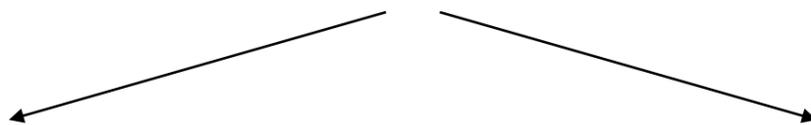


Practical: probing in qualitative interviews

Interviewer: 'So what effect, if any, did that first meeting with your personal adviser have on your plans for finding work?'

Participant: 'I don't know, I guess we looked at local jobs and that's what I needed at the time. The woman – the personal adviser person – did a search for local jobs and showed me the construction job, which I suppose was helpful. I mean, I didn't get that job, but it was the kind of job I wanted, so yeah... I'd say it was ok.'



Example 1

I: 'So she was helpful then?'

P: 'Yeah, she was helpful.'

I: 'Ok, great... Is there any other support you would have liked from your personal adviser?'

P: 'Nah, not really. Like I said, the main thing I wanted at the time was a local construction job, and she found one.'

I: 'But you didn't get it?'

P: 'No.'

I: 'Ok, If I could move on then...'

Example 2

I: 'How do you mean: you supposed it was helpful?'

P: 'Well, I... I suppose... I mean, I didn't get the job the end so it didn't help in that way, but you know, that wasn't her fault.'

I: 'So, in what way did it help?'

P: 'I guess it put the wind up me' [chuckles]

I: 'Put the wind up you?'

P: 'Yeah, like I'd sort of assumed that I knew all the construction companies round here, and I go through my mates, I've done that all the time I've been working. This one she showed me was new to the area, I hadn't come across it before'

I: 'Yes, you mentioned before that you go through your mates?'

P: 'Yeah, it usually works. I mean sometimes things are a bit slow and it take a few weeks to find something through them, but you just wait it out, sign on again... like I said before, construction work can be a bit on/off...'

I: 'You said it usually works, but are there any other reasons why that's how you've looked for work in the past?'

P: 'Ah...well, it's habit isn't it? You know your mates, they know you. You see them in the pub, and pick things up that way. It's dead easy; why change it? I had enough mates in the building trade that I thought I knew what was happening round here.'

I: 'So what was it that put the wind up you?'

P: 'I suppose I sort of realised things had changed locally, there's new companies and new developments out of town. I'd been at Neary's for seven years before it shut down, so I hadn't seen all the changes.'

I: 'And your mates, how much help did you get from them, if any?'

P: 'Nah. Nothing doing. A good few of my mates moved away, got injured, left the trade. A few mates from Neary's moved on but they were brickies... had different skills from me.'

I: 'So what effect, if any, has knowing about the changes you've talked about had on the way you look for work?'

P: 'I guess I look wider now... I use the local paper and check the boards at the jobcentre when I go to sign on.'

I: 'Ok... Just to go back to what you said looking at local jobs was what you needed at the time: was there anything else that you needed?'

P: 'Nah, not really. I mean... when I didn't get the job they said it was because I didn't have the right forklift licence, but apart from that – you know, I'm 47, I know how to do an interview and all that.'

I: 'A forklift licence?'

... and so on ...