



How to Be Successful without Hurting Men's Feelings: Non-threatening Leadership Strategies for Women

Sarah Cooper

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Ambitious women are so scary. In this fast-paced business world, female leaders need to make sure they're not perceived as pushy, aggressive, or competent. In *How to Be Successful Without Hurting Men's Feelings*, Sarah Cooper, author of the bestselling *100 Tricks to Appear Smart in Meetings*, illustrates how women can achieve their dreams, succeed in their careers, and become leaders, without harming the fragile male ego.

Chapters include, among others, "9 Non-threatening Leadership Strategies for Women," "How to Ace Your Job Interview Without Over-acing It," and "Choose Your Own Adventure: Do You Want to Be Likable or Successful?" It even includes several pages to doodle on while men finish what they're saying. Each chapter also features an exercise with a set of "inaction items" designed to challenge women to be less challenging.

And, when all else fails, a set of wearable mustaches is included to allow women to seem more man-like. This will cancel out any need to change their leadership style. In fact, it may even lead to a quick promotion!

How to Be Successful without Hurting Men's Feelings: Non-threatening Leadership Strategies for Women Details

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Neil R. Coulter says

Sarah Cooper's goal was "[t]o write a book that was hopefully funny but could also make people want to throw it across the room" (208). She achieved much more of the first part than the second part. Like her previous book, *100 Tricks to Appear Smart in Meetings*, the humor here is perfect: perceptive, biting, and dry. Also, and despite its title, this book features a lot of content that is just basic office humor, able to be appreciated by any reader, regardless of gender. Some of the attitudes and experiences Cooper writes about have more to do with particular personality types than with being male or female. But the fact that females deal with certain experiences more often than males is sad and infuriating.

My favorite parts of this book were the "bonus tips" and infographics included throughout. Cooper is right on about so much of corporate life, and though her particular focus is women in the tech industry, my experience shows me that higher education and nonprofits are not very different. (Though of course this book made me think about one male I know who not only matches a lot of what Cooper writes about men in the workplace, but probably wouldn't even understand which character he is in this book if he read it. I'm glad it's only one person like that who comes to mind.)

The only reason I don't rate this as highly as *100 Tricks to Appear Smart in Meetings* is that there is something inherently absurd and non-serious about meetings. Mocking and laughing at them seems like an appropriate survival tactic. But some of the issues Cooper addresses in *How to Be Successful Without Hurting Men's Feelings* are much more serious. Chapter 8 especially, "How to Be Harassed Without Hurting His Career," was particularly squirmy and awkward. Joking about that feels more difficult and perhaps inappropriate, and those were the jokes that, for me, didn't land quite so well.

But overall, the book is brilliant. Cooper has made me laugh through two books and her website, and for that, I'm grateful. Reading the other contributors to her website only highlights just how hard it is to do what she does. I was glad to read that this is the second of a three-book deal—can't wait for the next one!

Obsidian says

I ended up buying this on Thursday and was happy when it arrived Saturday. After a long road trip back from the southern part of VA, I was happy to be back in my house and reading something funny.

I had seen a post about this book on Ask A Manager, and loved the images that were shown.

Later on a friend and I going into work looked it up and were dying about some of the the things that Cooper gets into, but then of course we also got mad and then sad, because though this is humor, it still stings.

Yes, women are often talked down to by colleagues, ignored for saying something, but kudos are given out when a male colleague repeats the same comment ten minutes later. We are often told to not get wound up when someone is doing something shitty to us, and called a bitch behind our backs when we refuse to let

someone walk all over us. Yes, it is 2018 and the more things change, the more they stay the same.

This book reminds me of Yes Please by Amy Poehler, both are bright books which include places for the owner of the book to write, scribble, doodle, etc.

There are 12 chapters in this book (FYI they are very short due to the illustrations, so don't worry about getting bored) with a funny introduction and conclusion.

Chapter 2: Communication-How to Talk Like A Man but Still be Seen as a Woman is the one chapter that ticked me off the most though (I still laughed). Probably because every scenario in there has happened to me. Oh you said something that got totally ignored and a male colleague is praised for saying it 15 minutes later. Do you worry about talking too loud and forceful though when your male colleague does it, somehow he's considering charismatic and a leader of the future?

Chapter 4: Authenticity-How to Bring Your True Self to Work and Then Hide it Completely made me giggle the most though. I remember being new to the government and being told I needed to bring in pictures (I was not married and didn't have kids--still don't) to make me more approachable. A manager said this to me. I remember thinking who cares what is going on at home, it's not like you will ever meet these people!

Chapter 7: Negotiation-Gaslighting for Beginners and Chapter 8: Harassment-How to be Harassed Without Hurting his Career were also had some funny side by sides.

The side by sides showing how to do things incorrectly and the right way to do things in this book should be pull outs that you can stick on a fridge or in your cube somewhere.

This book is obviously humor, so please don't follow the advice in the book.

Tiffany says

"Because you know what's more precious than my hopes and dreams? A man's ego.

A man's ego must be protected at all cost."

How to Be Successful without Hurting Men's Feelings: Non-threatening Leadership Strategies for Women is **really, really** good.

It's one of those books that is so successful because not only is it genuinely funny (with wonderful visual aids and illustrations to boot) but it's all so painfully true, and timely.

Within the pages of this book, you will find helpful tips for how to ace your interview (without over-acing it), how to talk like a man (but be seen as a woman) and how to be harassed (but protect your harasser). I can't think of a woman who wouldn't relate to at least one thing that is discussed in this book but I can certainly think of plenty of men that will be **OUTRAGED** by it, which, who cares? This book isn't for them. This book is for the women who experience all of these things and have to be able to laugh about them so that they won't die inside every second of the workday.

I kept flagging pages that I wanted to pull quotes from for this review but I quickly found that I was tagging

nearly every other page. The only one I felt compelled to include is the one that I opened with here; for all of the other incredible ones, you'll just have to go and read this for yourself!

I was unfamiliar with Sarah Cooper before picking up this book and I plan to correct that mistake immediately by going back and reading anything and everything else she has ever written.

I received this ARC as a courtesy from NetGalley & the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Molly says

Very, very funny satirical "guide" to succeeding in a male-dominated world. And kind of depressing in its hilarity and accuracy.

Nenia ? Queen of Literary Trash, Protector of Out-of-Print Gems, Khaleesi of Bodice Rippers, Mother of Smut, the Unrepentant, Breaker of Convention ? Campbell says

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Fun fact: the ink for this book was made from male tears.

I applied for this book on a whim because I think breaking the glass ceiling is still a challenge that many professional and professional-aspiring women face in the workplace, particularly in the fields of science and tech. And yes, I realize that some workplaces are the exceptions. Some do an *exceptional* job incorporating diversity and acceptance into their corporate culture and making everyone feel welcome, regardless of sex, gender, ethnicity and creed, and those places should be lauded - deservedly so. However, for every place that's doing it right, there are even more places doing it wrong, and virtually every woman I know has at least one horror story of harassment, gaslighting, or even just under-appreciation in at least one of their jobs by sheer dint of being female.

HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL WITHOUT HURTING MEN'S FEELINGS satirizes the sexist old guard corporate culture (think *Mad Men*) of places where all of those in charge are white dudes, and women and minorities are treated as interlopers who are threatening the sanctity of their Boys' Club. Some of my favorite sections in this book were Gaslighting 101, "blank pages to doodle on while men explain things to you," and Being Liked vs. Being Successful. There's also a great comic in here that someone in my professional circle shared with me about how differently people view men vs. women when they say the same exact thing. It's amazing, really, how quick we are to label women as aggressive or bitchy for just doing their damn job and saying it without a smile or an emoji.

If you are a feminist who is frustrated with archaic gender roles and norms, or you've had a job where you didn't feel welcome and are still seething at the injustice, I think this will be a good book for you. I liked how the author identified the sexist problems while also making fun of office culture as a whole, as in *The Office*, and the email bingo was hilariously on point. The lighter moments balanced out the darker sections, such as the one on workplace sexual harassment, which made me very sad and uncomfortable. I feel very lucky in that all of the places I have worked have been very good to me, but this also makes me sad because feeling safe and secure where you work should *not* be a matter of luck and there are so many people who seem to think that just because inequality and harassment don't happen to them, personally, means that nobody *anywhere* is experiencing it, which is not the case. I'm glad that books like these are coming out to push equality and call out toxic behavior. Awareness and recognition are just the first steps when it comes to social change.

Thanks to Netgalley/the publisher for the review copy!

3.5 stars

Erica Larson says

I just binge read this and it is sadly fantastic or perhaps hilariously sad because it is so spot on with the satire. I laughed my way into hyperventilation up until Chapter 8: How To Be Harassed Without Hurting His Career. The following chapter was also a bit painful regarding likability versus success and I found myself yearning for the bottle of Rose I have downstairs. But then it was all five stars uphill from there by making me cackle far too loudly to be perceived as non-threatening. Ladies in corporate, especially tech companies, please enjoy this book with me.

Lorilin says

When I first started reading this book, it annoyed me. Yeah, yeah, okay: Better not wear this hairstyle because men find it threatening! And better not talk too loudly because men find that threatening, too! Etc., etc. It was all stuff I'd heard a million times before. Boring.

But as I kept reading, it really started to dawn on me that I do a lot of the "passive female" mannerisms shown in the book. That overly-fake-excited tone in emails? Yep, I do that. Letting men (and sometimes women) talk over me and even explain my own ideas to me? Yeah, I've done that, too. Allowing a man to make me feel physically uncomfortable but feeling powerless to do anything about it simply because he ended that douche comment with a smiley emoticon or that suggestive touch with a "we're cool, right!" smile? I have. I've allowed that.

Honestly, the more I read this book, the worse it made me feel. I consider myself pretty self-aware and progressive. I know how to be a strong woman. I'm woke, kids! But with every tongue-in-cheek cartoon, I couldn't help but realize how many tiny grievances I let slip by. Not that I'm looking to become petty,

overly-sensitive, hurtful, or rude toward other people. (I've worked hard to become a more confident advocate for myself, while still embracing the power of grace and forgiveness.) But wouldn't it be nice to be able to communicate honestly every once in a while without fake smiles and the excessive use of exclamation points---all without worrying about who I'm offending in the process? Is that a world I ever get to live in?

Some of the examples in here are dated, and I would argue that many of the situations shown are no longer specifically "men vs. women." (Shoot, I've learned that female bosses and coworkers can be brutal, too...) But there is still no denying the truth of what author Sarah Cooper writes.

Ultimately, this book isn't going to be for everyone, but it's definitely an interesting and eye-opening read. It made me think.

Thanks to Andrews McMeel Publishing and Amazon Vine for the ARC!

See more of my reviews at www.bugbugbooks.com.

☆ Ashley ☆ says

Wow---this book is HONEST af! I LOVED IT!!! If you're a female working in any type of office setting or male-dominated field, you will definitely relate. I've stopped counting the number of times a man has called me 'intimidating'. I used to be shocked and shy away from any actions that might have lead them to that conclusion... but now OH HELL NO! Unfortunately this book will not be read by the people *cough*men*cough* that need to read it the most. Funny, horrible, and spot-on sarcasm. Read it.

The above is an honest review of an advanced copy provided by the publisher via NetGalley.

Blog ✧ Twitter ✧ Instagram

Laura says

When I first got into the work world, the book we were all supposed to read was "Games your mother never taught you." Very good book. I would like to say it is a little dated, but some of those things still go on, and women have to adjust to them, unfortunately.

If you have every worked in a corporate office, and if you are a woman, you have run across the things that are being made fun of in this book. I worked in corporate offices for 10 years, in the 1990s. From the looks of this book, things have not changed much.

This book is pretending to tell women the right way to do things, so as not to upset their male co-workers, because, of course, we would not want to do that.

This example, below, is telling women how to dress for a job interview. As you can see, there is no perfect way to dress. :)

This example, below, is showing how if a woman says it, it comes across differently than if a man says it. This was true then, and true now. I'm sure not all men and women feel this way, but I have seen enough of this stuff to find humor in how it is presented.

This cartoon is self explanatory.

And of course, mansplaining is touched on.

And, the bonus tips about how to deal with CEOs, vs toddlers.

I quite enjoyed the humor that hit a little too close to home, in most of these instances, but makes for something to laugh at too.

Good gift for any working woman, and probably for men who understand, as well.

#HowToBeSuccessfulWithoutHurtingMen'sFeelings #NetGalley

Thanks to Netgalley for making this book available for an honest review.

Yoda says

I love funny/sarcastic books and this one was funny from the very first page.

Carol (Bookaria) says

This book in two words: **hilarious and relevant.**

A guide to help women navigate difficult workplace situations. It is marketed as a **humorous book** (and in fact is very funny) but is also an **accurate portrayal** of many issues women still face today on their professional lives.

Some of the chapter titles are "**COMMUNICATION:** *How to talk like a man but still be seen as a woman*", "**AMBITION:** *How to advance your career without shoving it in everyone's face*", and "**NEGOTIATION:** *gaslighting for beginners*".

I read the book in one sitting and it includes illustrations that describe different situations women may encounter and the corresponding responses they should have when encountering those situations.

Overall, **I liked it**, it was highly entertaining as well as a relevant and light-hearted portrayal of the workplace today.

Received ARC from the publisher via Netgalley

Critterbee☼ says

Hilarious, yet painfully accurate commentary on how to succeed with hurting men's feelings or damaging their ego. A must read for everyone.

eARC Netgalley

Wai Yan says

"To write a book that was hopefully funny but could also make people want to throw it across the room..."
Yes I felt this way while I was reading the book. Not sure how to rate this book, it's funny and sarcastic but many problems mentioned are true in reality.

danes says

Not sure if I should laugh or weep for us women.

Constance says

Who said feminists don't have a sense of humor? Hilarious and too true.
