



Gender and ICT professions
European workshop
Monday 29 September 2003, Brussels

Professional culture and work organisation

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Professional culture (I)

- A strong professional culture is based on professional community, created and continuously structured by means of the World Wide Web.
- Professional culture is more important than the company culture
- Significant values of the ICT professional culture are innovation, cooperation, problem solving and result orientation.
- Workers give a great emphasis to professional development being usually achieved by changing jobs and work experiences. This may be a difficult matter for women.

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Professional culture (II)

- Professional community is young, passionate, high qualified and rather “democratic”: women are likely to be less discriminated than elsewhere
 - “I think what we have in common is that we try to maintain the child in us” (BIOAF)
- Senior managers often have a marked coaching attitude which enhances the “team spirit” and is a means of empowerment. Sometimes women too get some chances from mentoring.

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Work organisation Project working (I)

- Project working is the most widespread way of working in ICT sector. It is based on fixed deadlines instead of traditional schedules.
- Project working often implies long hours, even night working and weekend working, this sometimes means the existence of a “total availability” model or even of a “company total control on work and life” model.

“My boss’boss, he works through the night: you can send him an email at any time and he will respond back. It is just his culture of “you must be available at all time”. It is very difficult” (BIOFUK)

A free lance web designer told us “when I need a project ready, I can work till four o’clock in the night...And often they see me working on my laptop when I watch my little daughter playing in the park” (BIOIF)

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Work organisation

Project working (II)



- According to our case studies and narratives, workers seem to appreciate the opportunity to organise their work themselves and to have the chance of self-managed hours.

- Women sometimes suffer from long hours, but sometimes enjoy the possibility to better balance work and family life (depending also on their different status in the company).

“Working as a software developer is not so bad when you have small children, because you can do it at home too” (BIOIF)

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Work organisation

Team work



- Small enterprises and flat hierarchical organisation favour team working

The actual work organisation follows a strongly cooperative model: people do different things depending on work needs, no matter if they are manager or employees. (CASE AR, I)

- Working as a team tends to reduce hierarchy and makes the way of working more informal and pleasant

In the company A (multimedia publisher) people are quite at ease in a place where top managers dress casual, having a friendly attitude towards employees and where the whole team often go out together in the evening.

- Team is the occasion for expressing and enhancing the potential inclination to relationship, negotiation, capability of coordination. All these “soft”, so called “female” skills become so important as the technical ones.

“when it comes to problems to solve or conflicts between colleagues, I have this mediating role, since I get along with all of them” (BIOAF)

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Work organisation

At customer work



- Especially in computer servicing, customer occupies the core place. So your working days will be tailored on his needs and travelling to the client will be very frequent

In the Italian company F, more than 60% of ICT workers have to go to the client and work at their office. The frequency can vary, according to the client needs from 2-3 days per month till 3-4 days per week.

What passionate MF, a 38 computer specialist, in her job is “to realise the customers’ dreams” (BIOBF)