

## Crucial Learning Gender Inequality Study 2023

### Results Summary

Prepared by Method Research -- November 2023

#### Methodology

Crucial Learning conducted this research using an online survey distributed among their database of professionals. A total of  $n=2,565$  completed responses were obtained from across the United States between October 17 and October 30, 2023.

#### Sample Profile

**Gender:**

Man - 25%

Women - 71%

Prefer not to answer - 3%

Non-binary - <1%

**Role:**

CEO - 2%

VP / Exec / President - 8%

Director - 16%

Manager - 32%

Individual contributor - 36%

None of the above - 7%

#### Key Findings

- Whether man or woman, aggression without acknowledgement leads to social backlash.
  - In the study 7 years ago, aggression hurt the perceptions of Sharon disproportionately than for Trent. However in this study, we did not see that same effect, perhaps suggesting improvement in gender inequality and bias.
    - Women penalized both Sharon and Trent overall more for aggression than the men we surveyed across the measures of status, competency and salary.

## Detailed Results

### Measures:

Survey items were asked on a scale of 1 to 9 and combined into scales to assess perceived status and competence

1. Status – Averaged the following four questions.

- How much status does Sharon deserve in her job? (or Trent in his job?)
- How much power does Sharon deserve in her job? (or Trent in his job?)
- How much independence does Sharon deserve in her job? (or Trent in his job?)
- Would you like to work for Sharon? (or Trent?)

The status scale was reliable. Cronbach's alpha = .93

2. Competence – Averaged the following five contrast statements.

- Ignorant/Knowledgeable
- Inept/Capable
- Incompetent/Competent
- Ineffective Manager/Effective Manager
- Poor Leadership Skills/Good Leadership Skills

The competence scale was reliable. Cronbach's alpha = .92

3. Salary – Salary data was collected using a single question.

- What salary do you feel Sharon/Trent deserves? \$50,000 - \$170,000 is the range for their position

4. Overall measure - Averaged the following questions

- Cold to Warm
- Selfish to Selfless
- Abrasive to Diplomatic
- Impulsive to Self-Controlled
- Ignorant to Knowledgeable

- Inept to Capable
- Incompetent to Competent
- Ineffective Manager to Effective Manager
- Poor Leadership Skills to Good Leadership Skills
- How much status does Sharon/Trent deserve in his/her job?
- How much power does Sharon/Trent deserve in his/her job?
- How much independence does Sharon/Trent deserve in his/her job?
- Would you like to work for Sharon/Trent?

**Status, competency and worth perceptions by scenario:**

Aggression has a significant impact on perceptions of status, competency and salary compared to the neutral baseline in all instances, regardless of actor gender and the presence or absence of primes.

While the primes were able to mitigate *directionally* some of the impact of aggression for the female actor Sharon, the effect was negligible for Trent. For both actors, the differences did not rise to the level of being statistically significant.

Dependent Variable	Status		Competency		Salary	
	Trent	Sharon	Trent	Sharon	Trent	Sharon
<b>Neutral</b>	5.1 (1.96)	5.5 (2.0)	5.2 (1.77)	5.7 (1.84)	\$102,355 (\$32,765)	\$109,743 (\$36,299)
<b>Aggressive</b>	4.1 (1.99)	4.7 (1.88)	4.4 (1.70)	5.0 (1.74)	\$94,623 (\$34,134)	\$103,284 (\$36,035)
<b>Value prime</b>	4.1 (1.91)	4.8 (2.02)	4.5 (1.65)	5.2 (1.88)	\$92,038 (\$31,477)	\$102,901 (\$34,385)

<b>Gender neutral leader prime</b>	4.1 (1.89)	4.8 (1.96)	4.4 (1.68)	5.1 (1.71)	\$93,733 (\$32,076)	\$105,421 (\$33,770)
<b>Gendered leader prime</b>	4.2 (1.89)	5.1 (2.17)	4.4 (1.72)	5.4 (1.96)	\$92,627 (\$29,519)	\$108,679 (\$36,495)

- Note: First number is the mean value on a 9 pt scale. The second number is the standard deviation.

In considering why we would see a statistically significant impact from the frames used in the prior study, but not with the primes in the current study, we have a few hypotheses:

1. The frames were spoken directly by the actors as part of the video scenario, while the primes were a separate written exercise independent from the videos.
2. The frames were a behavior undertaken directly by the actor, implying a level of self-awareness and accountability for the aggression. The primes on the other hand are a mental exercise required of the observer requiring some level of giving the benefit of the doubt to the aggressor without any accountability or ownership from the actor.

**Impact of aggression on perceptions of status, competency and worth:**

Aggression from either actor hurts their perceived status, competency, and salary. In this study, the aggression appears to hurt the male actor Trent more than Sharon.

The presence of a prime is able to make more of a difference in the perceptions of Sharon than for Trent, in particular the gendered leader prime statement. On worth (salary) in particular, the gendered leader prime helped Sharon regain nearly all of her lost perception due to aggression.

Though not statistically significant, this study indicates that organizational value primes may help reduce social backlash and emotion inequality effects, particularly for women.

Percentage Drop in Perception from NEUTRAL Baseline	Status		Competency		Salary	
	Trent	Sharon	Trent	Sharon	Trent	Sharon
Neutral	-	-	-	-	-	-
Aggressive	-20%	-15%	-15%	-12%	-8%	-6%
Value prime	-20%	-13%	-13%	-9%	-10%	-6%
Leader prime	-20%	-13%	-15%	-11%	-8%	-4%
Gendered leader prime	-18%	-7%	-15%	-5%	-10%	-1%

Change in Perception from AGGRESSIVE Baseline	Status		Competency		Salary	
	Trent	Sharon	Trent	Sharon	Trent	Sharon
Aggressive	-	-	-	-	-	-
Value prime	-2%	4%	2%	4%	-3%	0%
Leader prime	-2%	11%	-1%	2%	-1%	2%
Gendered leader prime	1%	9%	0%	8%	-2%	5%

**Impact of aggression on individual measures:**

The variables with the most contrast across conditions were related to control – the average ratings on both impulsive to self-controlled and out of control to in control had a variation of about 2.5 points. While the primes explored in this study did not address control specifically, this could be a future avenue of exploration.

Across both neutral and aggressive videos, and for both Sharon and Trent, the contrasts consistently closest to the negative side of the comparison were cold, selfish, abrasive and harsh.

	Neutral		Aggressive, no prime		Aggressive, value prime		Aggressive, gender-neutral leader prime		Aggressive, gendered leader prime	
	Sharon	Trent	Sharon	Trent	Sharon	Trent	Sharon	Trent	Sharon	Trent
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
1 Cold --- 9 Warm	3.8	3.76	3.1	3.05	3.17	3.1	3.09	2.9	3.24	3
1 Selfish --- 9 Selfless	4.39	4.35	3.87	3.49	3.89	3.61	3.87	3.59	4.14	3.65
1 Abrasive --- 9 Diplomatic	3.79	3.61	2.61	2.46	2.71	2.47	2.76	2.32	3.06	2.48
1 Impulsive --- 9 Self-Controlled	6.03	5.43	4.43	3.54	4.58	3.57	4.24	3.55	5.03	3.56
1 Ignorant --- 9 Knowledgeable	6.1	5.68	5.59	4.9	5.62	5.21	5.51	4.84	5.92	4.96
1 Inept --- 9 Capable	6.37	5.69	5.85	5.11	5.99	5.14	5.93	5.08	6.13	5.06
1 Incompetent --- 9 Competent	6.41	5.9	5.94	5.21	6.09	5.21	5.93	5.12	6.21	5.12
1 Ineffective Manager --- 9 Effective	5.17	4.63	3.97	3.55	4.35	3.63	4.22	3.58	4.64	3.53
1 Poor Leadership Skills --- 9 Good	4.61	4.32	3.57	3.18	3.81	3.28	3.82	3.16	4.15	3.22
1 Out of Control --- 9 In Control	6.22	5.74	4.71	3.8	4.97	3.74	4.83	3.8	5.25	3.79
How much status does XXX deserve in their job? 1 none 9 a great deal	5.83	5.32	5.02	4.38	5.14	4.42	5.19	4.34	5.52	4.57
How much power does XXX deserve in their job? 1 none 9 a great deal	5.67	5.22	4.86	4.29	4.97	4.22	4.98	4.17	5.35	4.38
How much independence does XXX deserve in their job? 1 none 9 great deal	5.8	5.16	5.04	4.39	5.01	4.18	5.17	4.34	5.51	4.3
Would you like to work for XXX? 1 not at all 9 very much so	4.89	4.6	3.67	3.44	3.97	3.38	3.96	3.36	4.21	3.42
What salary do you feel XXX deserves? \$50,000 - \$170,000 is position range	\$109,743	\$102,355	\$103,284	\$94,623	\$102,901	\$92,038	\$105,421	\$93,733	\$108,679	\$92,627
HARSH - XXX is withholding their resources because they're a harsh person. 1 disagree 9 agree	3	3.09	3.17	3.46	3.1	3.48	3.04	3.23	2.99	3.4
PERSONALITY - XXX asserted themselves because of their personality. 1 disagree 9 agree	4.79	4.58	4.91	5.22	5.11	5.15	5	5.31	4.85	5.55

SITUATION - The situation XXX found themselves in with team members caused them to act the way they did. 1 disagree 9 agree	5.37	5.38	4.74	4.92	5.1	4.7	4.79	4.58	5.15	4.6
TEAM BEHAVIOR - The team's behavior left XXX no choice but to penalize them. 1 disagree 9 agree	2.85	3	2.7	2.7	3.08	2.65	3.13	2.51	3	2.71
<b>Overall</b>	5.3	4.9	4.42	3.92	4.56	3.96	4.51	3.87	4.85	3.94
<b>Status</b>	5.55	5.07	4.65	4.12	4.77	4.05	4.82	4.05	5.15	4.16
<b>Competency</b>	5.73	5.24	4.99	4.39	5.17	4.49	5.08	4.36	5.41	4.38

**Impact of respondent gender on perceptions:**

Women in our respondent pool penalized both Sharon and Trent overall more for aggression than the men we surveyed on measures of status, competency and salary.

The primes mitigated this impact differently based on the gender of the respondent. Most notably, men who received the gendered leader prime before an aggressive video rated Sharon very similarly to men who saw a neutral video of Sharon. Women responding to the same video with the same gendered leader prime rated Sharon about a half point lower than women who saw a neutral video of Sharon. So the gendered leader prime made more of an impact on men’s ratings of Sharon than on women’s.

The value and gender neutral primes didn’t have a positive impact for men rating Sharon or Trent compared to the same video without a prime. For women rating Trent, the responses to the value and gender neutral primes were practically unchanged compared to the same video without a prime; for women rating Sharon there’s a minimal positive impact, but this is very small and not statistically significant.

	Neutral			
	Sharon		Trent	
	Man	Woman	Man	Woman
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Overall	5.00	5.41	4.95	4.87
Status	5.30	5.66	5.16	5.02
Competency	5.36	5.87	5.36	5.20
Salary	\$103,803	\$112,228	\$104,658	\$101,462

	Aggressive, no prime	
	Sharon	Trent



	Man	Woman	Man	Woman
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Overall	4.57	4.41	4.10	3.81
Status	4.76	4.65	4.46	3.96
Competency	5.06	4.99	4.54	4.29
Salary	\$105,167	\$103,333	\$101,333	\$91,942

	<b>Aggressive, value prime</b>			
	Sharon		Trent	
	Man	Woman	Man	Woman
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Overall	4.25	4.66	3.95	3.88
Status	4.46	4.86	3.92	4.01
Competency	4.88	5.28	4.66	4.37
Salary	\$101,127	\$103,649	\$92,133	\$91,250

	<b>Aggressive, gender-neutral leader prime</b>			
	Sharon		Trent	
	Man	Woman	Man	Woman
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Overall	4.32	4.63	3.94	3.83
Status	4.65	4.93	4.09	4.01
Competency	4.86	5.22	4.48	4.29

Salary	\$98,710	\$107,832	\$95,660	\$92,547
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	Aggressive, gendered leader prime			
	Sharon		Trent	
	Man	Woman	Man	Woman
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Overall	4.98	4.85	3.88	3.92
Status	5.20	5.20	4.05	4.12
Competency	5.67	5.36	4.37	4.36
Salary	\$103,519	\$111,400	\$94,630	\$91,345

### Additional Analysis

#### Perceived control:

Returning to control, as found in the prior study, the impact of people's perceptions of the speaker's control were significant. We combined the out of control/in control and impulsive to self-controlled scales into a single measure. This measure was significantly correlated with measures of salary, competency, status, whether someone wanted to work for Sharon or Trent, and the overall measure.

The correlations for salary and whether someone wanted to work for Sharon or Trent were weak, with  $r^2$  values of .27 and .38, respectively. Using these relationships, we would expect an \$8,261 increase in deserved salary for every increased perceived point of control and .71 point increase in whether someone wants to work for Sharon or Trent over the same interval.

We found moderate correlations for status ( $r^2=.47$ ) and competency ( $r^2=.53$ ). We would expect a .65 point increase in status for every increased point of control and a .62 point increase in competency for each point on the control measure.

Finally, the overall measure had a strong correlation ( $r^2=.63$ ) with the control measure. We would expect a .63 point increase in the overall perception measure for each point increase of control.

**Adjectives Analysis:**

*Question:* What are three adjectives you would use to describe Sharon/Trent?

Trent is described negatively more frequently than Sharon. Interestingly, the gender of the respondent/observer doesn't seem to have an impact, except perhaps that women are least likely to describe Trent in positive terms.

	Total	Trent	Sharon	Trent		Sharon	
				Man respondent	Woman respondent	Man respondent	Woman respondent
<b>Negative</b>	55%	60%	50%	61%	60%	51%	49%
<b>Neutral</b>	24%	21%	27%	18%	22%	27%	27%
<b>Positive</b>	21%	19%	23%	22%	18%	22%	24%

In all aggressive scenarios, respondents described Trent using more negative adjectives than Sharon. However the baseline (neutral scenario) sees a similar percentage difference, indicating that this is a more general bias against Trent than specifically tied to his displays of aggression.

	Negative	Neutral	Positive
Trent neutral	49%	27%	24%
Sharon neutral	41%	34%	25%
Trent aggressive	65%	19%	15%
Sharon aggressive	56%	23%	21%
Trent aggressive value prime	64%	17%	19%
Sharon aggressive value prime	52%	22%	26%
Trent aggressive leader prime	61%	21%	18%
Sharon aggressive leader prime	51%	30%	19%

Trent aggressive gendered leader prime	62%	19%	19%
Sharon aggressive gendered leader prime	49%	27%	24%

There are no negative adjectives in the top 5 words used to describe Sharon, while for Trent, three of the five top 5 words used to describe him are negative.

In the top 10 most frequently used words, however, Sharon and Trent score equally with 7 each. But the frequency with which Trent is described negatively is much higher than for Sharon.

	TOTAL	SHARON	TRENT
1	stubborn	assertive	stubborn
2	passionate	direct	passionate
3	determined	determined	aggressive
4	assertive	strong	determined
5	aggressive	confident	rude
6	rude	aggressive	inflexible
7	direct	rude	frustrated
8	confident	stubborn	closed
9	inflexible	firm	direct
10	strong	passionate	firm
11	firm	inflexible	assertive
12	closed	decisive	confident
13	frustrated	closed	closed-minded
14	decisive	opinionated	abrasive
15	forceful	forceful	committed