

***These cases represent real situations faced by real women leaders. All names and other identifying details changed to protect the identity of the women and their organizations.***

**CASE #1 – MELISSA**

- Partner at a professional services consulting firm
- 8-year track record of exceeding billing and business development goals
- Chair of Personnel Committee for the firm
- Adjunct Faculty Member in business program at local university
- Frequent invited speaker at industry conferences and association meetings
- Known for high energy, vivacious style

While pregnant with her 2<sup>nd</sup> child her father passed away unexpectedly and her mother needed significant support. Melissa's solution for managing the workload after her maternity leave ended was to work from home one day / week. She met all expected metrics and was continuing to work from home one day a week a year later, with the approval of her Department Leader. However, the Managing Partners required that she cease the practice and work in the downtown office full time.

***How does Melissa's situation illustrate the research results?  
What would you do?***

**CASE #2 – LISA**

- Director of Government Relations for a public sector organization
- 13-year history of meeting or exceeding expectations on annual performance appraisals
- Responsible for developing and executing plans to achieve Federal and State funding in years when similar organizations were not able to secure funding
- Recognized through a federal program as a high potential leader and invited to participate in special training
- High leadership ratings by her staff on 360-reviews; only department in her organization with no unplanned turnover

Lisa's boss routinely praises a male colleague whose department has missed his numbers for the past 2 years in public settings such as staff development days and Board meetings. He will also announce the accomplishments of Lisa's team without mentioning her by name or her role in leading the efforts, although he routinely praises one of her direct reports – a young male who she has mentored. Recently she presented the plan for government relations activities for the upcoming year as an informational session at a Board Meeting, and received generally favorable comments. After the meeting when she sought out the Board Chair to ask for some specific feedback on an aspect of the plan, he began to advise her briefly as they walked to the elevator; however once on the elevator, the conversation with the other (male) Board members shifted to weekend plans and included comments such as, "I do whatever my wife tells me..." and "I leave those decisions to the boss at home..."

***How does Lisa's situation illustrate the research results?  
What would you do?***

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**CASE #3 – GRACE**

- Director of an IT Department for a Fortune 500 Organization
- Approximately 100 employees report through to her
- 10-year track record of meeting or exceeding expectations on annual performance appraisals
- Nominated for membership in a prestigious industry women’s leadership forum
- Recognized as a rising female star in technology
- Her husband Ben is an executive at a start-up company, and they have 4 children

During the recent economic crisis, the executive team at Grace’s company determined that they needed to enact massive cost cutting through a Reduction in Force (RIF) and Grace was asked to RIF 10% of her department. An important part of Grace’s community life was a weekly study and prayer meeting at her church. She asked her friends to pray for her to have wisdom regarding the cuts she had to make, and was completely shocked during the prayer session when (with everyone’s head bowed) someone said, “.....and please help Ben to be successful in his business so that Grace can quit work and not have to deal with so much stress...”

***How does Grace’s situation illustrate the research results?  
What would you do?***