leave, my manager told me that when I came back, I should make sure I provided “proper” milk for everyone’s coffee, and not bottles of breast milk.

His idea of a joke, but I was very junior in the office and it felt incredibly awkward.

I was on a site visit to a customer with a more senior person who was meant to be there to observe only. He spoke over me regularly, openly contradicted the advice I was giving the customer, and at one point he patted me on the head (in front of the customer) and said not to bother with any of the advice I was giving as I was still just training.

I have 12 years of senior analyst experience.

There's this guy. It is actively acknowledged that he's a misogynist, there have been many complaints about him. But there is never any evidence, it's all done via gas-lighting or "jokes" without a witness. I ended up on sick leave caused by the stress and anxiety of dealing with his behaviour for over a year.

It's wearing, degrading and has undermined all confidence I had in myself.

I use a cane to walk. On the tube a complete stranger decided I obviously didn't need a cane, I must just be pretending. Young, good-looking people don't have disabilities. So they decided to take my cane away from me, and because of my disability my grip is weak, so I was helpless to resist, and I need it to walk to get away. It's such a violation.

I feel unsafe in public spaces.

I thought it might help if I spoke to my Inspector for some tips before an interview, and I was given some friendly advice to “drop the accent at your interview if you can”.

I'm sure it was in good faith and to help me rather than make me feel any less worthy or nervous but this comment has actually had quite a lasting impact on me throughout my whole career.

“At my New Starters conference I was lucky enough to get to sit next to the Chief Exec. She told me about what she was having to deal with, mainly in the Ministry of Defence, as a senior female. She got particularly annoyed at men who were her junior calling her “love” in meetings. She said her tactic was to incessantly call the offender “sweetie” in front of as many people as possible until they got the hint.”

“I've had to sit in rooms where predominantly white people talk about how underhanded Chinese people are, how sneaky unscrupulous and selfish they are, and I've had to point out that when the UK wants to achieve the same goals they call it strategy.

I know this happens in front of me because I look racially safe, not Chinese enough.”

Asked at interview, "Why did you tick the disabled box?" The tone was clearly *you don't look disabled, you lied to get an interview.*

I felt like I was in trouble, under suspicion, like I had to defend my identity. Even though the question is illegal, I felt I had to answer or it would count against me.

The Derby House Principles



We believe that promoting diversity and inclusion is the right thing to do.

Diversity and inclusion are more than just words for us. They are the hard-and-fast principles guiding how we will build our teams, cultivate leaders and create a community that supports everyone in it. No one should ever feel excluded or less welcome because of gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, or background. Experience and social science have shown that diversity can generate better results, in analysis, insight, and professional decision-making.

paxsims.wordpress.com/derby-house-principles