



Thank you for auditioning for

The Diversity and Inclusion Workshops conducted by the Center of Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging at NYU School of Law.

**ROLE: AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMAN 20s/30s**

Present in the room will be director, producing team & casting.

This project will present a series of short scripted, live training scenarios about issues relating to diversity and inclusion in the work place. The presentations will be on location at various business environments.

**PREPARE:**

For this audition please prepare/be familiar with this full packet of sides. We do not expect you to be off-book, just familiar with all of the material.

**ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS:**

Please dress in style for the role. All actors should be well groomed and camera ready in business casual attire.

Be sure to bring your picture and resume, otherwise we will not have one in the room!

Thanks so much!

W | S Casting

# JESSICA Side 1

## SCENARIO THREE: "Lacking Potential - Gender"

(Samuel and Kevin are facing one another on one side of the stage, simulating a conversation. Peter and Jessica are facing one another on the other side of the stage.)

START  
PETER

You've had another great year, Jessica. I get nothing but positive feedback from our internal clients about how responsive and diligent you are. Congratulations.

JESSICA

Thanks, Peter.

PETER

You should start thinking about the path to becoming Deputy General Counsel.

JESSICA

Definitely. I've been working hard with that goal in mind. How can I put myself in the best position?

PETER

As I said, you get tremendous feedback from all the business units we deal with. You're also very well-liked by our colleagues. One thing I've noticed, though: You have a tendency to shrink around others sometimes, to be a bit passive.

JESSICA

Oh, OK. Thanks for letting me know. Is there anything specific I should be doing to correct that?

PETER

Um, just, you know, project confidence. Take control of a room when you enter. When you're working in a team, you need to be able to establish credibility right from the outset.

JESSICA

You mean like speak louder? Or is it my body language?

PETER

Look, it's the vibe. To get promoted you need to inspire confidence in your judgment. You know, act like you are already in the role. I know you're perfectly capable of doing that. It's just something to work on over the next year. With everything else, you're doing great.

JESSICA

OK, thanks, Peter. I appreciate your honest feedback. I'm actually about to have a meeting with Kevin and Samuel right now, so I'll try it out.

PETER

Terrific. Good luck.

END

(Peter exits. Jessica walks over to Kevin and Samuel.)

JESSICA Side 2

JESSICA (*speaking confidently*)

Good afternoon. I know we don't have much time, so I'd like us to start with the breach of contract issue.

SAMUEL

Hi, Jessica. You look nice today! New hair style?

JESSICA

Oh, not really, but thank you. So, as I was saying, Samuel, where are you at with the memo?

SAMUEL

I should have it to you in a couple of days.

JESSICA

I asked for it by Wednesday.

SAMUEL

Sorry. Peter dragged me into a big procurement matter so it had to drop down the priority list.

JESSICA

OK. Please put it back up higher.

KEVIN

Jessica, please. No need to attack him.

JESSICA

I'm sorry. So, next on the agenda is the product liabi--

KEVIN

(*Cutting Jessica off*) I was thinking we should talk about the product liability matter.

SAMUEL

Good idea, Kevin. The plaintiffs are trying to run a failure-to-warn argument.

JESSICA

But surely there's a strong rebuttal to--

KEVIN

*(Cutting Jessica off)* That's a weak claim if I ever saw one, Samuel. But just to make sure, could you look into recent cases in New York and see if you can find anything useful?

SAMUEL

Absolutely.

JESSICA

Also, you might--

SAMUEL

*(Cutting Jessica off)* So are we done?

KEVIN

From my perspective, yes... Jessica?

JESSICA *(looking dejected)*

Ah, yeah, I suppose so.

**(Kevin and Samuel exit. Jessica and Peter sit down facing one another, as if having a meeting.)**

PETER

So, Jessica, I can't believe a whole year has gone by since your last evaluation. As I said then, you're an outstanding attorney and your technical skills are second-to-none. It's just the soft skills you need to work on. I and others have noticed that you can be a bit combative at times. The term "sharp elbows" has come up in conversation. Remember that we're a team, and effective collaboration is essential to what we do.

JESSICA

Really? You told me last year that I'm too passive, so I acted more confidently, and now you're telling me I'm too aggressive. I feel like, as a woman, I can't win.

PETER

You're trying to catch me in a contradiction, but all I'm saying is that you need to find the right balance. This isn't a gender issue. Men have to modify their behavior to succeed as well. *<Relaxing his tone>* I'm an introvert, but I've learned to speak up and go against my natural style because that's what

leadership requires. And sometimes, when I do that, people think I'm too tough or aggressive.

JESSICA

I bet you can get away with a lot more toughness than I can. I respect your opinion, but you don't know what it's like to be a woman here. I dress up to look more feminine, and people comment on my clothes and hair style and take me less seriously. So I dress down to look more plain and professional, and people ask if I'm depressed.

PETER

You don't know what I experience, either. This company has resource groups for women and minorities that focus on their advancement. It's much easier to get promoted if you're a woman or a person of color with all the focus on diversity. Where are the groups and the initiatives for men? All of the diversity and inclusion strategies—we're left out of them, and sometimes we feel like we're being pushed out the door. Anyway, that's not the point. All I want to do is give you some honest advice, as one of the superstars on this team, that if you want to rise through the ranks, you need to be a bit more collaborative.

JESSICA

Have you ever considered that the entire company is a resource group for men? Anyway, I don't mean to be rude. Thanks again for your honesty. I'll try to do better this year.

**CUT: FACILITATED DISCUSSION**

*Kenji describes the issues revealed in the scene and the basis for the scene in the social science and/or feedback received in interviews:*

- *Covering:*
  - *Jessica engages in appearance-based covering and reverse covering, and finds herself in a bind: "I dress up to look more feminine, and people comment on my clothes and hair style and take me less seriously. So I dress down to look more plain and professional, and people ask if I'm depressed."*
  - *Peter also engages in covering as an introvert: "I've learned to speak up and go against my natural style because that's what leadership requires."*
- *Jessica experiences the "double bind": She is told to be less passive, and then in the next formal evaluation cycle,*

END