

5-2000

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Reactions to Failure in Gender Non-Traditional Occupations

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Abstract

People are often called upon to make decisions about someone with whom they are unfamiliar. While not always the norm, in a business situation, managers frequently base those decisions on information presented to them by a third party. This study was an attempt to ascertain whether participants in the role of manager would punish female stimulus persons who fail at a masculine occupation, and if they would be reluctant to hire another female to the same masculine job. The occupations of nurse and pilot were used as traditionally female and male occupations, respectively. Participants read scenarios and assumed the role of Human Resources Executive. The scenarios described a stimulus person who failed as either a pilot or nurse with either severe or non-severe consequences. A small same-sex bias was discovered in that male participants chose to punish a female target more often than a male target when the error was severe. Participants were also required to rank-order three potential applicants (2 males, 1 female) for the same position. It was hypothesized that they would not choose another female pilot. The findings did not support that hypothesis as 33% of participants chose the female pilot applicant.

People are often called upon to make decisions about someone with whom they are unfamiliar. While not always the norm, in a business situation, managers frequently base those decisions on information presented to them by a third party. As a result, upper-level managers, owing to the hierarchical structure of many businesses, often make decisions based on information given to them about employees by the employees' direct supervisors. Punitive action also travels down the same structure, enabling the manager to disburse rewards or punishment to an employee without ever interacting with the employee him or herself. In the process of assigning credit or blame to an employee, the manager is often given descriptions of the employee's activities. It is then up to the manager to make judgments about the behavior which will impact future employment, such as deciding why the employee acts as she or he does and whether or not the employee will be allowed to continue to behave in this manner.

Attribution Theory

Attribution theory addresses the process of deciding the "whys" of a person's behavior. The attribution assigned to an employee by a manager or supervisor is important when hiring, promotion, pay raise, and termination decisions must be made. Attributions for successful performance have far-reaching consequences as do attributions for failure. Weiner, Frieze, Kukla, Reed, Rest, and Rosenbaum (1971) determined that individuals allocate the causes of success and failure along four dimensions: ability, task-difficulty, effort, and luck. The four dimensions are viewed as occurring in tandem and falling on opposite sides of two continuums: internal and external, stable and unstable. Internal and external refer to situational locus of control. Ability and effort are internal characteristics, that is, they occur within the stimulus person (the employee). Should the question of a pay raise arise, and the manager decides that the employee's successes are due to his or her abilities, it is likely that the employee will get the pay raise as ability is not only internal, but also viewed as a stable attribution. If the manager believes that the employee's successes are due to sheer effort, the employee is less likely to get the pay raise as effort is unstable, and the manager cannot be sure that the employee will continue to perform at the same level. Task-difficulty and luck are external characteristics. Task difficulty relates to the

task (job) itself, while luck relates to chance occurrences within the situation. In the same pay raise scenario, should the manager decide that the employee's successes are due to ease of the task or luck, the employee will be less likely to get a pay raise. If the manager does not assign the attribution of luck, or believes that the task was difficult and the employee overcame the difficulty, the pay raise is again more likely to occur. Within attribution theory, ability and task difficulty are viewed as stable characteristics of the situation. Effort and luck are viewed as unstable characteristics of the situation (Deaux, 1984).

Gender Differences in Attributions for Success

While some researchers have found no gender differences between attributions for a person's performance in sex-linked tasks and occupations (Heilman & Guzzo, 1978; Heimovics & Herman, 1988; Kinicki & Griffeth, 1985), several researchers have found such gender differences in attributions for performance on sex-linked tasks and occupations. Pioneers in the field of gender differences in attribution, Deaux and Emswiller (1974), found that participants rated the successful performance of a man on a feminine task to be attributed to skill whereas successful performance of a female on a masculine task was attributed to luck. This study, and many others, has provided evidence for enduring differences in attributions: Women who succeed at a job or task traditionally performed by men (masculine occupation/task) have their success attributed to the internal, but unstable, attribution of effort (Bar-Tal & Frieze 1976; Corenblum 1977; Hansen & O'Leary, 1983; L'Hereaux-Barrett & Barnes-Farrell, 1991; Reid, Kleiman, and Travis, 1985; Rose, 1978); the external, but stable, attribution of ease of task (Feather & Simon, 1975); or the external and unstable attribution of luck (Bar-Tal & Frieze; Deaux & Emswiller, 1974). Women who succeed at jobs or tasks traditionally performed by women (feminine occupation/task) are seen as possessing the same ability as males who succeed at feminine occupations or tasks (Deaux & Emswiller, 1974). Men who succeed are given the attribution of ability regardless of the gender of the occupation (Etaugh & Brown, 1975; Feldman-Summers & Kiesler, 1974; Kaufman & Shikiar, 1985; L'Hereaux-Barrett & Barnes-Farrell, 1991). Differences between the sexes have also been found with regard to self-attributions. Women attribute their own failure to bad luck

and men attribute their own successes to ability (Frieze, Whitley, Hanusa & McHugh, 1982). In the absence of information regarding prior behaviors, Locksley, Hepburn, and Ortiz (1982) found that stereotypical attributions were assigned to stimulus persons of both sexes. Whitehead and Hall (1984) found a same-sex bias in that men and women rated stimulus persons of the same gender more favorably and less responsible for an accident than stimulus persons of the opposite gender. Only in one study was the success of a female stimulus person rated higher on the attribution of ability than males. The finding was due to the gender of the subject. Paludi (1984) found that androgynous participants were more likely to attribute ability as the more important cause of a female's success.

Rewards

Gender differences in attributions for success have led to discrepancies in reward allocation to men and women. When observing stimulus persons performing out-of-role (a woman behaving in a masculine manner, i.e., aggressive, or a man behaving in a feminine manner, i.e., nurturing), the situational circumstances must be taken into account. The participant's perception of state v. trait dependent behavior results in differing attributions between men and women. In situations requiring one-time out-of-role behavior, women who act appropriately for the situation receive larger rewards than men. As Leventhal and Michaels (1971) found, rewards are distributed based on the contribution to the situation and the constraints under which the stimulus person makes those contributions. In laboratory experiments, Taynor and Deaux (1973, 1975), found that women who succeed at a masculine task receive higher rewards than man performing the same task. Taynor and Deaux (1973) theorize that sex is a constraint over which stimulus persons have no control, and due to the effort they expended to overcome that constraint, they are perceived as more deserving of one-time, higher rewards than their male counterparts. This possibility does not seem to be the case when the behavior is viewed as less state dependent than trait dependent as, overall, men are perceived as more competent than women regardless of the gender of the task (Deaux & Emswiller, 1974). Reward allocation is different within an occupational setting. Stimulus persons are seen as engaging in behavior that is

more indicative of their trait personality characteristics. Locksley, Borgida, Brekke, and Hepburn (1980) found that participants who observed a female stimulus person behaving in an assertive manner (masculine) predicted that she would behave in an assertive manner again. As such, rewards in occupational settings are subject to different influences than rewards for accomplishing an out-of-role, one-time event. L'Hereaux-Barrett and Barnes-Farrell (1991) found that within an occupational setting, with the male's ability attributions accounted for, males received more rewards than females, which may suggest that men get more rewards than they deserve. In a study by Heilman and Guzzo (1978), participants promoted stimulus persons attributed with high ability and gave pay raises to stimulus persons attributed with high ability and effort. As males are perceived as succeeding due to their ability, they are more likely to receive promotions than females, whose successes in turn are attributed to effort. To combat attribution heuristics, individuating information given to participants, such as personal characteristics or the performance history of the stimulus person, was found to help gender of the stimulus person become less salient than when participants determined attributions on their own (Heilman & Guzzo, 1978; Kunda & Sherman-Williams, 1993; see also Locksley, et al., 1982).

Predictions for Future Performance

In a study by L'Hereaux-Barrett and Barnes-Farrell (1991), male managers' success was viewed as an indicator of continued success, the same was not found for successful females. Rosen and Jerdee (1974), found the same bias in predictions of future performance. Female stimulus persons were significantly less likely to receive recommendations for promotion, opportunities for development, and opportunities to become supervisors. When sex of the participant was taken into account, a same-sex bias was found as males assigned less responsibility for an accident to male stimulus persons, and females assigned less responsibility for an accident to female stimulus persons (Whitehead & Hall, 1984). In a study conducted by McGill (1993), found that when a stimulus person succeeded or failed, and participants were given the possible explanations that the stimulus person is different from typical men or women in the same position, participants compared men with other men when they succeeded and when

they failed. Women, on the other hand, were compared with other women only when they succeeded at a feminine task. When women failed at a masculine task, they were compared with successful men. As most managers are still male, the possibility for sex-discrimination with regard to predicting the success or failure of an employee in a gender non-traditional occupation remains.

Gender Attributions for Failure

Females, when they fail, are believed not to have had the capability to succeed in the first place (Etaugh & Brown, 1975; Feather & Simon, 1975; Kaufman & Shikiar, 1985). Males, when they fail, are believed to have had the capability to succeed had it not been for some external influence upon the situation (Feather & Simon, 1975; Kaufman & Shikiar, 1985; Taylor, Newman, Mangis, Swiander, Garibaldi, Ismael, Talmore, Tritak, & Gittes, 1993). Early research found that when women fail at a masculine task, their failure is attributed to lack of ability. When men fail at a feminine task, their failure is attributed to task difficulty (Feather & Simon, 1975). Kaufman and Shikiar (1985) found sex-linked differences in failure attributions when the research participant played the part of a supervisor. Female research participants attributed the failure of a female employee in a masculine job to task difficulty. Male participants attributed both success and failure of a female employee to task ease when the female succeeded and to task difficulty when she failed. Feather and Simon (1975) found that when females succeeded at a masculine task (medical school), their success was attributed to the ease of the task. When women failed at medical school, the attribution made was lack of ability. Males who succeeded at medical school were attributed with ability, and when males failed at medical school, the attribution was task difficulty. Etaugh and Brown (1975) found that expected outcomes, females succeeding on feminine tasks or failing at masculine tasks, produced stable attributions whereas unexpected outcomes, females succeeding at masculine tasks, led to unstable attributions. Although some of the genders of occupations have changed, predominantly masculine and feminine occupations should produce the same attributions for their employees' failures.

Discrepancies in the Literature

The research in gender differences in attributions and reward allocation yields mixed results (Cowan & Koziej, 1979; Feather & Simon, 1975; Galper & Luck, 1980; Taynor & Deaux, 1975). Closer scrutiny, however, reveals that these contradictions may be due to differences in research methodology. When women are rewarded for behaving in a masculine manner in a masculine situation, as Taynor and Deaux found, the methods of the studies consisted of scenarios depicting behavior which was a one-time occurrence and participants recommended women receive greater rewards than men for acting out-of-role. Studies in which the female receives fewer rewards for behaving in a masculine manner in a masculine situation are those in which the situation occurs in an occupational setting, with participants reading scenarios and making recommendations on questionnaires. The female stimulus person's behavior can be more readily viewed by the subject as indicative of her typical behavior and personality as the stimulus person chose to work in a masculine occupation in the first place. It may be hypothesized that the fewer rewards are actually punishment for succeeding in a masculine occupation. Feather and Simon (1975) found that a successful female stimulus person was regarded as being less feminine than an unsuccessful female stimulus person. Lack of femininity, or role-incongruent behavior, by a woman may be regarded as deviant behavior (Cowan & Koziej, 1979). In a study by Galper and Luck (1980), bad (deviant) females were rated as solely responsible for their own deviant behaviors and males were rated as acting under some external influence which caused them to behave in a deviant manner. Role-incongruent behaviors were rated as having more personal causal attributions only when participants and stimulus persons were of different sexes. As most managers are still men, and women performing in a role-incongruent manner could be seen by those managers as having personal causal attributions for their behavior, the consequences for females who fail at a masculine occupation should be harsher than for females who fail at a feminine occupation. Men, on the other hand, are awarded the attribution of situational circumstances when they experience failure (Etaugh & Brown, 1975; Feather & Simon, 1975; Kaufman & Shikiar, 1985; McGill, 1993; Taylor, et al., 1993). Because men are believed to be

more capable of succeeding in any occupation, the sex-stereotype should override any possibility of generalizing the success or failure of another man, regardless of the gender of his occupation.

The behaviors of women and men are judged differently in many situations. Genders of occupations and tasks and the manner in which they are performed all influence the attributions assigned to men and women.

Hypothesis

A three-way interaction between target sex and occupation gender is expected such that:

- a) Participants will recommend a more severe punishment for a woman failing at a masculine task than a woman failing at a feminine task especially when that failure has severe consequences. No differences in judgments of men's behavior by gender of task, or severity of outcome, is expected (Deaux & Emswiller, 1974).
- b) Raters will be less likely to hire a woman in a masculine task if they observe a previously failing woman in such a context compared to the likelihood of hiring a woman in a feminine occupation if a previous woman has failed especially if that failure results in severe consequences. Therefore, a three-way interaction (target gender x gender of occupation x severity of error) on the selection of future hires is hypothesized. Task gender should not affect judgments of hiring future men for jobs after the failure of a man in such an occupation as men are viewed as experiencing failure through no fault of their own (Feather & Simon, 1975; Kaufman & Shikiar, 1985; Taylor, et. al., 1993).

Method

Pretesting

Pretesting was conducted with 20 participants who were drawn from the same pool as the experimental group. Of these, seven were men and 13 were women. Most were white (70%), while a minority were African American (25%), or Hispanic (5%). Participants received, in this order, an informed consent form, a list of 16 occupations (including the occupations of nurse and pilot) on which they were instructed to estimate the percentage of men and women they believed worked in each occupation. They then received one of four scenarios used in the actual study. They were instructed to read the scenario, which asked them to assume the role of a Human Resources Executive, and on the following page, they were instructed to answer reading comprehension questions that referred to the preceding scenario such as, "What was the pilot's name?" and "Was the pilot male or female?" All materials from the pretesting are included in Appendix A.

Results of the pretesting showed that 100% of the participants correctly answered the reading comprehension questions, which indicated that the scenarios were written clearly enough for future participants to understand. Also, 100% of the pretest participants indicated that they believed that more than 70% of pilots are men, and that the majority of nurses are women, numbering more than 85%.

Participants

The experimental participants consisted of 160 undergraduate students enrolled in an introductory Psychology course at a large, Midwestern university. Of these, 57.5% were women and 42.5% were men. The age range was 18-56 years with the average age at 19.9 years. The racial breakdown is as follows, White (66.3%), African American (25%), Hispanic (3.1%), Native American (1.3%), Asian American (1.3%), and Other (3.1%). Only a third (33.8%) claimed to have worked as a manager or supervisor, and of those, 61% worked between 1-5 years, 37% worked between 5-10 years, and 2% had worked more than 10 years.

Procedure

Male and female participants received a description of either a male or a female stimulus person who failed at either a masculine or feminine occupation that resulted in an accident that was either moderate or severe. Male and female participants then received a description of three potential applicants for the same position. Participants were randomly assigned (within gender) to one of eight experimental conditions representing the (2) sex of target person x (2) occupation gender x (2) accident severity factorial design. Each participant was presented with a written scenario in which they were asked to assume the role of a Human Resources Executive for either an airline or a hospital. The participants read a description of an accident caused by the target person. The target was either a pilot or nurse, and the severity of the accident was either moderate or severe (someone died as a result). The participant completed the "Recommendations for Disciplinary Actions form regarding the severity of the disciplinary action that should be levied against the stimulus person and the rehabilitation that should be given to the stimulus person.

In the second half of the experiment, participants were asked to review three potential applicants for the position of nurse or pilot on the basis of three resume ratings forms that were comparable in qualifications such as number of flight hours and prior experience. The resume ratings forms consisted of two male applicants and one female applicant. Upon reviewing the resumes, participants were asked to rank order their hiring preferences among the three applicants. The packet was completed with a demographics questionnaire, and the debriefing statement. All questionnaires are included in Appendix B. All 8 scenarios are included in Appendix C.

Materials

The "Recommendations for Disciplinary Action" form consisted of 15 items describing various ways the stimulus person in the accident scenario should be treated. Examples of the items are, "Suspend pilot's commercial license (will not be able to fly for a period of up to 1-year)," and "Provide additional medicine administration training."

Each item was rated on a 7-point Likert-type scale with anchors ranging from 1 (strongly recommend against) to 7 (strongly recommend). These items were subject to a principle components analysis with varimax rotation to determine if reliable subscales could be created. A three-component solution was obtained which accounted for 43.03% of the total variance (the first component accounted for 19.09%, the second for 13.04%, and the third for 10.89%).

Items loading greater than .40 on the first component were “Terminate Employment,” “Mandatory leave of absence for 6 months without pay,” “Suspend nurse’s [pilot’s] license (will not be able to work for a period of up to 1 year),” “Recommend permanent loss of license (will never be able to work as a nurse [pilot] again.” Because these items all dealt with punishment, they were combined into a subscale labeled “Punish.”

Items loading on the second component were, “Provide additional medicine administration [simulator] training,” “Provide nurse [pilot] with a more experienced mentor,” and “Provide refresher course in chart reading [flying particular model of aircraft (turbo-prop)].” As these items dealt with providing the employee with an opportunity for improvement, they were combined to form a subscale labeled “Remediate.”

Items loading on the third component were “Written warning to be placed in employee’s permanent file” and “Probationary period during which all actions will be supervised by a senior nurse [pilot] for a period of 3 months.” These items relate to less severe punishment than the items on the first factor, and as such, they were labeled “Warn.”

In addition to rating the likelihood of recommending each of the 15 possible consequences for the target person’s error, participants listed and rank-ordered their top 3 choices. These three choices were labeled, “Recommendation #1,” “Recommendation #2,” and “Recommendation #3.”

Results

Descriptive

The means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations of the dependent variables are presented in Table 1. The means and standard deviations are broken down by sex of participant. Of the three subscales created from the original 15 items on the “Recommendation for Disciplinary Action” form, the reliability analysis in the Punish subscale resulted in $\alpha = .80$, Remediate resulted in $\alpha = .70$, and Warn resulted in $\alpha = .63$. A 2 (sex of subject) x 2 (sex of target) x 2 (gender of occupation) x 2 (severe/non-severe) between subjects Multiple Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) with Punish, Remediate, and Warning as dependent variables was conducted. The Wilkes Λ was not significant for any effects [$p > .05$, ns]. Therefore, an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for individual effects was not warranted. However, for exploratory purposes, the univariate effects were examined. All further findings, however, could be the result of a Type 1 Error and should be reviewed cautiously.

The remediate and warn factors were combined in order to observe any punish main effects. A 2 (severe, non-severe) x 2 (punish, other) ANOVA yielded a significant effect for punishment [$F(1, 160) = 5.04$, $p < .01$] indicating that participants were more likely to choose Punishment for a severe error than a non-severe error [$M_{\text{severe}} = 3.15$, $SD = 1.46$, $M_{\text{nonsevere}} = 2.66$, $SD = 1.26$]. Again, this finding is subject to a Type 1 Error, and was conducted for exploratory purposes only. Significant effects were also found for sex of subject (male or female) x occupation (pilot or nurse) on the Warn recommendation [$F(1, 160) = 4.36$, $p < .01$] (see Figure 1) indicating that female participants recommended warnings for nurses more than for pilots while male participants recommended warnings for pilots more than for nurses. The 3-way sex of participant x sex of target x severity of error (severe or non-severe) interaction on the Punish recommendation was also significant [$F(1, 160) = 5.24$, $p < .01$] (see Figure 2) which indicates that female participants are most likely to recommend Punishment when a male target makes a severe error and male participants are most likely to recommend Punishment when a female target makes

a severe error, yet each are more likely to recommend punishment for their own gender when the error is not severe. These findings partially support the hypothesis that women making a severe error would be judged more severely than men making a severe error. However, in the present study, this effect appeared to include a same-sex bias for male participants only. Male participants were more likely to choose punishment for female targets than for male targets in the severe condition [$M_{\text{malesevere}}=2.58$, $SD=1.19$, $M_{\text{femalesevere}}=3.55$, $SD=1.61$]. Female participants were slightly more likely to choose punishment when the error was severe, regardless of the sex of the target person [$M_{\text{malesevere}}=3.40$, $SD=1.49$, $M_{\text{malenon-severe}}=2.65$, $SD=1.28$, $M_{\text{femalesevere}}=3.19$, $SD=1.50$, $M_{\text{femalenon-severe}}=2.88$, $SD=1.53$].

The scores on the rank ordering of the top three choices on the “Recommendation for Disciplinary Action” form, show that participants were most likely to choose Remediation and/or Warn over Punish, choosing Punishment only 10% of the time. The recommendation rankings were analyzed by creating variables to determine the consequence items that were first, second and third. Three variables were created: choose punishment, choose remediation, and choose warning. Choose punishment was created by summing the number of items from the punishment scale that were chosen as first, second, or third. Choose remediation and choose warning were created in a similar manner. Thus, each of these new variables could range from 0 (no items in the set were chosen for any of the ranks) to 3 (all items in the set were chosen for each of the 3 ranks). Participants were most likely to recommend Warning, then Remediation, followed by Punishment as one of their top 3 choices [$M_{\text{warning}}=.93$, $SD=1.07$, $M_{\text{remediate}}=.89$, $SD=.81$, $M_{\text{punish}}=.12$, $SD=.39$]. A 2x2x2x2 MANOVA was conducted on these variables, and no main effects or interactions were significant.

Recommendations for Future Employment

The data from the recommendations for future employment did not support the second interaction (b) of the hypothesis. Participants chose another female pilot 33% of the time when the failing target person was a female pilot. As participants chose from two male and one female

applicant, this 33% represents no bias. An unexpected bias was found in the male nurse condition as 33% of participants chose another male nurse when the failing target person was a male nurse. With all conditions combined, 75% of participants chose to hire a male, and 25% of participants chose to hire a female. The condition most expected to show a significant effect was a female pilot who experienced a severe failure. A Chi-Square performed on that data was not significant [$X^2(1, 160) = 0, ns$].

Discussion

This study was an attempt to ascertain the importance of a person's gender on failure experienced in his or her occupation when working in a non-traditional field. It was hypothesized that women would receive harsher punishment ratings than their male counterparts when they caused a severe error at a masculine occupation. That error was also hypothesized to cause the female's gender to become salient and prevent future females from being hired to the same position. While the MANOVA results failed to support the hypotheses, there were some significant post-hoc findings. Severity of error was found to impact punishment ratings. Participants were more likely to choose punishment when the error was severe than when the error was not severe. The three-way interaction of target sex x occupation gender x severity of error was partially supported during post-hoc testing. Male participants were more likely to punish a female than a male in the severe condition. This is consistent with the defensive attribution hypothesis (Whitehead & Hall, 1984) which states that males and females identify with stimulus persons of the same sex, and therefore, rate stimulus persons of the same sex as less responsible than stimulus persons of the opposite sex for an error. Also significant was the finding that female participants recommended warning more often for nurses than for pilots, whereas male participants were more likely to recommend warnings for pilots than for nurses. This finding may be due to the perceived outcome that a warning will have in different occupations. When severity of error was taken into account, participants were more likely to punish a severe error than a non-severe error, regardless of occupation.

The second part of the hypothesis found no support. A same-sex bias was found for females in the nurse condition. With two male candidates and one female candidate to choose from, participants chose to hire a woman when the failing stimulus person was a man.

There may be several reasons for the mixed results. Perhaps sexual discrimination no longer exists, or perhaps failure does not lead to the potential for sexual discrimination. The participants were all undergraduates in an introductory psychology class, and the majority (66%) had never worked as a manager or a supervisor which leads to the possibility that they had no prior experience which might lead them to make decisions based on heuristics. The scenarios were short, and did not include a lot of information. It was hoped that this would elicit the use of stereotypes, but the scenarios may have been too transparent. In the data analysis, some of the cell sizes were small; In one condition, there were only 5 male participants compared to 15 female participants. There is always the possibility that participants did not report their true feelings (see author's note). The experimenter was female, and owing to the nature of the task, they may have been influenced by a demand characteristic. Four of the participants, in the space allocated for them to write in their own recommendation regarding Punishment or Remediation, suggested further investigation of the cause of the error. As such, participants may not have believed that the target person was actually at fault. In a study by Frieze, Whitley, Hanusa, and McHugh (1982) they found that participants were more likely to blame the task than the person when the target person failed. This gives rise to the possibility that participants did not hold the target person responsible for the failure, and as such, were reluctant to punish the target person.

The results of their recommendations for future employment show that participants may not have used the failure of either a male or female as an indicator of future performance of others of the same sex. Reid Hastie (1984) found that when there is an unexpected event, participants are more likely to remember the cause of that event. Participants may have expected the woman to fail as a pilot and the man to fail as a nurse. While it is unlikely that participants simply forgot what they had just read, the information may not have had any bearing on their future decisions simply because their expectations would be met when the stimulus person failed.

Swim, Borgida, Maruyama, and Myers (1989) and Top (1991) have found that people are not generally biased by gender in the evaluation of performance. Perhaps these findings indicate a lessening, or the non-existence of gender bias in attributions. Should there be no difference in the attributions assigned to males and females when they succeed and fail, there should be differences neither in the amount of punishment they receive nor in their rates of hiring, regardless of the profession. However, numerous studies (see Glick, Zion, & Nelson, 1988 and Glick, 1991) still show a bias towards choosing men for masculine occupations and women for feminine occupations.

Recommendations for Future Research

Kay Deaux and Brenda Major (1987) delineated three factors which they believe determine whether gender stereotypes will be triggered: the perceiver (participant), the target, and the situation. This study employed the last two factors, gender non-traditional men and women (target) and gender-oriented occupations (situation). Some perceivers are more gender-oriented than others and those who are more gender-oriented tend to divide the world into masculine and feminine terms (i.e., "That's women's work," "Mowing the lawn is the man's job."). Sandra Bem (1981) has assigned such people the label "gender schematics" and those who do not split the world into a gender dichotomy as "gender aschematics." Gender schematics tend to invest more attention to the gender of job applicants than do gender aschematics (Frable, 1989), and as such, it is recommended that future research employ a validated measure for testing participants' gender schemas to determine if gender is a salient feature for the participants.

Lastly, when the majority of sex discrimination research was conducted, the 1970s through the 1980s, sex discrimination was more overt. There is the possibility that participants of this research were conscious of maintaining an image of being critically thinking, non-sexist, non-discriminatory men and women, and as such, the older, more straightforward methods for determining sexual discrimination will no longer work. Newer research into sex discrimination has provided evidence of differing types of sexual discrimination and harassment. Perhaps it would be beneficial to utilize modern sexism scales, which may be more useful in detecting the

more subtle forms of sexism, to enable researchers to gain access to participants' true feelings and predictors of their behaviors.

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Author Note

After completion of the data analysis, two of the participants, a man and a woman, inquired about the results. I told them what was found, and the man replied that he was able to discern what I was looking for, and that he refused to give it to me. The woman agreed that she also had uncovered my hypotheses, yet she claimed to have given me what she thought I wanted. I think this may be evidence that the scenarios were too transparent.

I thank my mentor, Dr. Margaret Stockdale, for all her help, for all the red ink, and for allowing me the latitude to learn for myself without merely providing all the answers.

Table 1
Means, Standard Deviations, Intercorrelations, and Internal Consistency Estimates for the Primary Study Variables, broken down by gender

Variable	Women (n=92)		Men (n=68)		a	b	c
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
a. Punish	3.02	1.37	2.76	1.40	(.81)		
b. Remediate	5.76	1.10	5.65	1.03	-.13	(.70)	
c. Warn	5.88	1.13	5.63	1.31	-.10	.15	(.63)

Figure 1

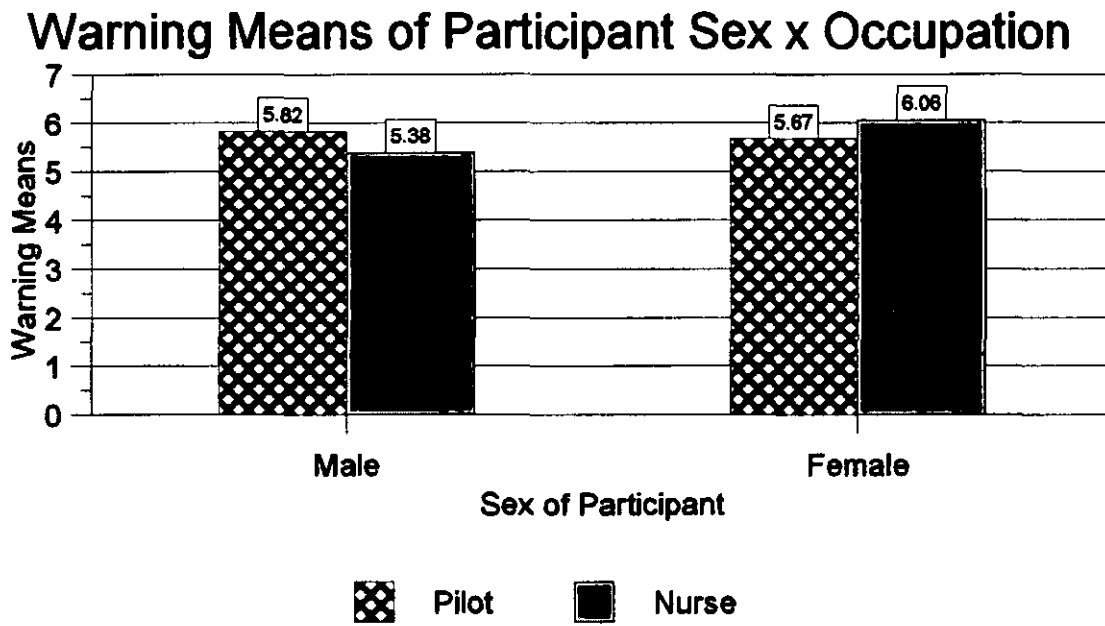
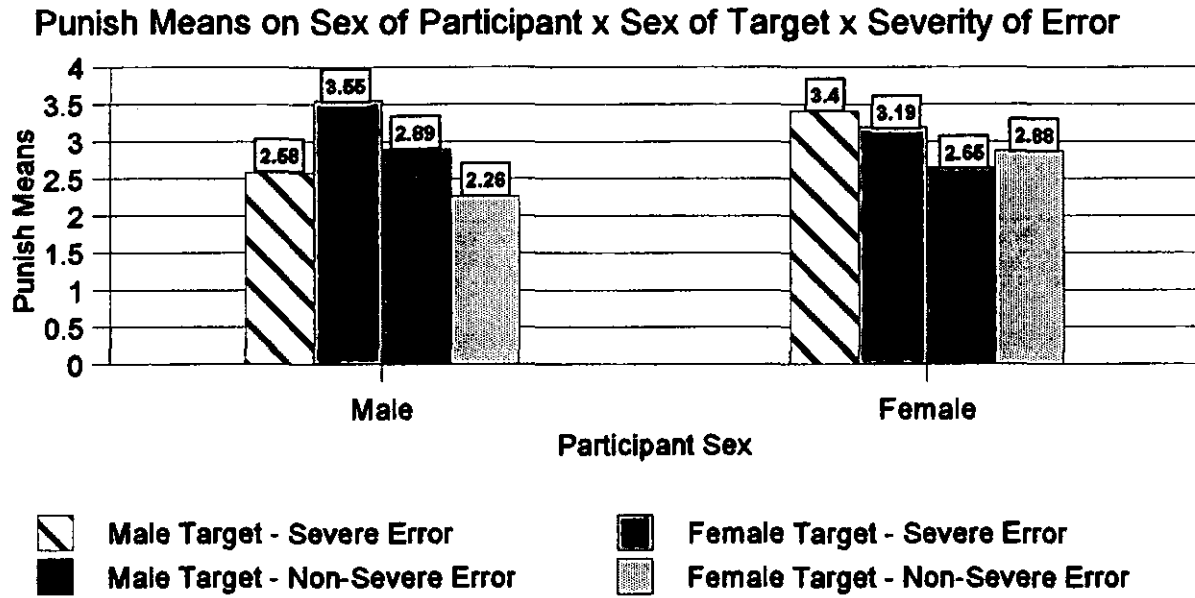


Figure 2



Appendix A

Occupations

Please estimate the **percent** of men and women in the U.S. whom you think work in the following positions.

Elementary School Teacher	___ Male	___ Female
Medical Doctor	___ Male	___ Female
Civil Engineer	___ Male	___ Female
Nurse	___ Male	___ Female
Physicist	___ Male	___ Female
Secretary	___ Male	___ Female
Biologist	___ Male	___ Female
Psychologist	___ Male	___ Female
Pilot	___ Male	___ Female
Sociologist	___ Male	___ Female
Foreman	___ Male	___ Female
Banker	___ Male	___ Female
Accountant	___ Male	___ Female
Movie Director	___ Male	___ Female
Homemaker	___ Male	___ Female
Data Entry Personnel	___ Male	___ Female

Clarity

Please read the following scenario:

You are a human resources executive for a medium-sized hospital. There has been an accident in which one of your nurses, RN Paul Stokes, has administered the incorrect amount of pain medication. The patient went into cardiac arrest, and the emergency team was unable to stabilize the patient. The patient was pronounced dead at 11:05 PM. Nurse Stokes claims that he administered the amount that the doctor told him to administer. Internal investigators have reviewed the patient's chart, and found the amount of the doctor's prescription to be considerably less than was actually given to the patient.

Nurse Stokes has two years experience as a post-operative nurse. Prior to the accident, he had been in good standing with the hospital. His medical and psychological profiles are both normal. The hospital is a medium-sized community hospital with 300 beds.

Unfortunately, this mistake has attracted national media attention. The actions of this nurse reflect back directly on the hospital.

Clarity

Please read the following scenario:

You are a human resources executive for a medium-sized hospital. There has been an accident in which one of your nurses, RN Pamela Stokes, has administered the incorrect amount of pain medication. The patient went into cardiac arrest, but the emergency team was able to stabilize the patient. Nurse Stokes claims that she administered the amount that the doctor told her to administer. Internal investigators have reviewed the patient's chart, and found the amount of the doctor's prescription to be considerably less than was actually given to the patient.

Nurse Stokes has two years experience as a post-operative nurse. Prior to the accident, she had been in good standing with the hospital. Her medical and psychological profiles are both normal. The hospital is a medium-sized community hospital with 300 beds.

Unfortunately, this mistake has attracted national media attention. The actions of this nurse reflect back directly on the hospital.

Reading Comprehension

What was the problem or accident? _____

What was administered to the patient by the nurse? _____

What was the nurse's name? _____

Was the nurse male or female? _____

Were there any emergency team members called to attempt resuscitation? _____

Was anyone injured or killed? _____

What was determined to be the cause of the accident? _____

What did the nurse claim to be the cause of the accident? _____

Clarity

Please read the following scenario:

You are a human resources executive for a major airline. There has been an accident in which one of your pilots, Captain Pamela Stokes, has crash-landed one of the company's small turbo-prop commuter planes. The aircraft was destroyed. The pilot survived with only minor injuries. The copilot, however, was killed. There were no passengers on board at the time of the crash. Captain Stokes claims instrument malfunction as the cause of the crash. Federal Aviation Administration and National Transportation Safety Board investigators have found no evidence of instrument malfunctions and, after listening to the cockpit black-box recording, they officially blame the crash on pilot error.

Captain Stokes has two years experience flying commercial turbo-prop airplanes. Prior to the accident, she had been in good standing with the company. Her medical and psychological profiles are both normal. The plane is a ten-year-old aircraft with normal maintenance records and had just passed a maintenance check one month before the accident.

Unfortunately, this crash has attracted national media attention. The actions of this pilot reflect back directly on the airline.

Clarity

Please read the following scenario:

You are a human resources executive for a major airline. There has been an accident in which one of your pilots, Captain Paul Stokes, has crash-landed one of the company's small turbo-prop commuter planes. The aircraft was destroyed. The pilot and copilot survived with only minor injuries. There were no passengers on board at the time of the crash. Captain Stokes claims instrument malfunction as the cause of the crash. Federal Aviation Administration and National Transportation Safety Board investigators have found no evidence of instrument malfunctions and, after listening to the cockpit black-box recording, they officially blame the crash on pilot error.

Captain Stokes has two years experience flying commercial turbo-prop airplanes. Prior to the accident, he had been in good standing with the company. His medical and psychological profiles are both normal. The plane is a ten-year-old aircraft with normal maintenance records and had just passed a maintenance check one month before the accident.

Unfortunately, this crash has attracted national media attention. The actions of this pilot reflect back directly on the airline.

Reading Comprehension

What was the problem or accident? _____

Was the aircraft destroyed? _____

What was the pilot's name? _____

Was the pilot male or female? _____

Were there any passengers on board at the time of the accident? _____

Was anyone injured or killed? _____

What was determined to be the cause of the accident? _____

What did the pilot claim to be the cause of the accident? _____

Appendix B

Recommendations for Disciplinary Action

Employee Name: Pamela Stokes

Employee Position: Pilot, Captain

Summary of incident: Turbo-prop commuter plane crash. FAA and NTSB officially blame pilot error. No injuries to civilians. Co-pilot killed in the crash.

Please rate your recommendations for action to be taken on a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 = Strongly recommend against, 4 = No opinion, and 7 = Strongly recommend:

1. Take no action

Strongly recommend against			No opinion			Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. Provide additional simulator training

Strongly recommend against			No opinion			Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. Provide pilot with a more experienced mentor

Strongly recommend against			No opinion			Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

4. Terminate employment

Strongly recommend against			No opinion			Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. Dock pay

Strongly recommend against			No opinion			Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

6. Demote position from Captain to Co-Captain

Strongly recommend against			No opinion			Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

7. Provide refresher course in flying particular model of aircraft (turbo-prop)

Strongly recommend against			No opinion			Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

8. Mandatory leave of absence for 6 months without pay

Strongly recommend against			No opinion			Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

9. Mandatory leave of absence for 6 months with pay

Strongly recommend against			No opinion			Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

10. Ground pilot (will remain an employee, but will not be allowed to fly)

Strongly recommend against			No opinion			Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

11. Suspend pilot's commercial license (will not be able to fly for a period of up to 1-year)

Strongly recommend against			No opinion			Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

12. Recommend permanent loss of pilot's license (will never be able to fly again)

Strongly recommend against			No opinion			Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

13. Verbal warning

Strongly recommend against			No opinion			Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

14. Written warning to be placed in employee's permanent file

Strongly recommend against			No opinion		Strongly Recommend	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

15. Probationary period during which all actions will be supervised by a senior pilot for a period of three months

Strongly recommend against			No opinion		Strongly Recommend	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

16. Other Recommendations: Please fill in any action not listed above that you would like to recommend on the following lines and circle your rating below

Strongly recommend against			No opinion		Strongly Recommend	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Of the preceding 16 alternatives, would you please number your top three recommendations in order of preference, 1 for your top recommendation, 2 for your second choice, and 3 for your third choice. If there is another recommendation you have that is not mentioned above, please number "Other" and fill in your recommendation in the space provided.

- | | | | |
|------|------|-------|-------|
| ___1 | ___5 | ___9 | ___13 |
| ___2 | ___6 | ___10 | ___14 |
| ___3 | ___7 | ___11 | ___15 |
| ___4 | ___8 | ___12 | ___16 |

Other _____

Recommendations for Disciplinary Action

Employee Name: Paul Stokes

Employee Position: Registered Nurse

Summary of incident: Excessive amount of prescription pain-killer administered. Patient experienced cardiac arrest. Patient died as a result. Internal investigation cites nurse error as cause of death.

Please rate your recommendations for action to be taken on a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 = Strongly recommend against, 4 = No opinion, and 7 = Strongly recommend:

1. Take no action

Strongly recommend against			No opinion		Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6 7

2. Provide additional medicine administration training

Strongly recommend against			No opinion		Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6 7

3. Provide nurse with a more experienced mentor

Strongly recommend against			No opinion		Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6 7

4. Terminate employment

Strongly recommend against			No opinion		Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6 7

5. Dock pay

Strongly recommend against			No opinion		Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6 7

6. Demote position to desk nurse

Strongly recommend against			No opinion		Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6 7

7. Provide refresher course in chart reading

Strongly recommend against			No opinion		Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6 7

8. Mandatory leave of absence for 6 months without pay

Strongly recommend against			No opinion		Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6 7

9. Mandatory leave of absence for 6 months with pay

Strongly recommend against			No opinion		Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6 7

10. Allow nurse to continue other duties without being allowed to administer medication

Strongly recommend against			No opinion		Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6 7

11. Suspend nurse's license (Will not be able to work as a nurse for a period of up to 1-year)

Strongly recommend against			No opinion		Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6 7

12. Recommend permanent loss of license (will never be able to work as a nurse again)

Strongly recommend against			No opinion		Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6 7

13. Verbal warning

Strongly recommend against			No opinion		Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6 7

14. Written warning to be placed in employee's permanent file

Strongly recommend against			No opinion			Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

15. Probationary period during which all actions will be supervised by a senior nurse for a period of three months

Strongly recommend against			No opinion			Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

16. Other Recommendations: Please fill in any action not listed above that you would like to recommend on the following lines and circle your rating below

Strongly recommend against			No opinion			Strongly Recommend
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Of the preceding 16 alternatives, would you please number your top three recommendations in order of preference, 1 for your top recommendation, 2 for your second choice, and 3 for your third choice. If there is another recommendation you have that is not mentioned above, please number "Other" and fill in your recommendation in the space provided.

- | | | | |
|------|------|-------|-------|
| ___1 | ___5 | ___9 | ___13 |
| ___2 | ___6 | ___10 | ___14 |
| ___3 | ___7 | ___11 | ___15 |
| ___4 | ___8 | ___12 | ___16 |

Other _____

Applicant Rating

Applicant Name: Christine Walters

Position applied for: Pilot, Captain

Aircraft requested: Turbo-prop

Recorded flight time: 3,000 hours (adequate)

Prior experience: In turbo-prop airplanes: Flight instructor - 1000 hours, Co-Pilot - 800 hours

Visual acuity test score: 300 (good) Average score: 250

Interviewer impressions:

Christine is a very personable interviewee. She seems to be capable of handling others in a cockpit situation. Her qualifications are adequate for the position.

Applicant Rating

Applicant Name: James Bell

Position applied for: Pilot, Captain

Aircraft requested: Turbo-prop

Recorded flight time: 3,200 hours (adequate)

Prior experience: In turbo-prop airplanes: Flight instructor - 500 hours, Co-Pilot - 1200 hours

Visual acuity test score: 310 (good) Average score: 250

Interviewer impressions:

James is a very personable interviewee. His time as both a co-pilot and flight instructor show his capability to communicate well with others. His qualifications are adequate for the position.

Applicant Rating

Applicant Name: Rick Odom

Position applied for: Pilot, Captain

Aircraft requested: Turbo-prop

Recorded flight time: 2,900 hours (adequate)

Prior experience: In turbo-prop airplanes: Flight instructor - 700 hours, Co-Pilot - 1300 hours

Visual acuity test score: 300 (good) Average score: 250

Interviewer impressions:

Rick is a very personable interviewee. He has extensive experience as a co-pilot. His qualifications are adequate for the position.

New Employee Recommendation

Please rank order the three previous candidates by entering their names in the spaces below. Please write in your first choice in space 1, second in space 2, and third in space 3. Thank you very much for your input in the hiring process.

New employee recommendation:

Choice #1 - _____

Choice #2 - _____

Choice #3 - _____

- College:
- Agriculture
 - Applied Sciences and Arts
 - Business and Administration
 - Education
 - Engineering
 - Liberal Arts
 - Mass Communication
 - Science
 - School of Social Work

Academic Major (list all): _____

- Are you employed? Yes.
 No.

- If yes, do you work on campus or off campus? I work on campus.
 I work off campus.

- Have you ever worked in a managerial capacity? Yes.
 No.

- How many years have you worked in a paying job? Less than one
 1-5
 5-10
 10+

If there is any other information about your work history that you feel is relevant, please feel free to write it at the bottom of this paper.

Appendix C

You are a human resources executive for a hospital. There has been an accident in which one of your nurses, RN Pamela Stokes, has administered the incorrect amount of pain medication. The patient went into cardiac arrest, but the emergency team was able to stabilize the patient. Nurse Stokes claims that she administered the amount that the doctor told her to administer. Internal investigators have reviewed the patient's chart, and found the amount of the doctor's prescription to be considerably less than was actually given to the patient.

Nurse Stokes has two years experience as a post-operative nurse. Prior to the accident, she has been in good standing with the hospital. Her medical and psychological profiles are both normal. The hospital is a medium-sized community hospital with 300 beds.

Unfortunately, this mistake has attracted national media attention. The actions of this nurse reflect back directly on the hospital. Your recommendation for disciplinary action, if any, is required. You will find a "Recommendation for Disciplinary Action" form attached to this memo. Please fill it out, and return it and the other materials to the packet.

In addition, there is an opening for a registered nurse in the same ward. Taking into consideration the media attention to this accident, your recommendation for employment is requested. Included in the packet you will find three standardized "Applicant Ratings" forms for the three finalists for the position. Please review these carefully, and make your recommendation for employment on the "New Employee Recommendation" form attached to the "Applicant Ratings" forms.

You are a human resources executive for a hospital. There has been an accident in which one of your nurses, RN Pamela Stokes, has administered the incorrect amount of pain medication. The patient went into cardiac arrest, and the emergency team was unable to stabilize the patient. The patient was pronounced dead at 11:05 PM. Nurse Stokes claims that she administered the amount that the doctor told her to administer. Internal investigators have reviewed the patient's chart, and found the amount of the doctor's prescription to be considerably less than was actually given to the patient.

Nurse Stokes has two years experiences as a post-operative nurse. Prior to the accident, she has been in good standing with the hospital. Her medical and psychological profiles are both normal. The hospital is a medium-sized community hospital with 300 beds.

Unfortunately, this mistake has attracted national media attention. The actions of this nurse reflect back directly on the hospital. Your recommendation for disciplinary action, if any, is required. You will find a "Recommendation for Disciplinary Action" form attached to this memo. Please fill it out, and return it and the other materials to the packet.

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You are a human resources executive for a major airline. There has been an accident in which one of your pilots, Captain Pamela Stokes, has crash-landed one of the company's small turbo-prop commuter planes. The aircraft was destroyed. The pilot and co-pilot survived with only minor injuries. No other people were harmed. There were no passengers on board at the time of the crash. Captain Stokes claims instrument malfunction as the cause of the crash. Federal Aviation Administration and National Transportation Safety Board investigators have found no evidence of instrument malfunctions and, after listening to the cockpit black-box recording, they officially blame the crash on pilot error.

Captain Stokes has two years experience flying commercial turbo-prop airplanes. Prior to the accident Captain Stokes has been in good standing with the company. Her medical and psychological profiles are both normal. The plane is a ten-year-old aircraft with normal maintenance records and had just passed a maintenance check one month before the accident.

Unfortunately, this crash has attracted national media attention. The actions of this pilot reflect back directly on the airline. Your recommendation for disciplinary action, if any, is required. You will find a "Recommendation for Disciplinary Action" form attached to this memo. Please fill it out, and return it and the other materials to the packet.

In addition, there is an opening for a pilot to fly the airline's turbo-prop commuter planes. Taking into consideration the media attention to this accident, your recommendation for employment is requested. Included in the packet you will find three standardized "Applicant Ratings" forms for the three finalists for the position. Please review these carefully, and make your recommendation for employment on the "New Employee Recommendation" form attached to the "Applicant Ratings" forms.

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Captain Stokes has two years experience flying commercial turbo-prop airplanes. Prior to the accident Captain Stokes has been in good standing with the company. Her medical and psychological profiles are both normal. The plane is a ten-year-old aircraft with normal maintenance records and had just passed a maintenance check one month before the accident.

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You are a human resources executive for a hospital. There has been an accident in which one of your nurses, RN Paul Stokes, has administered the incorrect amount of pain medication. The patient went into cardiac arrest, but the emergency team was able to stabilize the patient. Nurse Stokes claims that he administered the amount that the doctor told him to administer. Internal investigators have reviewed the patient's chart, and found the amount of the doctor's prescription to be considerably less than was actually given to the patient.

Nurse Stokes has two years experience as a post-operative nurse. Prior to the accident, he has been in good standing with the hospital. His medical and psychological profiles are both normal. The hospital is a medium-sized community hospital with 300 beds.

Unfortunately, this mistake has attracted national media attention. The actions of this nurse reflect back directly on the hospital. Your recommendation for disciplinary action, if any, is required. You will find a "Recommendation for Disciplinary Action" form attached to this memo. Please fill it out, and return it and the other materials to the packet.

In addition, there is an opening for a registered nurse in the same ward. Taking into consideration the media attention to this accident, your recommendation for employment is requested. Included in the packet you will find three standardized "Applicant Ratings" forms for the three finalists for the position. Please review these carefully, and make your recommendation for employment on the "New Employee Recommendation" form attached to the "Applicant Ratings" forms.

You are a human resources executive for a hospital. There has been an accident in which one of your nurses, RN Paul Stokes, has administered the incorrect amount of pain medication. The patient went into cardiac arrest, and the emergency team was unable to stabilize the patient. The patient was pronounced dead at 11:05 P.M. Nurse Stokes claims that he administered the amount that the doctor told him to administer. Internal investigators have reviewed the patient's chart, and found the amount of the doctor's prescription to be considerably less than was actually given to the patient.

Nurse Stokes has two years experience as a post-operative nurse. Prior to the accident, he has been in good standing with the hospital. His medical and psychological profiles are both normal. The hospital is a medium-sized community hospital with 300 beds.

Unfortunately, this mistake has attracted national media attention. The actions of this nurse reflect back directly on the hospital. Your recommendation for disciplinary action, if any, is required. You will find a "Recommendation for Disciplinary Action" form attached to this memo. Please fill it out, and return it and the other materials to the packet.

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Unfortunately, this crash has attracted national media attention. The actions of this pilot reflect back directly on the airline. Your recommendation for disciplinary action, if any, is required. You will find a "Recommendation for Disciplinary Action" form attached to this memo. Please fill it out, and return it and the other materials to the packet.

In addition, there is an opening for a pilot to fly the airline's turbo-prop commuter planes. Taking into consideration the media attention to this accident, your recommendation for employment is requested. Included in the packet you will find three standardized "Applicant Ratings" forms for the three finalists for the position. Please review these carefully, and make your recommendation for employment on the "New Employee Recommendation" form attached to the "Applicant Ratings" forms.

You are a human resources executive for a major airline. There has been an accident in which one of your pilots, Captain Paul Stokes, has crash-landed one of the company's small turbo-prop commuter planes. The aircraft was destroyed. The pilot survived with only minor injuries. The co-pilot, however, was killed. There were no passengers on board at the time of the crash. Captain Stokes claims instrument malfunction as the cause of the crash. Federal Aviation Administration and National Transportation Safety Board investigators have found no evidence of instrument malfunctions and, after hearing the cockpit black-box recording, they officially blame the crash on pilot error.

Captain Stokes has two years experience flying commercial turbo-prop airplanes. Prior to the accident Captain Stokes has been in good standing with the company. His medical and psychological profiles are both normal. The plane is a ten-year-old aircraft with normal maintenance records and had just passed a maintenance check one month before the accident.

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