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- 2011 POW! WINNERS
- 2011 POW! PHOTOS
- UPCOMING EVENTS
- PAST EVENTS
- EXPERT BLOGS
- PRESS ROOM

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Have you Been Stung by a Queen Bee?

Written by Beverly Langford
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Today, women are making their mark everywhere, moving into corner offices and boardrooms, owning companies, and governing constituents at all levels. So, when they get in positions of power, we naturally expect them to develop other women who follow them, providing opportunities for these employees and associates to excel and prosper. Unfortunately, even in the second decade of a new millennium, some women still see other women as a threat and continue diligently working to maintain their status at the expense of those around them. This unfortunate phenomenon is known as the Queen Bee Syndrome.



We all understand the organization of a beehive. The queen gets rid of the competition and lives the rest of her life with a host of male drones at her beck and call. Karen Bune, (LawOfficer.com) describes the Queen Bee as someone who likes her status as a successful woman among successful men, and she often feels threatened by the female employees who work for her, particularly if they show potential for achievement. She may be quite benevolent to support staff, which is there to help her. However, if employees are "highly educated and skilled in their profession with a commendable work history," she will often work to keep those employees down. Not only will she be openly critical, but she will also tend to give negative performance ratings to inhibit that person's advancement. She's the playground bully in four-inch heels.

Susan Wilson Solovic of [smallbizTV.com](#), notes that "recent research shows that men prefer working for women more than women do." Responses indicate that Queen Bees are typically harder on women than on male employees, giving women tougher assignments and being more critical of the results, often treating female employee disrespectfully in front of others. Some Queen Bees feel that they have to be better than other women at everything—doing ten extra crunches or beating you out of the parking lot. However the behavior manifests itself, it has a debilitating effect on morale, and it stifles creativity and growth.

If you are the victim of a Queen Bee, here are a few suggestions for dealing with her (adapted from [www.ehow.com/how_4862104_falling-victim-queen-bee-syndrome.html](#))

- Focus on doing your job rather than constantly reacting to her behavior.
- Document any personal attacks with a copy to file describing the episode in detail, who else was present, and what was the effect of the incident.
- Avoid stooping to her level by showing your anger, raising your voice, or, worse, bursting into tears.
- If nothing improves, look for employment elsewhere, either within or outside the company.
- if you do leave, make sure that you report the behavior to someone who can make a difference.

Have you ever dealt with a Queen Bee? What are your thoughts and ideas?

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