As the song goes, it's a man's world, and perhaps even more so in the correctional field. Still, women are making leaps and bounds as correctional officers, management, medical, probation officers and more. We took to Facebook to ask our readers what advice they would offer other female correctional employees, whether they were considering a job in corrections or if they were veterans. Here are the top responses.

10. Wear your uniform one size larger than you usually would. This isn’t just for comfort and convenience during shakedowns when going on or off shift; it’s also to prevent any lingering gazes from inmates.

9. This job isn’t for everyone; you’re going to see the worst of the worst, along with those who’ve simply made bad decisions. You’ll be faced with this every day, and that will change you, probably in ways you won’t expect or maybe even notice.

8. Know your facility’s policies and stick to them. Do everything by procedure. Doing so will keep you safe, hopefully both in the physical sense and from potential lawsuits.

7. Being a CO is a very physical job; your height likely won’t be useful in intimidating inmates, but being in good physical shape can. Also, just being in good shape can also save your life in a physical confrontation.

6. You earned your right to wear the uniform just like everyone else, regardless of gender; don’t let the comments of others, inmates or officer, get under your skin. You’re here to do a job, so do it and do it well, and let the rude comments slide off your back.

5. Make sure to always file reports when you have a concern, and don’t be afraid to voice your opinion. Doing both will help define who you are as an officer: it explains what you will and won’t stand for, and also leaves a paper trail in your own defense should anything happen.

4. It’s OK to be scared. Not being scared can lead to complacency, and that’s a slippery slope to letting an accident happen where someone could get hurt or, worse, killed. Being scared keeps you on your toes, alert and aware.

3. It’s all about character; be the officer that others want to emulate, that inmates respect, that gets the job done and goes home at the end of the shift safely and secure in the knowledge that she’s working to make the world a better place.

2. Be consistent with inmates; live, eat and breathe the motto, ‘firm, fair and consistent.’ As an officer, these are words you should live by, whether you’re dealing with an inmate, a fellow officer, or management.

1. This one should go without saying, but as our commenters so colorfully put it, ‘don’t get your honey where you get your money.’ The media is all too ready to run with the idea that female COs are willing to jump in the sack with male inmates; be the officer that defies this stereotype.

Additional Comments added on Facebook:

- As a female, you have an advantage over male officers because women have a more natural ability to empathize with hardships. 99.9% of the time you'll need to be stern firm, fair, and consistent. But as a human being you'll learn to recognize unique situations that may require a more tactful, empathetic approach. It's not being "friendly" to listen to an offender's problem; it's doing your job. I've recognized suicidal offenders this way and got them the help they needed. It's also a useful skill that'll help diffuse the tension and can prevent a use of force from happening. Trust your instincts and your judgment, practice your blank "don't mess with me" face, be prepared to ask for help and advice from senior officers, and be prepared to see more penises than ever.

- It's not just the inmates you need to watch out for.

- Never show fear. Never doubt yourself. Never trust anyone. Go with your gut. If you think something's there...it's there. Never date another officer/CO. Don't act "happy". Never show emotion. Understand that it is still the good ole boys club...

- You earned your place going through the same training, yes underneath your badge is the heart of a Lady but on the outside... You’re a Beast

- Don't take it home. I'm on marriage number 3
Look out for each other! It's still a "good ol' boys club" out there, we should be banding together to support one another, not trying to claw each other’s eyes out!

Excerpt from the Article “What We Wish We Had Been Told When First Going Into Prisons.”

Written by a group of female Quaker Volunteers

TO SEE OURSELVES AS OTHERS SEE US

As Seen by Prison Admin’s and Staff
• “Bleeding Hearts”
• Naïve and over-emotional
• An unwelcome responsibility and nuisance to security staff
• Security risk because of sexuality and naïveté, capable of provoking violence
• Potential careers of contraband
• Guilty of causing discontent by promising more than we can give
• A threat to existing power arrangements; destabilizing
• Deliberately disruptive; amateur lawyers’ political information carriers; legal and political activists.
• Arrogant, know-it-alls; believe ourselves to be superior and better educated
• Some see us as radicals/traitors/revolutionaries/gays/Communist and other “bogey women”
• Some even question whether we are a religious group or a plot to overthrow the Government
• Some see us as a public relations asset
• Some see us as a calming influence, and therefore an asset
• Some see our attempts to control
• Some are resentful because we’re seen as the “good guys” and they as the “bad guys.” This is made worse when we align our selves with prisoners and manifest hostility to officers and other prison personnel.
• Some see us as looking for a husband, a lover, or sexual excitement; losers with men on the outside
• Willing to throw away our lives on

As seen by Prisoners
• Willing suckers
• Bleeding hearts
• Rich, well connected; powerful (more than we are)
• Religious fanatics
• Post-women and writers of letters to the Governor
• Parole tickets
• Support system for their families
• Competition that can be used to spur their girlfriends or families to greater efforts on their behalf
• Obligatory martyrs to their needs (or, if we decline to be this “bad Quakers” and hypocrites)
• “Commie weirdoes,” Radicals, revolutionaries, lesbians
• Neurotics; bored women with endless time
• Sexual targets or objects
• Man-hungry; hung up on caged men
• Troublemakers
• Naïve
• Sexual teases
• Over-romanticized “good women”
• Link to different realities
• Sole link to outside
• Some want religion from us
• Some values us as people they need not be tough with
• Some try hard to understand what we bring
• Some see us as people to protect
• Some feel we are people with whom they can feel some power
• Others see us as acting as Lady
prisoners; traitors to our class/race/whatever

Bountiful and resent our rubbing their noses in their own powerlessness
• In sum we are seen as sluts or saints