

## Submission 31

I have been sexually harassed in the workplace multiple times. In my nature I am not as assertive as I would like to be yet that does not invite nor condone the behaviour.

Not the first instance but the first I remember well was when I was working in a warehouse doing data entry work. The office had large windows out into the warehouse where only men were working on the floor and on forklifts. They would come into the office to hand over information or say hello. The management was also all men. I was polite and engaged in a laugh and a joke but never went beyond that. I largely kept to myself and spoke with the other female working along side me. One day I got to work to here from my female colleague that the only way I got the job was because I had given the manager of the warehouse a blowjob under the table. I was also told that that was said by the manager to the men in the warehouse during a toolbox talk. I was in my early 20s and very distressed by the information. I had a honours degree and was taking some time off before doing further study, to be insulted like that in a job I was only doing to make a good hourly rate that was very easy and at time mind numbing to fill time before studying again was hugely insulting. Beyond that I felt extremely uncomfortable in my environment. I didn't where the comment came from because the manager denied it and the worker who told my colleague pointed the finger at someone else. I felt that I had been degraded and viewed as nothing but a sexualised blow up doll. Not a human being and not a respected team member. Needless to say I quit.

The next occasion that come fresh to mind was while I was working at a hospital. I was new to the workplace and surprise when the team psychiatrist asked me out for coffee. He made it seem like a welcome to the team coffee that everyone was invited to upon starting, though it was only him and I. The coffee seemed to go fine though he asked me some person questions - whether I had a partner, when was my last etc. I noticed his wedding ring was on his middle finger though I swear I thought I had seen it on his wedding finger earlier that day. That is part of the reason I initially felt comfortable with him. Over a period of months he would invite me to his office as a teaching opportunity to talk about clients yet would spend the time talking about his weekend, dates he had been on, parties he had been to and even started talking about sex he had with "friends" from work. He invited himself to my town, asking if he could get a lift to my home town because he had a date. When pressed for information he wouldn't give any so I denied him the lift. He would often comment on my outfits and would say that my legs looked good in my pants and would stare at my legs during meetings. While on a team trivia night, I had too much to drink and did not register correctly how close he was sitting next to me. He had his body pressed against mine. Because I had too much wine I knew I was uncomfortable and something was not right but could not quite pluck up the courage to move myself. He later invited me and a friend back to his house we both said no and I went back to hers. He was later fired for inappropriate behaviour with other staff members as well as myself.

On another occasion I was new to a workplace and was introduced to a team member who seemed very friendly. I was humbled to be included and she invited me to team events and things with just her and I. She made jokes that she should get in trouble for sexual harassment because she often touched other female coworkers on the breast or

bottom. She was almost making excuses for herself that she could do that to others and that she might do it to me. I can remember saying no. Under the guise of friendship she invited me to a number of social catch ups where she would touch others on the bottom. She gave personal information about herself often to show vulnerability and encourage the same back. Once while driving she rubbed my leg and told me she was in love with me. She was drunk at the time. I caught up with her the next day to tell her that it was inappropriate and I didn't have the same feelings back. She continued the same with the next new female employee. She told all of us she was going on dates with her however told the female coworker that it was a friend thing and that the rest of the team was coming but that was never the plan. She would often be very hot and cold towards individuals, act like you were her best friend and then turn on you like you were the worst person in the world and try to segregate you from the rest of the group by inserting herself as the closest friend or person you you and everyone else. She often touched everyone inappropriately and lied about the intention of meet ups. She later left the workplace and all the women got together to share their experience with her. That was when it became clear that she was sexually harassing almost all of them.