

Dilemma:

“No one takes me seriously”

Each group has a host.

This dilemma card is for the host and contains:

- A host guide
- A dilemma
- Fact boxes
- A question guide for dialogue one and dialogue two

Host guide As a host, your role is to facilitate a good, constructive dialogue where everyone gets to speak. Your role is not to participate by sharing your own perspective, but you are welcome to put your perspective into play by phrasing it as a question (“What if they ...?”).

Try to be curious (“Why do you think that?”) and investigative (“What if they react differently than you assume?”).

Aim to make it safe for participants to say or share something vulnerable by making it clear that different perspectives are welcome and that everyone should be respectful.

The dialogue is divided into two parts.

The first part is about giving advice to the person who posed the dilemma, and the second part is about the theme of the dilemma from the perspective of the panellists and their experiences at DTU.

On pages 3 and 4, you will find questions and data, which you can use to qualify the dialogue.

After reading this guide and skimming the question guide, please read out the dilemma to the panel. Give them a moment to reflect on the dilemma. Then initiate dialogue one.

Dilemma:

Sandra doesn't know what to do and would like the panel's help.

She works as a researcher and is good at her job. However, in the work environment, she feels like being a woman is a disadvantage. She no longer knows if she wants to stay in her job, not because of one episode but rather many small ones - although she is passionate about her research.

As the episodes don't seem like a big deal individually, and because it isn't about harassment or just one specific colleague, she finds it difficult to do something about it. She has given us a few examples:

A male colleague interrupts her during meetings for the tenth time that month.

Or someone expresses surprise at the fact that she actually knows what she is doing in her specific research area (which she dedicates about 50 per cent of her research time to).

Or collaborations centred around her specialty, where male colleagues nevertheless overrule her, even though she is usually just as capable and sometimes more capable than them.

Or when she is in a meeting and replies to a male colleague's question but is completely ignored while he and another male colleague talk for 10 minutes and eventually agree on the exact solution she suggested.

Sandra asks what she should do. She doesn't actually want to throw in the towel. But how can she create the change she desperately wants without facing too many consequences?

1

What advice does the panel give?

Dialogue one:

- [Start by hearing each panellist's thoughts on the dilemma so everyone gets the chance to speak from the start]
- "What could the underlying cause(s) for the dilemma be?"
- "What do you think of the options stated by the person who posed the dilemma?"
- "What could be the consequences if Sandra stays but doesn't do anything?"
- [Feel free to use the data from the boxes to boost the discussion]
- [Other investigative questions]
- "We have to come up with an answer, but you don't all have to agree. What does each of you think the person who posed the dilemma should do?"

Danish women are 27 per cent less likely to thrive in their workplace than men. Women generally have lower job satisfaction, and about 20 percent more women than men report actual dissatisfaction. (Poll by Zoios, 2023)

"When we don't get recognition for what we've done, it affects both our motivation and the psychological working environment in general. It breaks the trust between colleagues if someone takes credit for other people's work. If we don't trust each other, it destroys the relationships and leads to poor collaboration," says Head of Section and Psychological Working Environment Researcher Signe Pihl-Thingvad.

2 Dialogue two:

What do you do, and what could you do?

This part of the dialogue focuses on the panellists' own experiences at DTU.

Start dialogue two by telling the panel that the focal point is still the theme of the dilemma, but now they should look at the conditions in their own unit as well as considering other solutions.

Please note that dialogue two may be a bit more sensitive. Aim to create a safe and respectful space for everyone. The goal is still not to agree on everything, but to learn more about each other's perspectives.

- "Do you recognize the dilemma or parts of it, either on a personal level or through observation?"
- "What do you do in your unit to avoid a culture where employees don't feel that they're taken seriously?"
- "Is there a part of the advice you gave that you practise in your unit? If yes, what? If no, would that be possible?"
- "What else could you do? At individual, group, and organizational level?"
- [Other investigative questions]
- "What will each of you take with you to your unit, either as a point of attention or as possible solutions related to the theme of the dilemma?"