EMPLOYMENT BASICS

You’ve recently been promoted to a supervisory position and are now responsible for

coordinating the work of four other employees. Two of these workers are more than

20 years older than you are, and both have been with the company much longer than

you have. Although you’ve tried to be supportive of them and have gone out of your

way to praise their work, whenever there is some kind of disagreement, they go to your

boss with the problem. You’ve asked them repeatedly to come to you with whatever

issues they have; they just ignore you and complain to other workers about reporting to

someone your age. Design a strategy for dealing with these workers and your manager.

MANAGING A DIVERSE WORKFORCE

After two years of sales calls and persuasion, a large, multinational petroleum

company—Big Oil Ltd.—decides to sign with your employer, Secure Bank. Since

Big Oil is headquartered in Saudi Arabia and most of the meetings with the client have

been in the Middle East, Secure Bank’s senior executive in charge of oil and oil

products companies, Julie, has not attended. Although the Secure Bank employees

who have met with the company have told the Big Oil executives that the lead on their

account will be a woman, the news must not have registered, perhaps because of

language difficulties. Today, the Big Oil reps are in Chicago to sign on the dotted line

and meet with Secure Bank’s senior managers, and of course, they’ve met with Julie.

A member of your sales team calls you to say that Big Oil’s senior team member has

told him he does not want Julie to work on their account, period. Because of cultural

issues, Big Oil execs are uncomfortable dealing with women from any country. As

Julie’s manager, what do you do? Can you think of ways to respect Julie’s expectations

and those of the Big Oil executives?

MANAGING UPAND ACROSS

As an operations professional, you need to be able to interact effectively with many

internal customers—from corporate managers to field representatives. One of your

peers is Jessica, who is a talented operations professional but who is downright rude to

her internal customers. Her attitude is so bad that people around your company ask specifically to deal with you instead of Jessica. You’ve heard many tales about her

sarcasm and her unwillingness to deliver anything other than the absolute minimum to

other employees. You’ve thought about talking to Bruce, the manager to whom both

you and Jessica report, but you and everyone else knows that they’re dating. In the

meantime, your workload is increasing because of Jessica’s reputation. How do you

handle Jessica and Bruce?