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## Just don't call me a feminist: senior and junior women managers' perceptions of communication dilemmas at work

### Abstract

Barrett (2004) found senior women managers evaluated workplace communication strategies differently according to whether they thought a man or a woman was using the strategy. But organisationally junior younger women often reject overt feminist standpoints and might evaluate these strategies differently. To test this, 255 junior women managers evaluated strategies for the same dilemmas older women had. When evaluating strategies for short and medium term dilemmas (eg being interrupted, getting credit for an idea), junior women managers evaluate less than older women managers on the basis of the communicator's gender. However with longer term dilemmas (eg getting achievements noticed for promotion), junior women managers avoid some strategies they believe are effective, and which they think men would use. Implications and limitations of these findings and further research possibilities are discussed.

### Keywords

Just, don, call, feminist, Senior, junior, women, managers, perceptions, communication, dilemmas, work

### Disciplines

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**'Just don't call me a feminist': senior and junior women managers' perceptions of  
gender and communication dilemmas at work**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Barrett (2004) found senior women managers evaluated workplace communication strategies differently according to whether they thought a man or a woman was using the strategy. But organisationally junior younger women often reject overt feminist standpoints and might evaluate these strategies differently. To test this, 255 junior women managers evaluated strategies for the same dilemmas older women had. When evaluating strategies for short and medium term dilemmas (eg being interrupted, getting credit for an idea), junior women managers evaluate less than older women managers on the basis of the communicator's gender. However with longer term dilemmas (eg getting achievements noticed for promotion), junior women managers avoid some strategies they believe are effective, and which they think men would use. Implications and limitations of these findings and further research possibilities are discussed.

**Keywords** gender, communication, communication dilemmas, communication strategies, linguistics

### **Gender and communication at work**

Both academic research in linguistics (eg Brenner et al., 1989; Eagley et al., 1992; Mulac and Bradac, 1995) and popular management books alike (eg Bolinger, 1980; Harragan, 1976; Hennig and Jardim, 1977; O'Brien 1993, Rosener, 1993; Tannen, 1986, 1990, 1994) have investigated women's and men's communication styles at work and, particularly, how women's communication styles affect perceptions of them as leaders, innovators and problem-solvers. Many of these texts explicitly or implicitly advise women on how communication, including gender-related speech habits, can help or hinder their progress at work, both in short-term situations and longer term ones, such as achieving promotion. Some advise women to adopt the more powerful, direct speaking styles of men, but others argue changing how women speak will merely make them uncomfortable and self-conscious (Weiss and Fisher, 1998), or lead to them being penalised for not conforming to recognised norms of female behaviour (Case, 1993). It may also end up imposing US-based, male norms of direct speech on women and, in turn, impose these norms on other cultures where women's traditionally more indirect speech and negotiation approaches might actually be an advantage (Weiss and Fisher, 1998).

### **A previous study**

A study by Barrett (2004) looked at whether a group of organisationally very senior women managers in Australia valued masculine, feminine or mixed, 'adaptive' communication strategies for a specific set of workplace dilemmas, and to what extent their perceptions of the strategies' effectiveness and likelihood were subject to gender-related norms and expectations. Barrett found that overall, senior women valued masculine approaches to communication but that the strongly masculine approaches recommended in the 'communication advice' literature were valued less than might have been expected. In addition, senior women managers still drew on gender-based expectations in evaluating these strategies. This raises the question: what about organisationally junior women – those with less work experience? How do they see the best way to deal with communication dilemmas at work? Younger women often reject overt adherence to feminist principles as unnecessary and rather boring, seeing feminism and the fight for equal rights at work as yesterday's struggle. Has this affected their views of how best to use communication strategies at work?

### **Method**

*The survey instrument* The present study used a similar questionnaire instrument to that in Barrett (2004). It presented three workplace scenarios (short, medium and long-term) where it has been argued women tend to be disadvantaged by 'feminine' communication styles. The scenarios were:

- *Short-term* A speaker has been interrupted during a workplace meeting and wants to regain the floor.
- *Medium-term* A speaker believes they are not being given sufficient credit for an idea put forward in a meeting and wants to make sure they get credit for the idea.
- *Long-term* A speaker wants to ensure her/his work achievements are recognised by people influential in determining promotions.

For each scenario, between five and seven possible strategies were presented for the speaker to achieve the goals. The strategies had been graded by independent academics for their level of 'masculinity' or 'femininity', using general Western norms in English. Thus a response graded 'MM' indicates a highly masculine response, eg loud, clear direct talk. An 'FF' response indicates a feminine style, eg quiet, indistinct and indirect talk. Mixed responses were also included, eg an Mf response has some elements of both masculine and feminine speech but with masculine predominating. The strategist's name indicated their gender. Two versions of the questionnaire were devised which varied only the gender of the strategists' names. The three scenarios (in one of the two versions presented to participants) as well as the response strategies graded for masculinity/femininity are in the Appendix.

*Rating the communication strategies* Participants were asked to rate the strategies presented for each situation using five-point Likert-type scales to indicate, first, how effective they believed each strategy would be for achieving the goal and, second, how probable they believed each strategy was. The questionnaire had been piloted on a group of ten women managers at varying levels of seniority and three female academics. A further five students piloted the survey before it was administered for the current study. No-one in any group found difficulty with the instrument's clarity or ease of use.

*Administering the survey* The women for whom results were reported in Barrett (2004) had completed the survey during a businesswomen's networking breakfast held in an upmarket location in an Australian capital city. The questionnaire for the present study was administered during 2006 and 2007 at two lecture sessions of a second-year management subject immediately following the mid-semester examination. Students in that subject could be expected to have some knowledge of management issues, but relatively little management experience.

*Analysis* Frequencies and distributions of responses for each scenario were calculated. T-tests for differences in the mean for the perceived effectiveness and the likelihood of each strategy in each of the three scenarios were carried out. Before this, Levene's test for equality of variances was carried

out for each strategy. Where results for the test showed equal variances could not be assumed, the T-test took account of this.

## Results

*Number of respondents* The total number of useable responses completed by women in the present study was 255, with roughly half for each 'gender version' of the questionnaire. Demographic data confirmed that the respondents in the present study had comparatively little management experience. For convenience, the earlier group of senior women managers is referred to as 'seniors' or 'the older generation' and junior women managers, 'juniors' or 'the junior generation'.

**Table 1: Results for Scenario 1**

**Problem is to 'regain the floor' after being interrupted in a workplace meeting**

Response	Speaker is:	Effectiveness mean, ranking: younger women mgrs	Effectiveness mean, ranking: older women mgrs	Likelihood mean, ranking: younger women mgrs	Likelihood mean, ranking: older women mgrs
1 MM	M	3.23 2	2.72 3	3.08 3	2.78 4
I insist on finishing my point...	F	3.31	3.05	3.09	2.67
2 Mf	M	3.58 1	<u>3.42* 1</u>	3.25 2	<u>2.92** 1</u>
You may not have realised...	F	3.50	<u>3.74</u>	3.18	<u>3.30</u>
3 MF	M	<u>2.68 3*</u>	3.00 2	2.66 5	3.13 2
Palm outwards, 'your turn will come...'	F	<u>2.93</u>	3.16	2.70	2.78
4 mF	M	2.01 4	1.74 4	2.95 4	2.93 3
Just a minute... trails off	F	1.93	1.88	2.89	2.91
5 FF	M	1.59 5	1.32 5	3.44 1	<u>2.81** 2</u>
Says nothing sits fuming	F	1.56	1.30	3.44	<u>3.45</u>

\* = significant at  $p < 0.1$ ; \*\* = significant at  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*\* = significant at  $p < 0.01$

*Scenario 1: Regaining the floor after an interruption* Table 1 summarises the results for both generations' judgements about how effective and how likely the strategies in scenario 1 are.

*Effectiveness* Like their senior sisters, juniors believe that the second, Mf strategy ('You may not have realised you were interrupting me...', means 3.58 and 3.50) is the most effective. However they ranked the stronger MM strategy ('I insist on finishing my point...', means 3.23 and 3.31) in second place, followed at some distance by the Mf strategy ('That sounds a lot like the plan I mentioned earlier', means 2.69 and 2.93). This reverses the seniors' second and third preferences. Juniors see the mF and FF strategies as least effective, again, a similar result to seniors. Juniors rate one of the strategies they see as effective (the balanced, MF 'palm turned outwards, 'your turn will come' strategy) as actually more effective when they see it used by a woman than when they see it used by a man. The older generation made a similar judgement about the second, Mf strategy ('you may not have realised you were interrupting me...'). So, compared with their more senior sisters, the junior generation are more likely to see a low-key, only moderately effective strategy as more effective when it is used by a woman than a man.

*Likelihood* Here there were fewer similarities between juniors and seniors. Senior women managers had regarded two strategies as significantly more probable when they saw them used by a woman than when they saw them used by a man. These were the highly effective Mf strategy, and also, curiously enough, the most ineffective strategy, the FF strategy (if it can be called a strategy), of saying nothing after being interrupted and simply sitting there fuming. Junior women managers, by contrast, made no significantly different assessments about how probable any strategy was according to whether they believed it was being used by a woman or a man. Interestingly however, and in strong contrast to senior women who had rated the *most effective* strategy also as the most probable, regardless of whether it used by a man or a woman, junior women managers actually rated the strategy they saw as *least effective*, the FF 'say nothing, sit fuming' approach, as the most probable strategy, regardless of the gender of the strategist. In fact, with a probability mean of 3.44 they rated it as virtually equally likely when a man used it as the senior generation had done when a woman used it! With a mean of



2.81, the older generation women had rated it as significantly less probable when they saw it being used by a man.

**Discussion** In short-term situations like ‘regaining the floor’ in a meeting following an interruption, neither generation regards the most masculine strategy as the most effective. They seem to agree that it would be too strong, perhaps rude. The second, slightly more feminine Mf strategy seems to be about the right strength for both generations. They also provide broadly similar rankings of particular strategies’ effectiveness (both generations see the first three strategies as more effective than the last two). Both seem to regard a ‘mixed, assertive’ strategy, that is, one with a strong masculine element but with a feminine component, as more effective when used by a woman than a man. However the younger generation is less inclined to be influenced by the gender of the strategist when they make judgements about how probable this short-term strategy is. In fact, in contrast to the senior generation, they regard men as being just as likely as women – and at a mean of 3.45 very likely, at that – to fall victim to ‘losing the floor’ in meetings.

*Scenario 2: gaining sufficient credit for an idea expressed in a meeting* Table 2 summarises the results for both generations’ judgements about how effective and how likely the strategies in scenario 2 are.

*Effectiveness* Here the junior generation are similar to the senior generation in regarding masculine strategies with some feminine element (strategies 3 to 5 inclusive) as much more effective than very feminine responses (strategies 6 and 7). Also like the senior generation, they did not rate either of the highly masculine responses (1 and 2) among the three most effective responses, rating them lower than the mixed MF or Mf strategies. One difference appears: where the senior generation had rated the fourth response, the mild: ‘That sounds a lot like the idea I suggested earlier’ as more effective when they thought a woman was using it, the junior generation made no such distinction, rating its effectiveness around 2.90 regardless of the strategist’s gender.

**Table 2: Results for scenario 2**

**Problem is to make sure of getting credit for ideas discussed at a meeting**

Response	Speaker is:	Effectiveness mean, ranking: younger women mgrs		Effectiveness mean, ranking: older women mgrs		Likelihood mean, ranking: younger women mgrs		Likelihood mean, ranking: older women mgrs	
<b>1 MM</b>	M	2.61	3	2.17	4	2.46	5	2.47	5
Get your own idea...	F	2.62		2.48		2.46		2.35	
<b>2 MM</b>	M	2.14	4	1.91	5	2.29	6	<u>2.34**</u>	<u>6</u>
I'm taking that idea back...	F	2.12		2.02		2.09		<u>1.92</u>	
<b>3 MF</b>	M	3.54	1	3.23	1	3.80	1	3.70	1
That plan sounds a lot like the idea I mentioned earlier	F	3.34		3.29		3.70		3.47	
<b>4 MF</b>	M	2.88	2	<u>2.44*</u>	<u>3</u>	3.19	2	2.87	2
At office later: 'Two can play that game...'	F	2.90		<u>2.84</u>		3.13		2.80	
<b>5 Fm</b>	M	2.84	2	2.92	2	3.31	2	<u>2.84*</u>	<u>2</u>
"I'd appreciate a footnote"	F	2.86		2.92		3.25		<u>3.22</u>	
<b>6 FF</b>	M	1.91	5	1.36	6	2.97	3	2.73	3
Says nothing, injured look	F	1.71		1.34		3.05		3.02	
<b>7 FF</b>	M	1.60	6	1.34	6	2.65	5	2.42	4
Says nothing, & no indication of any problem	F	1.43		1.29		2.82		2.76	

\* = significant at  $p < 0.1$ ; \*\* = significant at  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*\* = significant at  $p < 0.01$

*Likelihood* Again like the senior generation, the junior generation's ratings about how probable the strategies were, initially followed their ratings of the strategies' effectiveness. Both generations also saw the very feminine strategies 6 and 7 as rather probable, despite ranking them low for effectiveness. As with scenario 1 the senior generation had made some different judgements about probability based on perceived gender of the strategist which juniors did not make. The senior generation had seen one highly masculine response (strategy 2) as being more probable for a male

than a female strategist (the jokey, 'I'm taking that idea back – you guys are butchering it'). They had also seen the mixed (Fm) response (5) (saying nothing at the meeting but going to the other person's office afterwards and saying you'd appreciate a footnote next time they borrowed one of your ideas) as more probable with a female than a male strategist. By contrast the strategists' gender did not affect how the junior generation assessed the probability of any strategy.

**Discussion** The senior and the junior generation seem to agree on what is effective to get credit for an idea expressed in a meeting: masculine strategies tempered by a feminine element. They also make similar judgements for probability. Highly feminine though ineffective strategies seem moderately probable to both generations of women managers, however, so some of the same strategy 'traps' remain for the junior generation as their senior sisters wrestled with. The difference between the generations lies in the way the junior generation does not distinguish between any of the strategies' effectiveness or probability depending on the perceived gender of the strategist. As with scenario 1, and more than the senior generation did, the junior generation sees men and women as being similar in how effective they will be if they use specific strategies, and how probable it is they would adopt them.

*Scenario 3: Making sure one's achievements get noticed by people influential for promotion* Table 3 summarises the results for both generations' judgements about how effective and how likely the strategies in scenario 3 are.

*Effectiveness* Compared with results for the previous two strategies, all strategies for scenario 3 rated fairly close. Both generations rate strategy 3 (sending a copy of the good figures to the boss with a note drawing the boss's attention to one's achievements), as the most effective strategy for getting noticed and increasing one's chances of promotion. Beyond this, however, the generations diverge markedly. The junior generation put the indirect, stereotypically female strategies including the Fm Strategy 2, ('say nothing other than to direct the boss's attention to the good figures and hope the boss will make the connection between the figures and one's performance'), and the FF Strategy 1 ('say

nothing at all and just keep working harder and more cooperatively next year') in second place. senior women, while putting the strongest MM strategy ('writing about one's achievements to the boss's boss as well as the boss'), in second place for effectiveness, had rated the Fm strategy ('point out the good figures and hope the boss will make the connection with good performance', and the FF strategy ('say nothing, just work harder') approaches the lowest. The junior generation, by contrast, rated the MM approach, ('tell five colleagues, one of whom is their boss, all about their accomplishments'), as the lowest.

**Table 3: Results for scenario 3**

**Problem is to get achievements noticed by people who are influential for promotion**

Response	Speaker is:	Effectiveness mean, ranking: younger women mgrs		Effectiveness mean, ranking: older women mgrs		Likelihood mean, ranking: younger women mgrs		Likelihood mean, ranking: older women mgrs	
1 FF	M	2.93	3	2.50	5	3.43	1	2.88*	4
Says nothing, just works harder	F	3.01		2.35		3.43		3.42	
2 Fm	M	3.09	2	2.89	4	3.30	2	3.19	3
Suggests boss looks at figures, boss will make the connection	F	3.28		2.82		3.40		3.39	
3 MF	M	3.23	1	3.58	1	3.27***4		3.51	1
Sends figures to boss with a note	F	3.24		3.81		2.96		3.44	
4 fM	M	2.88	4	3.18	2	2.50	5	3.18*	5
Sends figures to boss & boss's boss, with the same note	F	2.97		2.85		2.62		2.49	
5 MM	M	2.96**	5	3.06	3	3.20	3	3.25	2
Describes the feat to 5 colleagues, including boss	F	2.62		2.85		3.08		3.52	

\* = significant at  $p < 0.1$ ; \*\* = significant at  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*\* = significant at  $p < 0.01$

For this scenario, the senior generation had not judged any strategy as significantly more or less effective depending on whether they thought the strategist was a man or a woman. However, the

junior generation did do this, rating the MM strategy (openly talking about their achievements to the next five colleagues they meet) with a male strategist at 2.96 and with a female strategist at 2.62 for effectiveness. This means that, while they regard this approach when a man uses it as only moderately effective, they regard it as much more ineffective when a woman uses it. Given the low overall spread of the effectiveness ratings in this scenario, this difference stands out strongly.

*Likelihood* As with the results for the senior generation, the junior generation's ratings for the Scenario 3 strategies' probability are grouped relatively closely together. However, unlike for the senior generation and unlike the pattern of both generations in previous scenarios of ranking highly effective strategies as highly probable, the junior generation actually ranks the FF strategy ('say and do nothing, just work harder and more cooperatively next year') as noticeably the most probable for *both* male and female strategists (means of 3.43 and 3.43). It is noticeable too that, in the view of the junior generation, this strategy's probability outranks its effectiveness.

The junior generation had ranked their least effective, highly female strategy, the FF 'say nothing, just work harder' strategy, as significantly more likely when they saw a woman using it than when a man did. In addition, they had ranked the probability of the second most effective strategy (drawing the boss's boss's attention to the good figures as well as their immediate boss) as more likely when a man used it than a woman. The junior generation, by contrast, did not make different judgements on a gender basis about how probable these strategies were, but instead strongly indicated the most effective strategy (writing a note about one's achievements to one's boss) was much more likely for a male strategist than a female strategist.

**Discussion** In the light of how similar the older and younger generations' results were when they ranked the effectiveness of strategies in the first two scenarios, it is noticeable how much they diverge in their results for this 'how to get a promotion' scenario. Along with the senior generation, juniors see the moderately direct (MF) strategy (drawing one's boss's attention to one's achievements), as the most effective approach (means 3.23 and 3.24). However unlike seniors, they see this strategy as

much more likely to be used by men than by women. Perhaps they think women who do this may be seen as aggressive. This is a surprising and rather old-fashioned view, especially when we remember that in the previous two scenarios juniors generally had not assessed the strategies' effectiveness or probability according to the strategist's gender. Also, for short-term or medium-term communication dilemmas, junior women regard men as having the same communication problems as themselves, and likely to react in similar ways. In this scenario, by contrast, beyond a 'do nothing' strategy which the younger generation see as likely for both men and women, strong differences re-emerge in what junior women see as effective and probable for them compared to effective and probable for men. These differences are stronger than for the older generation, and attached to different strategies.

We might ask whether the junior generation's lower level of work experience affects their response to the third scenario. After all, with the first two dilemmas, junior women with limited management experience might have relied on other experience, for example dealing with debates in class or casual employment, when thinking about their response. The younger generation are also unlikely to have had much experience of securing promotion, certainly less than senior, experienced managers. The divergence in the strategies the two generations regard as effective for Scenario 3 might reflect this difference of experience, or perhaps even the propensity of Generation Y employees to move to another employer after a short interval if they are not to be getting the rewards they expect. Nevertheless it is interesting and disturbing that for this dilemma junior women managers, who otherwise seem relaxed and inclined to find common issues for men and women, revert to a 'pre-feminist era' pattern of not claiming certain strategies for themselves which they regard as effective and very probable for men.

## **Conclusions**

The results for organisationally junior women present a mixed picture. On the one hand, in the results for short and medium term dilemmas, they make mostly similar judgements to their more senior sisters in terms of which strategies they see as effective and probable. They are also like their senior sisters in valuing a masculine approach tempered with a feminine element. However they seem more

likely than their senior sisters to credit men with experiencing similar short and medium term communication difficulties as they do themselves, such as 'losing the floor' after being interrupted, or failing to get credit for an idea in a meeting. Moreover, in terms of how the junior generation rate specific strategies' effectiveness or probability depending on the gender of the communication strategist, in the first two scenarios they seem more relaxed than the senior generation, perceiving fewer differences in either effectiveness or probability of a specific strategy according to whether they think a man or a woman is using it. Like their senior sisters they are sceptical about the advice to 'do as men do'; they want to manage workplace communication problems in their own way. In addition, for short and medium-term dilemmas they seem to have 'learned some moves': they are less likely to see strongly or moderately masculine strategies as less effective or less available to women and occasionally see strongly masculine strategies as effective. In short, more than seniors, they expect women to be as effective as men if they use effective strategies, and they believe men as well as women sometimes have problems being heard at work, getting acknowledgement for their ideas, and so on.

The results for scenarios 1 and 2 suggest organisationally junior women's relaxed attitude to some communication situations may work to their advantage. Simply not expecting to be treated differently, especially not expecting to be disadvantaged, may deflect many problems, whereas expecting bad things to happen may tend to make them happen. On the other hand, the junior generation's lesser experience of corporate life might cause them problems. Their belief that the major problems feminism attempted to solve are in the past – unjustified, we could say, if women's representation at senior managerial levels is an index of success – may mean junior women are not alert to the subtle ways women can fail to make their mark in conversations, meetings and other workplace communication settings, and hence be less well recognised and rewarded at work.

In the third, longer term dilemma, however, the picture is different. Overall, junior women are still giving themselves less scope for strong, effective action than they give to men. They see both men and women as likely just to 'do nothing and work harder'. But when they consider more forceful

approaches, youngerjunior seem to be making judgements according to the old rules: the ones that say women will lose if they are too aggressive, and that women have more to lose than a man since for him aggressive behaviour is to be expected or at least forgiven. Perhaps after all it is too early to relegate yesterday's feminist struggles to the history books. Recalling the feminist battles of the past could still be useful for junior women managers dealing with workplace communication problems.

### **Limitations and further research**

Similar limitations apply to the present study as for Barrett's (2004) study. For example, given time constraints in a post-exam situation, the questionnaire only allowed investigation of a small number of communication dilemmas. A study dealing with more issues in more detail might have produced more fine-grained results. Other demographic aspects of the student sample were not investigated which may have affected the results. For example the students, like respondents in the original study, were not asked about their awareness of gender-focussed debates in linguistic and management research, and this may have affected the results. Again as with the original study, given the quantitative focus of the research respondents were not invited to comment in an unstructured way on their perceptions of their own communication styles and how this might link to the results. Future studies could usefully undertake this qualitative work.

Research is continuing into the possible relationships between the present results and a) junior women managers' view of their confidence as communicators, and b) junior women managers' amount and level of work experience. With the older generation neither their communication confidence nor their organisational level seemed related to the results, but organisationally less experienced women might be less confident communicators.

In addition, further analysis is being undertaken of male respondents' perceptions of these communication dilemmas and ways of tackling them. Since the perceptions and judgements of junior women managers sometimes reflect and sometimes diverge from those of their more senior sisters,



comparing both sets of female views with those of younger generation male managers can only serve to widen the picture.

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## Appendix The three scenarios and their communication strategies, rated for masculinity/femininity

**SCENARIO 1:** The scene is a staff meeting. The two people talking are colleagues; neither is subordinate to the other, and there is no formal chairperson. The agenda item **Jane** is discussing is something she knows a great deal about.

**Jane:** What I think we should [do is...]

**Jim:** (*interrupting her*): [We can] deal with that issue later. On the Singapore deal, though, we'll just move ahead right away – if we don't our competitors will grab it.

**Jane:** I'd just like to finish [this point...]

**Jim:** (*interrupting again*): [I want] to be sure we get the Singapore matter resolved today.

**THE PROBLEM:** **Jane** wants to "regain the floor" and continue talking about her topic.

	Strategy	Masculinity/femininity
1	<b>Jane:</b> "Jim, you've just interrupted me for a second time. I insist on finishing my point, which is ..." ( <i>She continues talking about her topic.</i> )	<b>MM</b>
2	<b>Jane:</b> "Jim, you may not have realised you were interrupting me, but you were. What I was saying was..." ( <i>She continues talking about her topic.</i> )	<b>Mf</b>
3	<b>Jane:</b> ( <i>holding her hand palm outwards in Jim's direction</i> ): "Jim, your turn will come. Now, as I was saying..." ( <i>She continues talking about her topic.</i> )	<b>MF</b>
4	<b>Jane:</b> "Jim, just a minute..." ( <i>She trails off and doesn't revert to her topic.</i> )	<b>Fm</b>
5	<b>Jane</b> says nothing but sits there fuming as Jim continues talking about the Singapore deal.	<b>FF</b>

**SCENARIO 2:** The scene is a staff meeting. **Paul** has just brought up an idea which **Sally** had thought of first and mentioned earlier in the meeting. **Paul** talks about the idea as if it had not been mentioned before and as if it were his own.

**THE PROBLEM:** **Sally** wants to make sure that people at the meeting realise the idea was hers.

	Strategy	Masculinity/femininity
1	<b>Sally:</b> "Paul, get your own idea. That one was mine. When I proposed that plan I had something slightly different in mind."	<b>MM</b>
2	<b>Sally:</b> "I'm taking that idea back. You guys are butchering it."	<b>MM</b>
3	<b>Sally:</b> "That plan sounds a lot like the one I mentioned earlier."	<b>Mf</b>
4	<b>Sally</b> says nothing at the meeting, but goes to Paul's office afterwards and says to her, "We can work well together, Paul. Just remember to give credit where it's due. By the end of the meeting, I think everyone thought my project upgrade idea was yours. You know, two can play that game."	<b>MF</b>
5	<b>Sally</b> says nothing at the meeting, but goes to Paul's office afterwards and says to him, "I don't know what you were thinking in that meeting today, Paul. I'd appreciate at least a footnote next time you borrow one of my ideas."	<b>Fm</b>

6	<b>Sally</b> says nothing, and does not go to see Paul after the meeting, but turns away from him with an injured expression when they next meet.	<b>FF</b>
7	<b>Sally</b> says nothing and gives no indication to Paul that there is any problem.	<b>FF</b>

**SCENARIO 3:** Steve has just finished a meeting in which he closed an important deal which took skill and determination to bring off.

**THE PROBLEM:** Steve would like to increase his chances of promotion this year.

	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Masculinity/femininity</b>
1	<b>Steve</b> says and does nothing but works even harder and more cooperatively over the coming year. Working hard and getting results will eventually be noticed.	<b>FF</b>
2	<b>Steve</b> says nothing straight away, but a couple of weeks later suggests to his boss that he might like to take a look at the performance figures for their profit centre before the next board meeting. Presumably his boss will make the connection between the healthy figures and Steve's hard work.	<b>Fm</b>
3	<b>Steve</b> sends a copy of the figures to his boss with a memo drawing his attention to his achievement at the meeting and its positive effect on the figures.	<b>MF</b>
4	<b>Steve</b> does the same as in response C, but also sends a copy of the figures and the memo to his boss's boss.	<b>Mf</b>
5	<b>Steve</b> comments to the next five colleagues he meets following the meeting – one of whom is his boss – “You won't believe what happened in that meeting today...”. He follows this with a description of the challenge and how he accomplished it.	<b>MM</b>