WOMEN & WORDS

THE PROBLEM WITH "TOO"...

We are no strangers to hearing you're "too much" of a personality trait. Sometimes these comments are not inherently malicious, but they expose the underlying gender biases that still exist in the workplace. The different words used to describe leaders of different genders unveil the stark contrast between objective and subjective perception of character of each. Research has shown that women are more likely to receive vague feedback unrelated to work performance or objectives, which is a disadvantage when competing for opportunities and promotions. According to the Harvard Business Review, the following are common words to describe performance in managerial reviews of men and women, respectivley.

- "Leader" vs "Bossy"

- "Open minded" vs "Indecisive"

- "Compassionate" vs "Emotional"

- "Analytical" vs "Nit-picky"

- "Confident" vs "Vain"

- "Assertive" vs "Aggressive"

As we all take strides to eliminate gender bias from the workplace, it's important to place importance on the language we choose.

For society to reach this utopian goal of equality we must start with becoming aware of our own biases, being open to ideas from all genders and pledging to break down assessments of character based on stereotypes. As women, challenge yourself to honor yourself enough to never apologize for being authentically you. And remember, you're never "too much" of anything.

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