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In saluting ladies, please make sense

Jay Remer, **Financial Post**
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Dear Etiquette Guy: I am writing a letter to the board of directors of a corporation. The board consists of six men and one woman. "Ladies and Gentlemen" doesn't seem appropriate as there is only one woman on the board. Is "Lady and Gentlemen" appropriate? Or would you suggest something else? I want to make sure I get this correct.

Bothered Bruce

Dear B. B.: I would definitely suggest something other than "Lady and Gentlemen." An acceptable salutation is "Dear Board of Directors." It is important to remember that even in today's still-male-dominated society, women take precedence over men in formal business and social situations. Hence, "Lady" before "Gentleman" in a salutation. However, common sense almost always prevails. Therefore, the generic choice is preferable in this case -- a simple answer but it should do the trick. - Jay Remer is the Etiquette Guy. He is trained and certified by the Protocol School of Washington as a consultant for corporate etiquette and international protocol. He lives in St. Andrews, N. B. E-mail your etiquette questions to jay@etiquetteguy.com and visit his Web site at www.etiquetteguy.com.

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