

Appendix 2

Chapter 6

'Mapping the Territory of Workplace Dynamics Between Women'

Questions for interview based discussions

Topic guide

What interests you about this topic of how women relate to each other in organisations?
What thoughts/ memories came to mind when I invited you to have this discussion?

Tell me about the experience you will be drawing from; the work you do/ have done with women. What work are you doing at the moment /most recently with women? What roles do you take on/ find yourself in? In what kind/s of organisation/s?

What comes to mind when you think of relationships with women in work settings? As peers or colleagues; as managers; as clients? Hopes? Fears? Disappointments?

Thinking about the whole of your experience-have your relationships with women changed over the years/ in different settings?

Do you see any patterns in how women relate to you in work settings; what they are hoping you will be able to give them / not give them or do for them; what assumptions they make about your values/ priorities/ beliefs?

Do you see any patterns in how you respond to these expectations? What feelings are triggered? How do you work with these?

How do you describe what you do best in your work or professional role? Your strengths? Preferred working style? Are there any issues for you in finding a way to articulate your strengths in relation to your work role?

How do you think women you work with perceive your strengths in your work role as a consultant, manager etc.?

What do you think you are most valued for in your work role? by women? by men?

Do you identify any of the following as within your experience?

Painful breakdown in relationships with women colleagues?

Expectations you could not meet from female colleagues?

Feeling used/ exploited / undervalued by other women?

Inability to accept your authority/expertise from female colleagues/clients?

Being envied/ feeling envious or competitive in relation to women colleagues or clients?

Being seen as betraying other women/ feeling betrayed by another woman in her work or public role?

Positive collaborative working with women colleagues?

Nurturing and support from women colleagues?

Having to cover up aspects of your identity or life from other women in order to be accepted or supported?

Issues around negotiating friendships / sexual relationships with other women in work relationships?

What other issues would you add?

Approach to interviews

Use questions as a topic guide, a map of the territory to be covered.

Invite focus on projections experienced, both those received and made, in the organisational role and how contributors worked with them. Distinguish between the feeling quality of relationships with women, and their ideological or rational content - the 'isms'.

Focus on getting a picture of what each discussant brings to her relationships with women- as well as her perception of what she gets and how she works with the interactions; what goes on for her and what sense she makes of what goes on

Aim for depth of content and be prepared to use a variety of methods to achieve this: tell stories, ask direct questions, invite dialogue.

Watch for balance between sharing own approach and experience, and leaving room for contributors' sense making frameworks to emerge.

Be alert to my experience of the interaction, during preparation, the interview, and afterwards.