

# [ BIAS INTERRUPTERS ] *small steps big change*

## BIAS INTERRUPTERS FOR ASSIGNMENTS

### *Assignment Typology Guide*

The purpose of the assignment typology process is to figure out what the glamour and lower profile work are in your organization, and who is doing it. Because this will vary from organization to organization, we've created general tools that will help you figure this out. Walk through this activity yourself and ask anyone else who supervises employees to do the same.

1. Use the **Assignment Typology Worksheet** to help identify what's what on your team.
  - What is the glamour work? Make sure it passes this test: does it help the employee get promoted?
  - What is the lower profile work? Work that is necessary to the company and needs to be done well, but doesn't enhance an employee's prospects of promotion.
2. Fill out the left-hand side of the **Manager Assignment Worksheet** with the results of the **Assignment Typology Worksheet** and then fill out the remainder of the worksheet.
3. Analyze the worksheet information for demographic patterns, dividing employees into (i) gender and ethnic/racial groups, (ii) parents who have just returned from parental leave, (iii) professionals working part time or flexible schedules, and (iv) any other underrepresented group that your organization tracks (veterans, LGBTQ+ communities, individuals with disabilities, etc.). If you've distributed the **Office Housework Survey**, analyze the findings by the same demographic categories. Identify:
  - Who is doing the office housework?
  - Who is doing the glamour work?
  - Who is doing the lower profile work?
  - If you supervise anyone, create and analyze metrics by individual supervisor.
4. Use responses to anticipate potential challenges in giving assignments to a broader range of people.

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## BIAS INTERRUPTERS FOR ASSIGNMENTS *Assignment Typology Worksheet*

Fill out the worksheet below with specific projects/types of work/assignments that are high-profile and fall under the categories provided below:

This process applies to: (circle one) Junior Senior Intermediate ( ) ( )

**HIGHER-PROFILE WORK:**

<b>Roles that provide the opportunities to gain new knowledge or become a subject matter expert:</b>
1.
2.
3.
4.
<b>Opportunities to display knowledge to important audiences:</b>
1.
2.
3.
4.
<b>Opportunities to develop relationships inside the company that are important for promotion/compensation:</b>
1.
2.
3.
4.
<b>Opportunities to develop relationships outside the company that are important for promotion/compensation:</b>
1.
2.
3.
4.
<b>Opportunities that grant access to business development resources:</b>
1.
2.
3.
4.
<b>Other high-profile assignments in your organization that lead to promotion:</b>
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.

**LOWER-PROFILE WORK:**

<b>Routine Work: Work that must be done well but does not typically enhance promotion prospects:</b>
<i>Example: Often, but not always, serving on the Diversity Committee and/or mentoring junior employees falls into this category.</i>
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.
11.
12.
13.
14.
15.

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## BIAS INTERRUPTERS FOR ASSIGNMENTS *Manager Assignment Worksheet*

**Instructions:** Input the specific projects/types of work/assignments that were identified in with the typology worksheet. Then fill out the right column to see how the work is distributed on your team.

**This process applies to: (circle one) Junior Senior Intermediate ( ) ( )**

Glamour Work	Employee Assigned
<b>Roles that provide the opportunities to gain new knowledge or become a subject matter expert:</b>	
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
<b>Opportunities to display knowledge to important audiences:</b>	
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
<b>Opportunities to develop relationships inside the company that are important for promotion/comp:</b>	
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.

# BIAS INTERRUPTERS *small steps big change*

## MANAGER ASSIGNMENT WORKSHEET *Tools for Organizations*

<b>Opportunities to develop relationships outside the company that are important for promotion/comp:</b>	
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
<b>Opportunities that grant access to business development resources:</b>	
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
<b>Other high-profile assignments in your organization that lead to promotion:</b>	
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.
8.	8.
9.	9.
10.	10.

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## MANAGER ASSIGNMENT WORKSHEET *Tools for Organizations*

Lower-Profile Work	Employee Assigned
<b>Routine Work: Work that must be done well but does not typically enhance promotion prospects:</b>	
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.
8.	8.
9.	9.
10.	10.
11.	11.
12.	12.
13.	13.
14.	14.
15.	15.

**1. How do you decide who to assign work to?**

**2. What would be the challenges (if any) for you to give the glamour work assignments to a broader pool?**

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## BIAS INTERRUPTERS FOR ASSIGNMENTS

### *Office Housework Survey*

**Please fill in the blanks below. Put in zero if no time was spent on certain tasks.**

			Tell us about the peers you have in mind when answering the previous question		
	On average, how much time did you spend per month on each task below?	Do you feel you spent more time on this task than your peers with similar seniority and experience (circle answer)	# of peers you have in mind	# of women in your peer group	# of people of color in your peer group
1. Cleaning up after meetings	__hours__minutes	Yes/No			
2. Planning parties and other social events	__hours__minutes	Yes/No			
3. Getting coffee/food for meetings	__hours__minutes	Yes/No			
4. Taking notes at meetings	__hours__minutes	Yes/No			
5. Fetching documents during meetings	__hours__minutes	Yes/No			
6. Handling logistics and scheduling for meetings	__hours__minutes	Yes/No			
9. Keeping track of paperwork	__hours__minutes	Yes/No			
10. Keeping track of budgets	__hours__minutes	Yes/No			
11. Managing documents and data	__hours__minutes	Yes/No			
12.					
13.					
14.					

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## **BIAS INTERRUPTERS FOR ASSIGNMENTS**

### *Office Housework Survey*

## **How Do I Use This Survey?**

- 1. Circulate this short survey to your team.**
- 2. Look at the amount of time each team member is spending on different office housework tasks.**

Do certain groups of people spend more time in general? What about on specific types of work: literal housework, administrative work, undervalued work?

Do certain groups of people feel that they are spending more time, even if the amount of time recorded does not reflect a difference? Start there, then head to the **Bias Interrupters for Assignments: Tools for Managers** toolkit to learn how to level the playing field.

- 3. Help us improve this tool: e-mail us at [feedback@biasinterrupters.org](mailto:feedback@biasinterrupters.org)**

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## **BIAS INTERRUPTERS FOR ASSIGNMENTS**

### *Responses to Common Pushback*

Here are some of the most common justifications that supervisors/managers give for why plum assignments go to a non-diverse pool, and women end up with office housework—and some responses:

**“It needs to get done, and the women are the only ones who volunteer!”**

“Staffing office housework by asking for volunteers puts subtle pressures on women to volunteer, to show they’re good team players. It also put equal pressures on men *not* to volunteer, to show they’re go getters. Instead, allocate tasks like parties to admins; for the rest set up a rotation so that less valued work gets shared out equally.”

**“The women just do a better job at it. When I give it to the men, they blow it off, so I end up having to give it to a woman anyway.”**

“That’s because the women sense that there will be negative consequences if they blow it off—they’ll be dinged as prima donnas. And the men know that if they do a bad job, the only consequence is that they won’t be asked to do office housework again.”

**“He worked out successfully in the past,” “I trust him to do a good job.”**

“This is justifiable in a crisis. But operating always in crisis mode is not good for the organization in the long term. It means that the person who happens to get a career-enhancing assignment the first time around becomes the golden employee, excluding others who are equally talented from career opportunities. That means they will leave—and the golden employee may leave, too, because they’re asked to do the same thing over and over again.”

**“I’m too busy to train someone new.”**

“That may work well for you in the short term, but it will hurt the organization in the long term, as we lose valued people who are not given career-development opportunities. Having a deeper bench also gives you insurance: What if your go-to-guy gets hit by a bus or leaves the company? Taking a little time today could save you time and money in the future.”