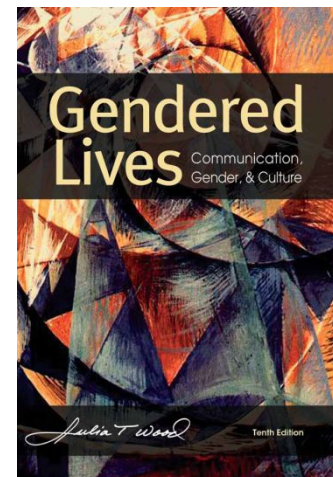


Gendered Organizational Communication

Chapter 10



Stereotypes of Women

- Women in the workplace are classified according to one of four roles
- Each role reflects a gendered stereotype

Sex Object

- Defines women in terms of their sexuality
- Leads to judgments of women based on their appearance
- Contributes to sexual harassment
- Prevalent in military
- Also used to harass gays and lesbians

Mother

- Expect women employees to take care of emotional labor
- Basis of job segregation by gender
- Majority of women in labor force work in “pink collar” service, clerical, support positions
 - Least prestige, lowest salaries

Mother

- Women employees who have or plan to have children perceived as less serious
- Fathers not judged as less competent or committed
 - Fatherhood improves perceptions of male workers

Mother

- EEOC receives thousands of complaints of pregnancy-based discrimination
- Women experience discrimination once mothers
 - Maternal wall

Child

- Cute, but not taken seriously
- View women as less mature, less competent, less capable
- Masquerades as *protecting women*

Child

- Argument against allowing women in combat is they should be protected
- Women involved in and killed in every war fought by our nation
- Protecting women excludes them from experiences that lead to promotions, raises, personal development

Iron Maiden

- Female professional who is independent, competitive
- Competent but unlikeable

Stereotypes of Men

- Men are also stereotyped
- Reflect cultural views of masculinity

Sturdy Oak

- Self-sufficient, pillar of strength, never weak
- May rule out consulting others for advice or assistance
- Discourage men from collaborating and supporting

Fighter

- Brave warriors who go to battle
- No room for being less than fully committed, less than aggressive, less than ruthless
- Not supposed to take time off from work
 - Risk disapproval from coworkers

Breadwinner

- Stereotyping men as breadwinners used to justify paying them higher wages
- Historically how society judged men
- How many men judge themselves

Masculine Norms in Professional Life

- Men have historically dominated institutional life
 - Masculine norms infuse workplace

Misperception 1: Think Manager-Think Male

- Equating *male* with *manager* poses barrier to women's advancement
- Ability to manage associated with communication traits cultivated more in masculine speech communities

Misperception 1: Think Manager-Think Male

- Women who engage in female communication may not be recognized as leaders

Misperception 1: Think Manager-Think Male

- Women more likely to base career choices on desire to help others
- In leadership roles, women exceed men in collaborative communication

Misperception 1: Think Manager-Think Male

- Subordinates judged male and female leaders equally effective
- Judge masculine and feminine styles to be important in leaders
 - Most effective leadership style incorporates both

Misperception 1: Think Manager-Think Male

- Men and women judged differently for enacting same communication
 - Important to distinguish between actual *behavior* and *perception*

Misperception 1: Think Manager-Think Male

- Women and men may need to communicate differently to be equally effective

Misperception 1: Think Manager-Think Male

- Assertive women may be labeled *iron maiden*
- Coworkers with gender stereotypes may negatively evaluate women who demand results

Misperception 2: Communication Styles Don't Change

- Standpoint theory
 - As contexts change, so may ways of thinking, communicating, performing identity

Misperception 2: Communication Styles Don't Change

- Support for standpoint theory comes from research showing men and women develop new communication skills needed for effectiveness on job

Misperception 3: Careers Must Follow Linear Patterns

- Career paths regarded as linear progression
- Also thought of as full-time

Misperception 3: Careers Must Follow Linear Patterns

- Assumptions reflect social relations of previous eras
- Most professional men had stay-at-home wives

Misperception 3: Careers Must Follow Linear Patterns

- Today, most women and men work outside the home
- Few can afford household help

Misperception 3: Careers Must Follow Linear Patterns

- Increasing numbers of people arguing organizations should be more flexible

Misperception 3: Careers Must Follow Linear Patterns

- When couples have children, usually woman takes time off from work
 - Inflexibility of work force leaves little choice

Misperception 3: Careers Must Follow Linear Patterns

- Most women who leave paid labor to care for children plan to return
 - Run into barriers when ready to return

Misperception 3: Careers Must Follow Linear Patterns

- Employers prefer to hire non-mothers
- Break from work leads employers to perceive mothers as less committed

Misperception 3: Careers Must Follow Linear Patterns

- Those who find jobs marginalized
- Taking years off reduces earning power

Gendered Patterns in Organizations

- Organizations have formal and informal practices
 - Formal = policies
 - Informal = normative behaviors

Leave Policies

- 1993 – Family and Medical Leave Act
- 2010 – Obama announced right to family leave will be expanded
 - Employees can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for family
 - Doesn't cover all workers

Leave Policies

- Only companies with 50+ workers required to grant
 - Some states require companies with as few as 25 to grant

Leave Policies

- FMLA does not require companies pay workers
 - Many workers cannot afford leave

Leave Policies

- Usually women who take leave
 - Gender stereotypes create situation in which difficult for men to become full partners in raising children

Leave Policies

- U.S. lags behind other developed countries
- Other industrialized nations provide generous parental and family leave policies
- Lack of support from U.S. businesses forces workers to choose

Work Schedules

- 9-to-5 model giving way to longer work days
- Neither model accommodates family needs
- Women more likely to take time off to care for children

Work Schedules

- Providing more leavetime and flexible working hours can save employers money
- Family-friendly policies enhance businesses' ability to recruit and keep talented workers

Unwelcoming Environments

- Language and behavior that emphasizes men's experiences normative
- Women less familiar/comfortable with terms from sports, military, or dealing with sexuality

Unwelcoming Environments

- Can be resistance to women who enter into fields in which men predominate
- May be given unrewarding assignments, isolated, treated in stereotypical ways

The Informal Network

- Because men have predominated in workplace, informal networks are largely male
 - *Old boy network*
- Hiring and promotion decisions made through informal communication

The Informal Network

- Informal networks vital to professional success
- Women less involved in informal networks
 - Sometimes not invited to be part of network
 - Sometimes not made to feel welcome if participate

The Informal Network

- Sense of difference also experienced by transgender people and people of color
- May avoid informal networks and lose out on sources of information and support

Mentoring Relationships

- *Mentor* = senior colleague who helps junior colleague build career
 - Women and minorities less likely to have mentors

Mentoring Relationships

- Lower numbers of women and minorities in senior positions means few who might counsel new female and/or minority employees

Mentoring Relationships

- Men reluctant to mentor women
 - Fear gossip about sexual relations
 - Assume women less serious about careers
 - May feel less comfortable with women

Mentoring Relationships

- Pattern perpetuates status quo
 - White men get more help in climbing corporate ladder

Mentoring Relationships

- Professional women have formed own networks
 - Provide information and support
- As men and women become accustomed to interacting may become more comfortable mentoring one another

Mentoring Relationships

- For examples of networking sites/organizations
 - http://www.quintcareers.com/womens_networking_organizations.html

Glass Ceilings & Walls

- *Glass ceiling* = invisible barrier that limits advancement of women and minorities
- Glass ceiling identified in 1991
- Research confirms persistence of glass ceiling today

Glass Ceilings & Walls



- Most often progress impeded by subtle discrimination that limits opportunities

Glass Ceilings & Walls

- *Glass walls* = metaphor for sex segregation on job
- Women placed in positions that require feminine skills
 - Such jobs do not include career ladders
 - Have no advancement paths

Equal Opportunity Laws

- Laws prohibiting discrimination began with *Brown v. Board of Education* – 1954
 - Supreme Court overturned *separate but equal* doctrine

Equal Opportunity Laws

- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
 - Prohibits discrimination in employment

Equal Opportunity Laws

- 1972 – Title IX
 - Forbids discrimination in educational programs that receive federal funds

Equal Opportunity Laws

- Title IV of the 1964 Civil Rights Act
- Women's Educational Equity Acts of 1974 and 1978
- Amendment to 1976 Vocational Education Act
- Laws pertaining to institutes and foundations

Equal Opportunity Laws

- Equal opportunity laws focus on discrimination against *individuals*
 - Complaints filed with the EEOC must claim particular person has suffered discrimination
 - Does not ask whether entire group underrepresented

Equal Opportunity Laws

- Focuses on present practices
 - Historical patterns of discrimination irrelevant

Equal Opportunity Laws

- Scope of Title IX weakened in 1984
 - Supreme Court narrowed application from institutions to programs

Affirmative Action Policies



- President Lyndon Johnson – 1965 – announced new policy

Affirmative Action Policies

- Affirmative action based on:
 - Remedies must apply to groups
 - Must be preferential treatment of members of groups that have suffered discrimination
 - Effectiveness of remedies judged by results

Affirmative Action Policies

- Some think aiming for greater numbers of women and minorities results in excluding white males
- Claim is challenged by study by Bowen

Affirmative Action Policies

- Affirmative action policies recognize *limited availability* of qualified people from underrepresented groups
- Attempts only to increase number of qualified applicants

Affirmative Action Policies

- Affirmative action aims to increase the number of qualified members of marginalized groups
- Does not advocate admitting minorities who lack necessary qualifications

Affirmative Action Policies

- Attempts to compensate for effects of legacy of bias
- Gives preferences to individuals whose qualification was achieved despite obstacles

Affirmative Action Policies

- Since affirmative action began, U. S. courts have wrestled with question of extent to which admission and hiring practices should consider applicants' race and sex

Affirmative Action Policies

- Diversity especially important in educational institutions
 - Responsibility to prepare leaders for future

Affirmative Action Policies

- Debate over whether preferential treatment is fair
- Effectiveness clear when look at changes in proportions of minorities and whites

Affirmative Action Policies

- Two key studies
- Examination of records of students admitted to medical schools

Affirmative Action Policies

- Supreme Court issued rulings that clarify and refine affirmative action
 - 2003 – ruled race cannot be deciding factor but may be a factor in admissions

Affirmative Action Policies

- 2007 – Supreme Court ruled public school districts cannot use race as basis for assigning students to elementary and secondary schools

Affirmative Action Policies

- 2005 – Supreme Court ruled individuals who report sex discrimination are protected from retaliation

Affirmative Action Policies

- Growing interest in revising affirmative action to give preference based on SES rather than race-ethnicity
 - The economically disadvantaged face numerous barriers

Affirmative Action Policies

- Protection for transgender workers is underway
- 2009 – Obama authorized drafting policy guidelines

Quotas

- Quota specifies number or percentage of women or minorities must be admitted, hired, or promoted
 - Binding quota – specified number regardless of circumstances such as merit

Quotas

- 1978 – Bakke case
 - Sued UC-Davis medical school for rejecting him
 - Won case on grounds of *reverse discrimination*
 - Court did not outlaw use of race as one factor in admission decisions
 - Position reaffirmed in 2003

Quotas

- Some states banned race-conscious admissions policies
 - California first state to ban affirmative action in admissions

Goals

- *Goal* = stated intention to achieve representation of minorities or women
- Goals do not require results
 - Often skeptical of goals because no penalties for not achieving them

Goals

- Quotas and goals can work against women and minorities
 - Numbers can be interpreted as maximum number of women and minorities rather than minimum

Goals

- When goals or quotas in effect, may assume women and minorities got in only because of their sex or race
 - Not regarded as capable members

Diversity Training

- Aims to increase awareness and respect for differences that arise from distinct standpoints
- Assumes people unaware of how comments and behavior could offend
- Solution to raise awareness

Diversity Training

- Some people unwilling to make changes
 - May limit own privileges
- Programs require personal commitment