



**JOBS FOR THE FUTURE**

# ADDING A GENDER LENS TO NONTRADITIONAL JOBS TRAINING

CREATED BY WIDER OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

MAY 2017

## **TOOL 5.5.1 IMPERFECT PICTURES ROLEPLAY**

Use this tool as part of the activity described in session 3 of the facilitator guide. The roleplay exercise enables training participants to understand a real-world scenario involving sexual harassment and work through the issues involved.

*This tool is also part of the pre-apprenticeship Multi-Craft Core Curriculum of the Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO.*

### **WHO SHOULD USE THIS TOOL**

Occupational training instructors, with their students

### **SOURCE**

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in the growing advanced manufacturing sector. JFF is partnering with manufacturing associations and leading innovators in apprenticeship to dramatically increase the number of manufacturing firms that are utilizing Registered Apprenticeship and to register over 2,200 apprentices by 2021.

*Adding a Gender Lens to Nontraditional Jobs Training* is available online at: [jff.org/newlensonjobs](http://jff.org/newlensonjobs).

# A ROLE-PLAYING EXERCISE FOR INTEGRATING WOMEN INTO NONTRADITIONAL JOBS

## THE BACKGROUND

Annie Rivets, has started to feel uncomfortable working with her male coworkers on the production floor at Big Name Factory Co. They make constant remarks about her personal appearance, make lewd jokes around her, and share stories of their sex life in her presence while they are working. When Annie asks her coworkers to stop, they say she is being too sensitive. In the break room, one of her coworkers placed a piggy bank resembling female breast with a sign stating: "Stick it Here". Annie took a picture of the piggy bank, emptied its contents into a different container and threw the bank away. The next day she found the piggy bank placed beside her locker with a note which read, "Your tits were trash not these!"

Annie's team is working on a tight deadline, they are responsible for producing a large order for one of the company's largest clients. In the middle of production, Annie missed several days because of the stomach flu. As a result, production of the order was slowed down and the team is now under pressure to deliver the order on time.

Annie tells her Production Manager Richard, about the piggy bank and the inappropriateness of her male coworkers. He replies, "I don't think they meant anything by it, that's the way we talk to each other on the job." Richard tells Annie that the piggy bank was in good fun and support of a good cause. He suggests that she not take it so seriously next time because if she continues complaining she might make her coworkers angry. He suggests that the retaliatory note was a light action; he says things would've been worse back in "his day."

Frustrated but undeterred, Annie mentions the problem to her union steward, Fore Yu, who suggests that he and Annie meet to discuss the problem and propose solutions. He assures her he will look into the situation and asks her document any further interactions with Richard about her concerns.

Meanwhile at the weekly Production Manager meeting, Jay, the Plant Manager, says he has received a phone call from the union

suggesting there might be a problem with sexual harassment. He also raises his concern about whether or not Richard's team will meet their client's deadline.

Jay has a meeting with Richard to figure out what is happening on his team. Richard tells Jay about the conversation he had with Annie. He also tells Jay about Annie missing work and implies that she is the reason the order is taking so long to process. He implies that Annie hasn't been performing and that is the real cause of the problem. Richard says he going to have an extremely stern conversation with her about it and will put her on probation. Jay suggests that before that happens, Richard and himself sit down with the company's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Manager, Imani, to figure out what to do.

## YOUR MISSION

1. Divide into the two groups. In each group discuss each person's point of view on what happened and what can be done to resolve it. Decide whether there is a violation of the law, who is being harmed and who is responsible. Develop a proposal and strategy for meeting together with the other group. Identify immediate solutions and a longer term strategy to address what happened.
2. You will have 10 minutes to discuss this in the small group.
3. You will then have 15 minutes with both groups together to identify two immediate steps and one or two long term policy changes that can be implemented. Identify who will take what action.

## RULES OF THE GAME

1. Sustain your role at all times during the game itself, from the moment you introduce yourself until the conclusion of the problem solving session.
2. Work to gain the agenda of your character, even though it may not reflect your own perspective or values
3. Do not fabricate activities, pasts, or agreements about other characters that do not happen in the confines of the game . . . (conversations, prior agreements, etc.) unless they are written into your role.
  - a. No financial bribes can be used in the game.

## CHARACTERS

**Woman Worker.** Annie Rivets is a divorced mother of three boys. Annie's wages are her only income and she's just moved to her own place. She has been with this company only a few short months but has a good record with them. Although this job pays more than her former job, as a security guard, she doesn't know how much longer she can put up with the attitudes of the guys at her company. She is worried that she is getting the reputation of being a whiner, but she is certain she needs to stand up for herself to get fair treatment.

**Production Manager.** Richard has 20 years in manufacturing, 10 years as a Production Manager. He doesn't think women can do the work, that men need these jobs, and that women in manufacturing are ruining the industry. He is the sole support of his family while his wife stays home. He runs a tight ship and doesn't like controversy. He doesn't like anyone who goes over his head and especially doesn't like "complainers". He invites factory workers in his crew for drinks most nights but has never invited Annie. He has more important things to worry about than harmless talk.

**Plant Manager.** Jay is under a lot of pressure from shareholders to have a strong quarter and retain clients. He's known as fair and smart. He also knows that part of his job is to mediate between employee and observe other federal guidelines.

**Union Steward.** Fore Yu is thinking about running for union president. He wants to make sure all the members like him.

**Big Name Factory Co. EEO Manager.** Imani used to work for the government in their affirmative action office but wanted a higher salary. He knows that at the end of the year the government will review the company, but that they have plenty of private work for the future.

**Observers.** Pay attention to the actions and behavior of each character, remind people to stay in character, note what worked, where there were obstacles and other observations on this problem and the process to resolve it.

## NOTES ON CHARACTERS

### Richard, Production Manager

You believe that women should stay home and raise kids like your wife does. You think men need these jobs, women can't do them and affirmative action lets unqualified people into the trades. This is ruining the profession. You resent complainers and get very upset when people go over your head. You know you have to keep Annie on because of the regulations but you wish she could just handle her own conflicts with the other workers like the rest of your crew. You have better things to do than fight this battle.

### Annie Rivets, Woman Worker

This work pays much better than your previous job as a security guard, but you are not sure how much longer you can put up with the attitudes of coworkers hassling you and bosses allowing it. Nobody seems to take you seriously. You love your job but are beginning to feel that maybe you are just not cut out for it. You are angry but also worried that you have a reputation as a whiner.

### Jay, Plant Manager

You believe that women should work at any job they are qualified for, but believe that this should be a natural process, like the forces of the free market, not contingent on employer's making special exceptions.