

EIGHT STEPS FOR DEALING WITH REDUNDANCY

Dealing with redundancy and finding out that you will be losing your job is one of the most difficult experiences faced by many workers during their careers.

It can be an emotional and stressful time, often made worse by the sense of grief and loss attached to losing a job into which you have put so much time and energy.

Here are Eight Steps for Dealing with Redundancy that will help you get back up, process the emotional impact of being made redundant and get back in to the workforce in a rewarding and fulfilling new role.

1. Don't take it personally

Losing your job is stressful, but you're not alone. While some people are lucky to work in the same job their whole careers, this is no longer the norm, and many thousands of people will face the difficulties of redundancy every year. Some workers may even face the redundancy process more than once over their lifetimes.

It's essential to understand that the decision by your employer to make your position redundant was not personal. It's also worth remembering that, since it is a difficult business decision made because of external factors, other employers will understand why you're now seeking new employment - they won't judge you for being made redundant or hold it against you. It's therefore important not to self-judge or doubt your own capabilities and experience.

2. Be pragmatic and process your emotions

Finding out that your role is going to be made redundant is always a major shock, even when you might have suspected it was a possibility. Receiving the news in a formal way suddenly makes it real, and this can trigger a range of emotions.

Reactions to redundancy include shock, anger, denial, sadness, fear and helplessness. These are all fair and reasonable reactions.

It's important to acknowledge the emotions you are experiencing and to discuss them with your friends and family. If necessary, reach out to a professional therapist or counsellor for further, formal support.

3. Banish negative thoughts

Dealing with redundancy isn't easy and nor is managing or processing the negative thoughts that can feel like they're engulfing you.

It's crucial not to fall into negativity, especially in the form of thinking about worst-case-scenarios or developing feelings of despair about the future. You will come out the other side of this process but you need to look after yourself on the way through.

Focus instead on how you will handle the situation. Make plans to socialise with friends and family, stay active, take time to enjoy your favourite hobby or consider volunteering some time with a local charity.

Keep to your normal routine as much as possible or create new routines to provide structure in your day.

4. You are not alone

Redundancies occur in all industries, in small businesses through to major companies and public sector agencies. Most workers will face the prospect of redundancy at one stage in their career or another.

It's important to remind yourself that many thousands of people have faced this same difficult period and come through, stronger and more experienced because of it. You will find friends and family who've gone through similar situations come out of the woodwork to check on you and provide support.

You'll be surprised to learn how common this experience is.

5. Take charge of your finances

When you receive your redundancy payment, you should draw up a monthly budget of your essential outgoings. You may find it easier to rearrange some expenses now, but sitting down with your bank statement and closely assessing where your money is being spent will give you the basis for a plan to move forward with.

This plan will show you exactly how far your money will go and how long you can give yourself to find a new position. Depending on your age and your circumstances, you might find it helpful to speak to a financial counsellor or a financial planner about your options in the medium to long term.

6. Update your CV

Now is the time to take stock of your skills, experience and achievements. Use these to create a new CV and think about ideas for what you'll say about yourself in a Cover Letter.

Your employer might provide you with Outplacement Support services; make full use of these if they do. They will help you prepare for Job Interviews and provide feedback on your CV and Cover Letter writing skills.

It's also important to get written references from your employer and arrange for trusted referees to provide a verbal reference by phone for employers who might prefer that.

7. Start networking

Networking opportunities are everywhere, and often hiding in plain sight! You can network wherever and whenever you find people. Are you on LinkedIn yet? If not, sign up. It's important to let people in your professional network (and even your wider social network) know that you are back on the job market.

People who already know you and the work you're capable of will be a great resource for finding job opportunities and securing interviews.

8. Find your next job

Once you've sorted your finances, updated your CV and set yourself a deadline, it's time to start searching for a new job with a sense of purpose and determination. If you've been with your last employer for at least two years, you should be given some time off with pay during your notice period to look for a new job. Take advantage of this time off even if you feel angry or disgruntled with your employer.

This is not the end of the road. Think of it as an opportunity to expand your horizons, take stock of what you like and dislike about your current role, and what you want from a new job into the future.