

Excerpts from
“It’s A Man’s World (or is it?)
What you need to know before you decide

Chapter 1

So, ya wanna work like a man, do ya?

Styles of Working

Okay, let’s get started. Men and women work in different ways – knowing how we differ can make working together much less stressful. In general, men work in bursts, and then take breaks in between, while – again, in general – women tend to work more steadily and methodically. This makes sense when you consider that most men have a physical strength that few women have: men are able to work in short, tough bursts without hurting themselves. We women, on the other hand, need to pace ourselves so that we don’t get hurt.

Keep in mind that hurting yourself to prove your ability to someone is just plain foolish. And, believe me, you’ll be presented with the opportunity to prove yourself many times. Satisfying your ego is a luxury you may not be able to afford. Some people think it’s funny to taunt and challenge others to prove their abilities. These are people who need an education in the real world – you don’t need to rise to their taunts.

Some men don’t think that women should be working in trades. I think if you go out there and prove that you are interested and can do the work, then more power to you! I know from experience I have out-worked some of these men. If they see what kind of good worker you are, they will give you a chance.

Sophie
Journeyman Scaffolder

Chapter 7

Personal Wellness

What about me?

One of the hardest parts of going into non-traditional work was discovering how alone and lonely I often felt. Initially, it seemed as if I was the only one who was different and didn't fit in. I didn't get the jokes or the lingo and I didn't feel a part of the group. It was a painful and confusing time that did pass but it seemed unavoidable and to last forever.

Most challenging was working with all men and no other women. Going to work that first day and not knowing what to expect: where would I be working and who would I be working with?

Sophie
Journeyman Scaffolder

The other police officers in the detachment were supportive but without a communication outlet it was very challenging to be learning everything needed to police and deal with the negativity surrounding my chosen profession.

Wendy
Police Officer

Finding good people to support you through this time is very important and crucial to whether you will remain in this occupation. The fact is, if you are the minority then you are different from the rest – that is neither good nor bad, it just is. Accepting this and then choosing how to deal with it are the only parts that any of us have control over. Being angry, defensive and overly sensitive will only drain your energy and eventually make you bitter.

The most challenging thing is to be able to communicate with her about the job and what needs to be done without offense being taken (by her).

Rob
Journeyman Carpenter