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# **An Exploration of Influences on the Careers of Professional Women Planners**

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## **Abstract**

The literature which explores key influences on women's career pathways suggests women's careers are a blend of the work and non-work facets of their lives. The kaleidoscope career model (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005, 2006) portrays the attributes of authenticity, balance and challenge as constants in a woman's life and drivers which move constantly to shape her career at any particular point in its trajectory. The model seeks to explain why women 'opt-out' or work in different ways throughout their career.

There is little knowledge or research on professional women planners and the influences on their careers. The report explores key influences using thematic analysis to analyse interview data from six participants. The results show professional women planners are adept at crafting their careers and taking into account their own particular objectives, needs and life criteria. They are able to work in a range of ways throughout their careers, from the corporate and local government sectors through to running their own consultancy practices in the private sector. The report finds they are able to do this without 'opting out', and integrate the facets of the kaleidoscope career model to take into account their own particular circumstances.

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