



He can't imagine being in your shoes. At least, not those.

The Reason Dudes at Work Don't Get You

A leading communications expert found men and women have very different codes of behavior on the job. So that's why male coworkers often view us as a little crazy....

BY ANNA DAVIES

▶ Aside from dealing with a crush on that dude from digital, you may not think gender differences matter at work. After all, women are thriving in all sorts of professions, so what do you care if you don't act like one of the guys? But the fact is, you still have to work with (and often for) men, and you need to feel comfortable doing so. If guys are misinterpreting your words and actions, it's only going to create frustrating hurdles.

So we talked to Shaunti Feldhahn, author of *The Male Factor: The Unwritten Rules, Misperceptions, and Secret Beliefs of Men in the Workplace*, who has a culmination of findings through researching her book. Here, she explains how men respond to common work situations, because knowing what's going on in their heads can only help you in the end.

1 While passionately defending an idea of yours during a meeting, you raise your voice.

He thinks: *Why is she so emotional?*

Any displays of excitement (or disappointment, for that matter) can confuse male coworkers. Since they have difficulty processing feelings and logic at the same time, they don't get that we're able to show both.

2 You are figuring out the next steps in a project and ask your teammate if he made a follow-up phone call...in front of coworkers.

He thinks: *She's calling me out and throwing me under the damn bus!*

Guys' egos are so tightly entangled with their work performance, they'll freak if they hear anything that even remotely sounds like a challenge.

3 You stop your manager as he's walking down the hall to ask him a quick premeeting question.

He thinks: *I'm being ambushed.*

Your intention is to be considerate by not wasting his time with a meeting or clogging his in-box, but you're inadvertently pushing him into full-on panic mode since most dudes need time to process questions and requests.

4 You remind your boss you'll be late tomorrow—because you have an a.m. dermatologist exam.

He thinks: *She needs to better handle her personal and professional lives.*

Remember back in kindergarten how you would get weirded out when you saw a teacher outside the classroom because you just assumed she lived at school? The same effect is in play when you bring up out-of-office topics to guys.

5 You brief a colleague on a meeting by telling him who was there, what they said...

He thinks: *Get to the point already!*

Anything but the end result is considered idle chitchat to men. ■

ALEXA MILLER: Fashion editor: Charles Manning; Makeup: Josie Miller for Cielo Blue Pro; Manicure: Alexis Garcia for Cielo Blue Pro; Prop stylist: Tammy Lopez with Ford Artists Miami; (On her) sweater: Diane von Furstenberg; skirt: J'AN R. N.; shoes: CH Carolina Herrera. (On him) shirt: Marc Jacobs; pants: D&G; belt: D&G; shoes: Z Zegna.