

## Handling change and redundancy

There are times in life when you may have instigated change for yourself, whether this be changing job or moving house, but during this change, you were in charge and took control of the situation. You were doing something that you wanted to do and bringing change into your life because you chose to. During the process of change, you may have experienced some ups and downs and things may not always have gone exactly how you wanted, but you were able to handle the change because it was still of your own making and you wanted to achieve your change objective.

However, when change is forced upon you, it can evoke many different feelings, such as fear, anger and shock. You may need to make lots of adjustments in your life to deal with the change you are facing. These may be unexpected and temporarily turn your life upside down. It is important for you to work through what's happening and to take control again.

Career Change and the search for new employment may be something that you are facing as a result of your own decisions and choices or it may be as a result of changes made by your current employer. In the current economic climate virtually everyone knows someone who is facing or who has already been made redundant. You might not, however, have thought it would be you.

Specifically, this section focuses on

- dealing with your feelings and handling the changes occurring
- creating your departure message so that you are clear about the way you will communicate how you left your last company or workplace.
- getting yourself organised in terms of finances, health, space and focus
- and preparing to look for work.

## Dealing with your feelings

Any type of major change in life can prompt different feelings in different people.

This section discusses:

- the range of emotions you may experience
- reviews the work of Psychiatrist, Elizabeth Kubler Ross in relation to the major change of losing a job
- the importance of having a strong support network around you
- being kind to yourself and listening to your needs

For some people being made redundant can come as a huge shock and not something they had ever considered happening to them. You may have worked for the same company, in the same job for many many years and felt safe and secure in your role. For others, redundancy has become a regular part of their career with some people having been made redundant more than once. It is important to recognise that redundancy can throw up all sorts of feelings, some of these may be positive, i.e. the opportunity for a fresh start, a time of excitement and the opportunity to explore other possibilities or less helpful, i.e. feelings of despair, that your world has been turned completely upside down and not knowing which way to turn first.

It is likely that you will experience a range of different feelings and emotions. You may be excited, enthusiastic or even relieved or angry, bitter, anxious, humiliated or completely overwhelmed about what is happening to you currently. For some, leaving a job can be a huge relief. It might release you from a major cause of stress in your life or remove you from a highly unsatisfying role. For others it can come as a real shock, particularly if you are defined by your job and if maintaining your current financial status is dependent on the role.

It is completely normal to experience a wide range of emotions and feelings. Losing your job through redundancy can trigger feelings associated with other major life changing events involving loss, such as loss of partner through divorce. You too are experiencing loss. You may experience feelings of denial, anger and depression before finally being able to accept your situation and move forward positively.

# what's next for me?

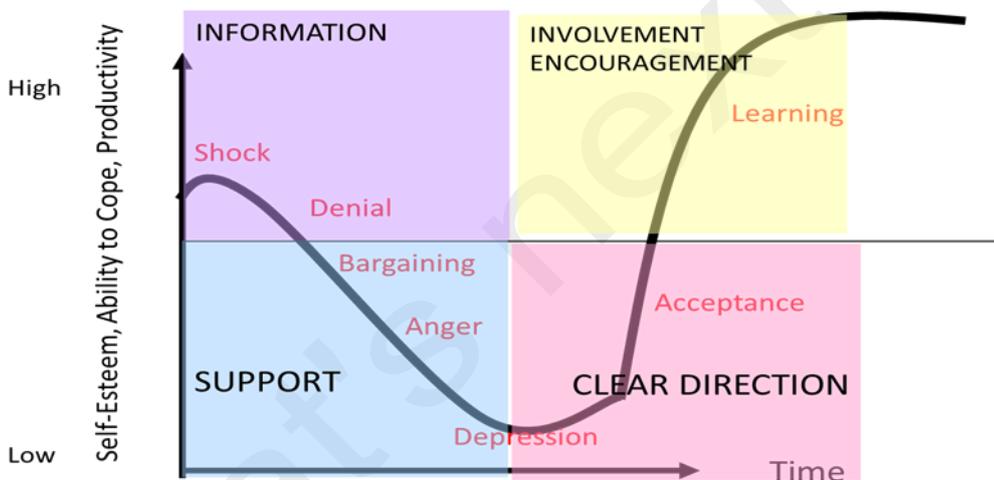
In addition, your self confidence and self-esteem may also be affected which can feel frightening, but recognise that these feelings are perfectly normal and usually temporary.

See the appendix at the back of this section which tells the stories of people who have actually faced redundancy and how they coped.

## The work of Elizabeth Kubler Ross

The 5 stages of Grief by Elizabeth Kubler Ross are often used to describe the feelings that arise during times of change and transition in our lives and in particular in relation to situations of loss. What Kubler Ross wrote about this subject indicates that during change individuals may experience feelings of shock and denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance.

Remember though that everyone is different in how they handle the circumstances they are operating within. You may go through some of the stages and not others or you may go through all of them. In addition, there is no sequence to the order in which you might go through the stages. Some people enter a stage, leave it and then return to it again or some people get stuck in one stage and struggle to leave it. There is no specific measurement of the time spent in each phase – this is dependent upon the individual. You may have seen people that are able to brush themselves off and jump straight back to things very quickly and others that find it very difficult to deal with things and who seem unable to let go of what's happened to them and move on. How the loss is perceived by the individual will naturally affect the intensity of feelings and duration.



Based on the work of Kubler Ross

## Explanation of what emotions and feelings you may experience

<b>Feelings that might arise when faced with redundancy</b>	
<b>Shock &amp; Denial</b>	<p>When things are difficult to deal with and we hear news that we don't want to accept, it can be easy to try and deny the situation. This is a natural defence mechanism and a way of trying to protect ourselves from a situation that is very uncomfortable to us. Even if you were aware that redundancies were going to occur in your Company, it can still be a huge shock when you are called into the office and given the news.</p> <p>You may have heard of some people who are unable to tell their loved ones that they have been made redundant and who continue to get up, get ready for work and leave the house each day. These people are in denial of what has happened to them and trying to protect themselves and those close to them from the reality.</p>
<b>Anger</b>	<p>You may become angry and upset about what's happening or has happened to you. You may feel anger for the Company that has put you in this position, feel angry at yourself or display signs of anger to those close to you due to your own frustrations and feelings about the current situation. It is perfectly natural to feel angry and best to try and work through these feelings in order to let them go.</p>
<b>Bargaining</b>	<p>You may try and bargain with yourself. For example, you may make lots of statements that start "What if..." or "If only..." You may wish that you could turn back time and have life back to normal and how it used to be. You may start to blame yourself and consider what you could have done differently to avoid the current situation and to have remained in the job.</p> <p>Remember though that it is the job which has been made redundant and not you. Try to keep this in mind. You cannot change what has happened.</p>
<b>Depression</b>	<p>You may feel quite down about the way that life is going and experience feelings of unhappiness, despondency, and isolation. You want back what you have lost. You may feel low and find it hard to take an optimistic approach, particularly if you have started applying for a few jobs and not yet been successful.</p> <p>Make sure that you have some supportive people around you to help you through this phase and who can help you remain motivated and make you feel good about yourself.</p>
<b>Acceptance</b>	<p>Acceptance comes when you are able to acknowledge what's happened and move positively into the future.</p>

These feelings can arise, even if you have made the choice to leave a job. You may have resigned or taken voluntary redundancy feeling courageous and optimistic about your future, however, once your notice period is complete and you find yourself at home searching for a new job, other feelings that catch you off guard may surface.

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You may feel irritated about needing to deal with your feelings and be tempted to brush them aside, but it is only when the past has been suitably acknowledged that you can begin to prepare for the future. Recognising and understanding your own feelings is an essential part of transition and once you start attending interviews, you need to show prospective employers that you have let go of the past and are not holding onto and bringing negative feelings in your next position.

If you do find yourself experiencing feelings that are causing you concern or that you are not used to, it is important to talk about them as openly as possible. Find family, friends and colleagues that you trust and who will listen. You may well find that talking things through and expressing your situation helps you to make more sense of what's happened and perhaps help you to more readily come to terms with the event and explain the changes in your life. And don't feel bad about calling upon the help of your family, friends and colleagues – you never know when one of these people might require your help and support in the future and of course if these people know about your situation, they may be aware of potential career opportunities available.

If your feelings continue to hamper your progress and you find it difficult to move on, you might want to consider seeking professional help and advice.

## Being kind to yourself

Also be kind to yourself. You are going through a period of adjustment. What's the point of beating yourself up mentally about your situation and why it happened? Be gentle and go easy on yourself. You may find that you need to take some time out for a complete rest, yet believe that you should be applying for new jobs and searching the Internet to get things moving. Listen to what your body is telling you it needs. If you take time out for a proper rest, you are likely to find that you are far more productive in terms of your job search. You are far more likely to come to it feeling refreshed and having had some time to reflect on your future course of action.

Think about how you might treat a close friend who was going through this experience. You would undoubtedly be supportive, encouraging and positive – so why treat yourself any differently?

## Creating a departure message

It is important to consider what you are going to communicate as part of your departure message, i.e. what you tell other people when they ask you the reason why you left your company. This is referred to as your departure message or to put a more positive spin on it, your job search message.

This section outlines:

- What is a job search message
- Why is a job search message important
- Some examples of job search messages
- Creating your own job search message

## What is a job search message?

A job search message is the message that you choose to communicate to other people that you come into contact with that might help you get a new job. It provides them with an overview of why you left your old Company and is a frequently asked question particularly at interview.

## Why is it important?

It is important because it is another tool to help you sell your skills, experience and strengths if used in the right way and it also provides information to networking colleagues or a prospective Employer about how you view your old company.

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Creating a Departure Message follows on from the section on Dealing with your Feelings as the way you are feeling can have a positive or negative impact when you compose your departure message. Your feelings about your last Company may not be the most positive at the moment, but frankly whilst people might sympathise when hearing how badly you feel you were treated and what a terrible Organisation your last Company was to work for, this won't get you a new job. It is particularly important to consider how your departure message will be perceived by prospective Employers.

Make sure the message you give is positive, so do allow yourself time to recover your poise and self-confidence before drafting your message. In addition, ensure that you are consistent. Ensure that you give the same message to all those people that might be able to assist you with your job search.

## Examples of departure messages

Take a look at the examples below

### Poor Messages

- ✗ "I was made redundant from Halls Ltd because they had too many Engineers and I was the unlucky one chosen to leave".
- ✗ "I feel that I have outgrown my current employers, their views and practices are outdated and out of sync with my own opinions, I don't agree with my manager's direction and there's little opportunity to progress. I fancy a change".

In relation to the first example above a prospective Employer is likely to want to know why you were selected and why you were unlucky, rather than any of the other Engineers. This may not be a discussion that you want to get into. The statement could imply rightly or wrongly that the previous Company based their decision on performance and that this person was made redundant because they were under-performing. Do you really want to get into a discussion about redundancy selection and why you were selected? In addition, the statement talks about the person being redundant rather than the job. Overall it is not a very positive statement.

The second example talks about negative reasons for leaving the Company. It shows a mismatch between the employee and his or her Manager and the Company. This might indicate to a new Employer that there could be a possible mismatch in the new Company. Again it is not a positive statement and gives the individual no opportunity to sell him or herself. There appears to be more interest in expressing a personal opinion about the previous Employer.

### Good Messages

- ✓ "I recognised that Halls Ltd would need to reduce their staff numbers to remain in business due to the economic downturn and the loss of several major orders. However, I believe that the role I carried out there, has given me additional engineering experience. In particular I have developed my project management and organisational skills and now feel confident running a project from conception to launch. These are assets that I can bring to a new job".
- ✓ "I have been in my current role for X years which I have thoroughly enjoyed and learnt a great deal. I have developed my skills in X, Y and Z which are required for this role. I have read up about your Organisation and I believe that I could really contribute with the experience I have and it would give me the opportunity to progress in an industry that I'm very interested in".

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The first statement above shows that the person's vision is optimistic. There is no sign of bitterness or resentment but an acknowledgement of what happens sometimes in organisational life. In addition, the statement is used to outline skills and experience. The individual has used it as an additional opportunity for marketing him or herself.

In the second example, again the individual uses the situation as an opportunity to talk about their skills and also what they believe they could contribute in the future to the new Company. It also demonstrates that the person likes to learn and that they are enthusiastic about the industry sector. Both the above examples are far more positive responses.

## Creating your own job search message

When creating your job search message, think about what you want it to say about you and how you wish to be perceived by others. You might like to consider the following questions before creating your message.

- Why did I leave my last Company? / why am I leaving my existing Company?
- What explanation did the Company provide regarding your leaving if your departure was company enforced?
- How can you use this information in a positive way?
- What did you learn during your time with the Company?
- In what ways have you enhanced your career prospects by working for this Company, for example do you now have additional skills, experience or are able to bring additional strengths to a new role?
- Think back to appraisal meetings or chats with your Manager/Boss – what were you particularly praised for in your role? What strengths or attributes did your Manager particularly value in you?
- How has this experience helped you decide what you want to do next?
- Are there any personal characteristics or attributes that you would like to portray in your message?
- How do you wish to be perceived by a potential new Employer?

See the Job Search Message Questionnaire and Message Template appendices at the back of this section.

## Getting organised - finances

Your priority right now might be to get focussed on your job search and gain new employment as soon as possible. However, don't overlook some other areas in your life that will help you remain in control.

If you are facing a period of time without work, then your financial circumstances might be an area of concern in your life. Naturally, an ideal situation is to leave one job and walk straight into another one, but life doesn't always work that way. However, remember to stay calm and don't panic about the situation. Rushing into impulsive decisions regarding your financial situation are unlikely to achieve the results you want. There are lots to think about and taking a logical and rational approach will help you to make the right choices. The material outlined below focuses on:

- Creating a budget
- Strategies for cutting costs
- Other Financial aspects to consider including your pension

### Your budget

This might be the first time that you've ever had to sit down and create a budget plan. You are going to be considering your income and expenditure. Take a look at your income. Did you receive a redundancy settlement and payment in lieu of notice? Do you have any savings you can draw upon if necessary? Is there anything else that brings income into your life? Make a list of the income available and once you have listed your expenditure, you will be able to estimate how long your redundancy pay and other savings will support you.

Next, write down a list of all your expenditure. What weekly or monthly payments do you have to make? Where else does your money go? Think about all the things that you spend money on including the non-essentials as well as the

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essentials. You don't want to find that you've budgeted for all your essentials and then when you continue to spend money on other things, this is what tips you over your budget. See the budget template appendix at the back of this section to help you review your financial situation and of course alter the categories according to your own personal circumstances.

Once you have a better idea of your current financial situation, you may choose to look for ways to reduce your current expenditure. Often when there is regular income coming in, people do not always take time out to review their finances. They know that they can meet their financial requirements and so don't worry about it. However, I am sure that you have heard of the saying "cut your coat according to your cloth". This means living your life within your means. You may decide to take the opportunity to look at ways to cut back on expenditure or to be more frugal. Some ideas are outlined below:

## Cutting costs

Any good business seeks to cut back on its overheads and costs and ensure that it has a healthy balance sheet. Apply the same rule to personal finances. Why not take this opportunity to consider where you might cut costs?

- Review credit cards for better deals. Could you transfer your balance to a new card and save on monthly repayments?
- Review any savings accounts you have. Could you move your money into a higher interest account?
- Check out switching to an alternative provider on such services as gas, electricity and telephone. You might get a better deal and make some savings
- Ensure that your home is properly insulated and that you are not paying for heat to escape. There may even be grants available to help you save energy
- What services might you be able to cut back on? Are there things you just take for granted in your life? Take a look at your bank statement – review where your money goes each week or month
- Think about swapping to an alternative supermarket to do your weekly shop or shop around for the best deals or think about the brands you buy. Could you make some changes to cut costs to your food shop? Check out your local market, butcher, baker and green grocer. You may find that shopping locally saves you money
- Do you have some things that you have been meaning to sell? This might be the time to advertise items for sale via an online site such as EBay or in one of the free papers
- Are there any bad financial habits you have picked up? Do you for instance always pay for your morning coffee on your debit or credit card? Think about setting yourself a weekly budget and only using cash to pay for things. This way you know exactly what you are spending every day
- Before making a purchase, ask yourself the question – do I need this or do I just want it?

Check out sites like [www.moneysavingexpert.com](http://www.moneysavingexpert.com) for helpful advice and take a look at the BBC's Watchdog helpful fact sheet on how to cut costs at [www.bbc.co.uk/watchdog/consumer\\_advice/pdf/fhc\\_factsheet2.pdf](http://www.bbc.co.uk/watchdog/consumer_advice/pdf/fhc_factsheet2.pdf)

## Other financial aspects to consider

### Consider debt repayment

Take some advice on debt repayment. Some loans are best paid off as quickly as possible e.g. credit cards and high APR agreements. Other loans may be best left outstanding e.g. mortgage repayments. Assess each debt on its own merits and talk to your providers about possible options.

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## Investigate your tax position

Contact your tax office to see if you are entitled to a tax rebate. Help should be available from any local Tax Office or you can look on-line at: <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/individuals/index.shtml>.

## Council Tax

Also contact your local council offices regarding your council tax payments and whether you will receive a reduction or exemption whilst you're unemployed.

## Pensions

Take careful advice from an independent source regarding your pension(s). Deciding what you should do about your existing pension arrangement is in the long run one of the most important decisions you have to take.

The position may be complicated and require professional advice. For some facts on this subject the following website might help:

[http://www.moneymadeclear.org.uk/guides/retirement/saving\\_for\\_retirement.html](http://www.moneymadeclear.org.uk/guides/retirement/saving_for_retirement.html)

The Pensions Advisory Service is an independent non-profit organisation that provides free information, advice and guidance on the whole range of pensions, including state, company, personal and stakeholder schemes.

Their helpline number is: 0845 6012923.

Click here to go through to their Website: <http://www.pensionsadvisoryservice.org.uk/>

## Insurance policies

You may want to review your options on non-essential insurance policies but ensure that you still have adequate levels of cover for you and your family on essential cover. But do check to see if you have the type of insurance that pays some or your entire mortgage if you are made redundant. If so, contact your insurance provider. There are likely to be conditions to meet before they provide any funds, such as providing copies of appropriate paperwork and notification from the Job Centre that you have signed on to claim unemployment benefit.

## Rainy day assets

Perhaps you have some assets which you might consider selling to release some money or indeed some funds put aside for just such an emergency as this. Consider any such steps very carefully.

Consult a regulated advisor on any major financial decisions.

## The Job Centre

- Dependent upon your personal circumstances you may be entitled to some benefits including National Insurance contributions
- Check out what you may be entitled to by calling the Job Centre Plus Claims Line or check online
- You may also be eligible for interview expenses and funding for training

You may be entitled to some benefits depending upon your individual circumstances. You can call the Job Centre Plus Claims Line on: **0800 0556688**

The office is open Monday to Friday, 8 am until 6 pm.

Have your National Insurance details, redundancy letter and other personal information ready to ease the process. Once they have all the appropriate details, a Job Centre representative will make you an appointment.

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Or you can check out what benefits you might be entitled to online:

<http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits/BenefitsTaxCreditsAndOtherSupport/index.htm>

## **Do not turn up at your local Job Centre Plus to discuss benefits without an appointment.**

Staff will not see anyone who do not have an appointment and will ask you to phone the claims line.

The Job Centre will provide confidential advice about your entitlements, such as Job Seekers Allowance, Income Support, Family Credits, etc. The rules for these vary so do not assume you know the answers before you obtain factual information. Even if you feel unlikely to qualify for benefits you should at least sign on for National Insurance payments.

## **Interview expenses and funding for training**

The Job Centre may also be able to provide reimbursement for travelling expenses for interviews and you should also ask about any funding that might be available to help you train or re-train.

## **Getting organised - health, space and focus**

When you are focussed on getting a new job, it can push other aspects of your life into the background. However, maintaining a balanced perspective is important. You need to remain healthy and energised, have good time management skills and have some space to work in to help you make the most of your job search.

- Think about your health. It is important that you remain healthy in order to get another job. Take care of yourself in terms of your diet, maintain a regular exercise routine and try to keep to a regular sleep pattern.
- Time management is still very important during job search. You may believe that you have lots of time on your hands now; however, managing your time appropriately is key to your well being.
- Consider where you will undertake your job search. What space is available to you and how are you going to use it efficiently?
- Think about how you are going to utilise the technology available to you most effectively.

See the Getting Organised Checklist appendix at the back of this section.

## **Look after yourself**

When faced with redundancy and the feelings that might arise as part of this, it is important to look after your health. It can be easy to lose regular routine in relation to sleep, exercise and food which won't help how you feel about yourself and could ultimately affect your effectiveness when searching for a job.

As we have mentioned, different people react to different circumstances in their lives in different ways. It is important to take care of yourself and try and remain positive about your future. Consider your wellbeing:

- Take some regular exercise. Find something that you enjoy doing – you are much more likely to keep it up, if you enjoy it
- Maintain regular eating habits and try not to use being at home as an excuse to overindulge
- Try and keep a regular pattern to your day and to your sleep patterns. Getting a good night's sleep will help you remain focussed on your job campaign. Try not to get into irregular sleeping patterns. You don't want to miss all important calls inviting you for an interview because you are still in bed at noon because you were working into the night on your job search.

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- Try to ensure that you develop a good support structure. Keep in regular contact with people that encourage and support you and who help you keep positive. Avoid those who you know tire you or who deplete your confidence.
- Keep an active social life. Don't hide but make a positive effort to accept invitations. Talk to people and network. You never know who may be aware of that next career opportunity!
- Make sure that family and friends recognise that you are not "off work" but "working on your future".

## Organise your time

Think carefully about how you will construct your days in relation to your job search. Large amounts of time can be eaten up sitting at your computer undertaking Internet job searches and often this can be a fruitless and frustrating task. You want to work constructively and devote time to all methods of job search.

Take some time out to plan your campaign and think about how you might allocate your time. It can be helpful to try and put in place a working structure or routine that was similar to your normal working pattern. But, be realistic, job searching can be hard work so pace yourself accordingly.

Do spend some of your time working away from home, in a library or a local cafe so that you have a change of environment and the ability to interact with others. And remember, to take some time out with family and friends if the opportunity arises – you could be back at work quicker than you anticipate and wish that you had had taken the chance when it was available.

## Organise your space

Searching for a new job is very much like having a job. It requires your focus, attention and dedication. It is important, therefore, to find some private space at home or somewhere quiet where you can work without disruption.

Do you have a spare room or some space in your home for example a spare bedroom or an infrequently used dining room that you could make use of? You want somewhere that you can store all your information without disrupting the family. If there's no space at home, utilise your local library or if you have a laptop why not take a trip to your local coffee shop with WIFI to conduct some of your job search.

It is likely that you'll accumulate a lot of correspondence, notes, brochures, newspapers and journals. It is important to get yourself organised so that you can easily find papers and important correspondence relating to specific job applications. You are going to need to organise and run an efficient office dedicated to marketing yourself and your skills during your planned job search campaign.

Track which jobs you apply for in a binder or filing system or via an excel spreadsheet. Keep it in date order. This is so you can chase non-respondents and also to ensure you don't apply for the same role twice. See the job tracker appendix at the back of this section.

## Use of technology

Access to a computer and the Internet is essential for job searching. Many vacancies are advertised via the Internet now plus it is an essential tool to use when researching companies to find out more about who they are, what they do and what you might expect should you secure a new position with them.

In addition, you will need an appropriate email address as many Employers and Recruiters prefer applications to be emailed to them and will use email to correspond with you regarding vacancy progress. Remember that the funny email name you set up to use with friends won't be appropriate to use with Recruiters or your potential new Employer.

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Make sure that you have an easily remembered and appropriate email address. Avoid addresses with hyphens and underscore or anything which could easily be misunderstood or confused if you are giving the email address over the telephone.

If you do not have much experience of using a computer or the Internet, ask at your local library about training in this area. The Library may well run introductory courses or certainly be able to help you find an organisation that does.

Access to a printer and copier may also be useful, but if these are not available to you, your local library or post office may be able to assist.

Ensure that your answer machines both at home and on your mobile phone are working so you don't miss any messages from potential employers and make sure that you have a personal message set up so that new callers know that they have the right number if they are leaving a message for you.

## Preparing to look for work

Having read through this section you are ready to make a start. You may wish to work through the various other sections dependent on your needs:

- Are you still contemplating your future and career options? Why not undertake a review and carry out some of our helpful exercises in the Managing your Career section
- Are you concerned that your CV is not up to scratch. Take a look at the CV section and work through the exercises to get that all important marketing document finalised
- Want to know where to search for a job and how to network. Go to Your Job Search section to get help in this area.
- Do you have some interviews lined up, but feel out of touch with what to expect. Browse our Interview and Selection section to help get you prepared.

If you talk to authors, they may well tell you that they have certain rituals in place before beginning their new novel. This can be anything from writing with a certain pen or pencil, ensuring that they always sit in the same chair, at the same desk and in the same space or that they believe that they can only perform the art of writing between the hours of 5 am and 7 am. Many will also tell you that they often resist sitting down to start work and can find all sorts of distractions to avoid the job in hand.

You now need to get yourself in the right frame of mind to think about how you will make a start on looking for a job. Perhaps you too will have a certain place you sit in to carry out your job search or a certain time of day that works best for you in terms of your own personal energy or that fits in with others members of your family. Be careful, however, that you do not fall into the practice of finding all sorts of other things to do that distract you and which take away your focus from the job in hand.

Looking for work may be something that you have not done in a long long time or perhaps you have never had to search for a job. Your previous career could have been forged on personal recommendations or you took a temporary post that became permanent, or you were successful and were promoted to your current level of seniority. Whatever, your situation, you need to consider how you are going to make a start.

If you have read the earlier parts of this section, you have some good space to work in; you are set up from a technical perspective and have everything in place in readiness to make a start. However, what are you going to do next?

If you are still uncertain about what your future holds and want to consider your career options, go to the Managing your Career section and work through our exercises.

If you know exactly what job you want, and just want to get on with writing your CV, go to the Your CV section.

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If you feel confident that your CV is already in good shape and it's ready to go, but you want to explore what job search opportunities are available then go to the Your Job Search section.

And finally, if you are already in the fortunate position of having some interviews lined up, why not review our section on Interviews and Selection and get yourself prepared for that all important meeting.

## What's important - handling change and redundancy

### 1. Recognise that

- The one constant in life is that change will occur
- When you are the one making changes, you are able to influence the situation and take control
- All sorts of feelings may arise when change is forced on you
- It is important to recognise what's happening to you and reach a point where once again you are in control

### 2. Dealing with your feelings

- Change brought about by redundancy may evoke many different feelings
- Talking about it with a trusted friend may help you work things through and enable you to positively move on
- During this period of adjustment, remember to be kind to yourself

### 3. Creating your departure message

- Your departure message is a positive, self-promotional message that tells others about the reason you left your old job
- It is also known as a job search message as it is the message you will give to people that might help you secure new employment
- Make sure that you use it to sell your skills, experience and strengths
- Be consistent, use the message during networking and at interviews
- It is not an excuse to bad-mouth your previous employer

### 4. Finances

- Create a budget to monitor your current and ongoing financial situation
- Reviews ways of cutting costs if you need to
- Make sure you sort out your pension if you have one
- Find out what support is available from the Job Centre

### 5. Health, space and focus

- Look after yourself. You need to remain healthy to get another job
- Keep to regular routines in terms of exercise, diet and sleep patterns
- Develop a strong support structure. Avoid people who deplete your confidence
- Use time effectively and make time for some fun activities too
- Find somewhere quiet and free from distraction to undertake your job search
- Ensure that you have an email address and that your mobile phone and home phone are set up to take a message

### 6. Preparing to look for work

- Do you know what job you want? Before making a start ensure that you know what types of jobs you wish to apply for
- If you are still unsure, work through some career options exercises to help you assess your choices

# what's next for me?

- Think about how you are going to make a start on your job search
- Get yourself in the right mind set and approach your job search with the right attitude
- Stay focussed and avoid distractions

what's next for me?

## People who have faced redundancy and moved on

1. Janice was made redundant from her role as an Administrator after 5 years in the job. She reported to the Managing Director of a Recruitment Consultancy and absolutely loved her role. The position had evolved since she had been in it and she had taken on more and more responsibilities that were not originally in her job description. She was devastated about the loss of her job and went home to tell her family. Her husband happened to mention her situation to his colleagues the following day at work and later that week one of them advised him of a similar type of job that had become vacant at his cousin's firm. Janice put forward her CV, had an interview and was selected for the role. Due to Janice's enthusiastic approach and her interest in adding more value to the Company, the new Company is now sponsoring her to gain basic qualifications in the industry.
2. Jim was a Mechanic in the motorsport industry when the business made cuts due to new ownership. He had been in the company since his apprenticeship and felt daunted by his redundancy and not sure where he might get a new role. The whole motorsport sector was going through many changes and Jim decided that he wanted to move away from this industry but wanted to continue to use the skills he had. He also wanted a job where he would travel less and be able to spend more time with his family. After applying for several different roles, Jim joined the RAC as one of their Road Side Assistants. Although he earns less money now, he does get to spend more time with his family. Jim said that he enjoys his new role and he gets a real satisfaction in helping others.
3. Louise worked as the Group Personnel Manager in an automotive supply business. She had been there just over 2 years. A major restructuring exercise took place and changes were made to the management layers and as a result she lost her job. Some of the UK management were able to assume the larger European roles but Louise did not have the relevant HR experience or language capabilities. It was initially a terrible shock for her and she was very tearful for the first day or so. Louise received a generous redundancy settlement and knew that she had time to look for another job without financial risk. However, she encountered a wide range of emotions during her time between jobs ranging from huge disappointment to anger. It took some time for Louise to accept the situation, which was not helped by hearing rumours and gossip about the current lack of HR expertise in her old Company which made Louise even more resentful.

Although Louise had several interviews, she was not successful in securing new employment. Feedback provided intimated that Louise was coming across negatively about her old Employer and was dwelling on this rather than selling herself and what benefits she could bring to a new Company. It took a while for Louise to realise that her comments were impacting upon her negatively, but when she did realise, she talked the situation through with a trusted former colleague and then focussed her attention on her interview technique and what her leaving message was. Two months later Louise was offered an HR Manager position with a large, reputable, US company in another industry at twice her previous salary.

4. Paul was a city trader in London who unfortunately was made redundant as a result of a downturn in business due to economic circumstances. He had a very affluent lifestyle and lived in a big house, drove expensive cars and his children were in private education. Paul was in severe shock when he was told that he no longer had a role within the organisation. Regardless of a handsome redundancy package he could not bring himself to tell his friends and family what had happened. He believed that his family relied on him to be their provider.

So, each day he got up as usual, dressed in his usual work clothes and went into the City as if he was still working. He tried to get a new role by registering with agents and meeting up with network contacts. This continued for three months, but unfortunately his efforts were not successful. He eventually had to discuss the matter with his wife, when he knew that he might not be able to meet the upcoming term fees for his children's education. He was in a state of real distress by this time. Not discussing his situation with anyone had put him under a huge amount of pressure and strain and he believed that his wife would leave him once he admitted his circumstances. Actually, his wife was very understanding and decided to return to work herself to aid the family financial situation. The family took the decision to downsize and move into a more moderate house, they sold some of the cars and made some lifestyle changes and cutbacks. The capital raised was used to help Paul set up his own business as an Independent Financial Adviser.

## **My reaction to being told I was redundant: I felt like I'd been punched in the stomach and there were lots of tears!**

I remember quite clearly the morning my boss called me in and said that he needed to take 10 heads out of the business including my role. I had no warning that this conversation was coming and I felt sick when he told me. I couldn't breathe and it was a terrible shock. I remember trying to stay composed and said "I see". "I see", how ridiculous it sounds now. The truth was I didn't understand, I worked really hard for the Company and very long hours. There were plenty of "shirkers" in the company, why wasn't he getting rid of them? I think my boss asked me if I was going to be OK after receiving this news and I think I nodded although I have to say the conversation after that was a bit of blur. I do remember him asking me would I be able to make the other 9 heads across the businesses redundant whilst I worked my notice period and again, I nodded. What was I thinking?

I left his office and made a bee line for the Ladies. I was in there for ages and just couldn't stop crying. Every time I thought I'd composed myself to go back to my office I cried again. Eventually, after about an hour I got myself together and walked straight to my office, gathered my things and headed out the door into the car. I cried all the way home and kept crying. I felt angry, sad, scared, insulted, shocked and worried all at once. How was I going to pay my mortgage? I wanted to know how much money I'd get as severance pay to see how long it would last me and how quickly I needed to get a job. I was due to go out to one of the businesses the following day to start the other redundancies but I just couldn't face it and so I phoned my boss and told him I'd go, but I needed some time for myself first.

I spent the day writing a list of questions for my boss. These questions ranged from how much money was I going to get and would I receive a reference from the Company. I worked out the minimum amount I'd receive from the government website and found some comfort in this. I was fortunate in that at least I'd have about three months before I needed to get another job. I worked on my CV and started to look at job adverts.

The following day, I went to the other business and advised the individuals that they were to be made redundant. It was horrid! Some of these people had been there years and were heartbroken; others were very matter of fact; and some were very angry. I managed to keep my composure throughout and empathised with their situation. I did not tell anyone that I was being made redundant as well. On the way back, however, the flood gates opened again. I think back on this now and feel that it was my way of dealing with the situation, better out than in so to speak.

The next day I had my second meeting with my boss and we went through my questions. He answered them all but our relationship was now very strained and he was very careful with his words. I was very angry with him and he knew this.

After keeping the situation to myself for a few days, I told my Mum, in secrecy. She was not to tell my Dad and she didn't. It wasn't because my Dad would not have understood but he is tenacious in character and would be calling everyday for a report on what I'd been doing to find another job. At that time, I wouldn't have been able to cope with the pressure.

The following week I started to apply for jobs. I remember I was quite excited as I got an interview more or less straight away. However, I wasn't really ready. I had not been interviewed for some time so had got out of the habit and did little preparation. I had not anticipated the types of questions I'd be asked and more importantly what I'd say about why I was looking for a new role. On reflection, I must have come across as quite negative at that time because I hadn't really come to terms with my situation. Needless to say, I didn't get the job.

I slowly realised that I had to prepare fully for each interview, not only answers to potential questions but to also research the organisation. In addition, I had to have a rational explanation for leaving my current organisation. The message I formulated was "The UK management layer across the business was being taken out of the organisation". Once I recognised that the redundancy was not happening to me but was part of a broader business decision, one that happens in many organisations and I had a proper message to convey about this, I felt much more comfortable about it.

I left my old organisation with my redundancy package in the July and in the September landed myself a new role at a major healthcare company with an 80% wage increase. I've never looked back since.

Top tips:

- It's natural that you will go through a range of emotions when faced with redundancy
- Ensure you talk to someone about it
- Work out how long your money will last and how quickly you have to get another job
- Take some time, if possible, to determine what you want to do next
- Ensure you have a rational explanation as to why you're leaving
- Thoroughly prepare for interviews

what's next for me?

## Job Search Message Questionnaire

1. Why did I leave my last Company? / Why am I leaving my existing Company?
2. What explanation did the Company provide regarding your leaving if your departure was company enforced?
3. How can you use this information in a positive way?
4. What did you learn during your time with the Company?
5. In what ways have you enhanced your career prospects by working for this Company, for example do you now have additional skills, experience or are able to bring additional strengths to a new role?
6. Think back to appraisal meetings or chats with your Manager/Boss – what were you particularly praised for in your role? What strengths or attributes did your Manager particularly value in you?
7. How has this experience helped you decide what you want to do next? Can this be portrayed in your message?
8. Are there any personal characteristics or attributes that you would like to portray in your message?
9. How do you wish to be perceived by a potential new Employer?

## My Job Search Message

So tell me why did you leave your last Company?

The reason I left my last Company was because:

what's next for me?

Monthly Budget Template													
	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
<b>Income</b>													
Salary 1 (after tax)													
Salary 2 (after tax)													
Income from Savings/Investments													
Income protection insurance													
Redundancy Settlement													
Notice Pay													
Other													
<b>Total</b>													
<b>Outgoings</b>													
Mortgage/Rent													
Utilities													
Monthly credit card payments													
Pension Payments													
Regular Savings													
Insurances													
Personal loan repayment													
Mobile phone													
School Fees													
Car costs/Petrol													
Gifts													
Holidays													
Non-essentials													
<b>Total</b>													
<b>Balance</b>													

## Getting Organised Checklist

Have you.....	Yes	No
Created a job search message		
Undertaken a review of your finances and created a budget if appropriate		
Made an appointment with the Job Centre and reviewed benefits and support if appropriate		
Considered when is the best time of day for you to undertake your job search		
Organised space in your home for you to undertake your job search or checked out the facilities at your local library or other suitable venues close to home		
Set up an appropriate filing system, either electronic or manual to help monitor your progress		
Set up an email to use during your job search		
Checked that your mobile phone and home phone have message services		
Set up appropriate messages on both phones advising the caller who they have reached		







