

When the office slacker is the owner's daughter

Question: “My boss hired her daughter, “Tammy”, to work part-time in the business. Before that, I was her only employee. Tammy is arrogant, foul-mouthed and a know-it-all. She spends most of the day surfing the Internet and texting her friends. Although she is supposed to help with office work, Tammy won’t even answer the phone. She does exactly what the boss tells her to do and nothing more. I recently discovered that she is being paid almost as much as I am, which is extremely insulting. My boss had told me she was making much less. I doubt that any criticism of the daughter would be well-received, so I don’t know how to address this issue without creating hard feelings. Until this happened, I really loved my job. What should I do?” — *Resentful*

Marie’s Answer: In a family business, the unfortunate reality is that family always trumps fairness. Relatives and “outsiders” are in two separate categories. Since your boss is the owner, this is her money. She’s free to give as much as she likes to her child, even if that child is a slacker. However, the fact that she fudged the pay figure indicates that at least she recognizes the inequity.

The good news is that Tammy might not be there for long. Mom probably forced her into this position, so goofing off is her revenge. Eventually, rebellion may cause her to quit. In the meantime, you’re smart to keep your mouth shut, because any criticism of her offspring will make your boss feel like both a bad mother and a bad manager. She is therefore unlikely to appreciate this feedback.

Since you previously enjoyed your job, wait awhile to see how the situation plays out. And just try to view this child’s inflated salary as a very large allowance.