



gateway 
CAREER MANAGEMENT

Gateway Guide Six Step Redundancy Process

Gateway Career Management is a team of career coaches and development specialists based in the South East.

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Six Step Redundancy Process

Here are our six key steps to ensuring that you manage your redundancy well.

1. Know the process and your rights

Before making any decisions about your future it is important that you know exactly where you stand as far as the process of redundancy is concerned. What are your rights and entitlements? Can you take any action? What are the steps involved? What are the risks involved. Getting the right legal advice is essential. Here are the main points that you need to know.

- Your employer must fulfill your contractual and statutory rights: accrued holiday pay; notice or pay in lieu of notice; and statutory redundancy pay. Many employers are more generous than this. They may have a redundancy policy as to how much to pay. You may be able to use your knowledge of how much other leavers have been paid.
- If your employer asks you to sign a compromise agreement, there must be an extra payment to persuade you to waive your rights to go to Court or Tribunal. You may want to negotiate, not just more money, but extended health or life insurance, a reference, outplacement or a longer period to exercise your share options. In the end, you want the peace of mind of knowing that you have got all you can, short of litigation. If you don't ask, you don't get.
- You may decide to litigate, for a variety of reasons. You need to know whether you have a good legal claim and what this is worth. Specialist employment solicitors advise on this, as well as negotiating, compromise agreements, tax and whether any restrictive covenants in your contract are valid. We recommend that you contact our Employment Law partner, Just Employment, for more details.

2. Take stock of your Transferable Skills

One of the biggest challenges you will face when considering a job or career change is giving your CV the punch and bite it needs to make an impact in a new industry or sector. You may think that little of what you have done to date will count, but you'd be wrong. We all gain and develop a wide range of skills that can be applied in many different roles.

What is a transferable skill? As the name suggests, a transferable skill is something that can be taken with you and applied to any new job. These are core skills that all employers value, and include:

- People skills – your ability to communicate, motivate and lead a team, or successfully coach or train people.
- Technical skills – knowledge of popular computer programmes, or more practical things like an ability to construct or repair.
- Data skills – good record keeping, detailed statistical analysis, or research skills.

Think of your current role and how much of it is solely concerned with the industry you're in now. Unless you're a specialist working at a high level with complex information, much of what you do could easily be taken elsewhere.

For example, if you are a good trainer, that skill could be used in any role – every business could do with someone who can teach others how to work better. Likewise, if you're a good organiser, any position that requires project management is there to consider. Client or customer service skills is another example. Almost anything can be a transferable skill. It's all about how you sell it to your prospective employer.

How do you identify your transferable skills?

To start with, look at job specs across a wide range of industries and see what skills they have in common. You can do this quickly and easily using one of the large job sites like Reed, Total Jobs or Monster's job search. Review your findings against what you are doing now. Think about your working day or week and do a quick analysis of what your tasks actually involve. How many are people related? How many have to do with data or technical expertise? This will help you focus on identifying skills you may not have even known you had. Don't ignore things that come as second nature to you and that you don't necessarily see as key attributes – they might be invaluable and of priceless value to a potential employer.

As you go through this process, write each skill down and compare it to your findings from your job spec comparison. There's a high chance that you will already have provable experience called for by virtually any job.

The 'provable' factor here is very important. It's obviously not merely enough to say 'I'm a great manager' or 'I'm really good with figures'. Make sure you identify specific achievements in your career that clearly demonstrate each of your transferable skills. By updating your CV regularly with each new success, you will improve your chances of landing the job you want when it's time to move on.

Your CV must outline your relevant skills and they must be upfront and clear to see. They must have key selling points. As you change your

career the first task of your CV is to convince the reader why you are a better prospect than other candidates who have more relevant experience in the role or industry. Your personal profile is the ideal place to sell yourself with some clear and eye-catching statements.

3. Know where you are at.

One of the most important factors to look at when thinking about what you have to offer the job market are your core “job and career wants”. These will have a strong bearing on what type of work you decide to do and on the organisation or business where you work. Here are some examples:

- Promotion prospects
- Job security
- A clear career path
- Respected organisation
- Clear objectives
- Diverse people
- Routine
- Excitement
- Working on my own
- Autonomy
- Informal atmosphere
- Authority

The key is to choose the ones that are important to you and that you **MUST HAVE**. In other words they are pivotal for you in any work environment and just not negotiable. Think about what you need in your work in order to be happy and satisfied. This is not just about the way you work, but also how you prefer to be managed/ work with others, where you want to work and under what sort of conditions.

Doing this will help you to identify some of the important factors which will affect the choice of what you do next and whether you are happy where you are now. You will want to give them priority when making choices about future opportunities - whether this is employed work, being your own boss, or working in a business partnership with others.

From the items – and our list has about 75 “wants” – mark up to ten which you consider to be the most essential. Then rank them by giving them a number, with number 1 being the most important. Finally ask yourself the following questions:

- How many of these 10 are being met in my current role or occupation?
- If they are not being met is that a problem? Maybe they are not appropriate for this kind of work or organisational culture?
- For my ideal job or for the next position that I am considering how many of these am I sure I can tick as being addressed?
- How many of these am I likely to have any influence over? If not, does that matter?
- Would I change any of them on reflection?

4. Job or Business?

By definition most people who are informed that their job or role is at risk and that they are facing possible redundancy are in a job or in employment, whether full or part time or with a large or small organisation. In many cases they may also not have been made redundant before in their careers and, quite probably, they will have always been in a job under PAYE.

While the whole redundancy process will undoubtedly be a new experience for them it is just as likely that the immediate work options that occur to them are limited to “How do I find another job?” This is quite normal but the world of work is changing at a pace. We hear it said frequently that it is not nearly so common now to have “a job for life” in one organisation given that the labour market has changed over the last 15 to 20 years and so too have personal working patterns and life style trends. What has not changed has been the attitude of people themselves who have only ever been in paid employment.

As you start to weigh up your options and consider the alternatives open to you it is important to take stock and ask yourself: “What are my main personal and financial requirements outside work? Am I the main bread earner? What lifestyle do I want and what do I (and my partner / family) need to earn each month in order to pay the bills and enjoy that lifestyle?” Having reviewed these key questions you should then analyse your own personality and basic temperament as a guide to how you prefer to work and the impact it will have on employment or self employment. Most of us have never had the benefit of any formal analysis as to “what makes us tick” so we rely almost entirely on what we believe we are good at, are skilled in, are trained to do or enjoy doing as the primary basis for making decisions and judgments on our occupation or choice of work.

But what if we actually have other skills that we are not aware of or not using? For example, the lawyer who is excellent and trained to give legal advice to his clients but has never realized that he is also a strong presenter with a natural flair for marketing and developing business opportunities. He has never had to use these skills so they have become dormant over time. The skills are in place and he could now possibly redirect them in another line of work.

With a full review of all of your skills completed you are now ready to consider other options and explore different alternatives. One of these might be the option of setting up your own business, joining a colleague in a small business or becoming a self employed consultant. 15 years ago we never tended to advise people to start up their own business until they were over 40. Why was this? We saw experience and track record as paramount and thought that people who set up their own business too young might be regarded negatively by others in their line of business. That has all changed. Today many people set up their own business after leaving university, returning from starting a family or following redundancy. The reason for this transition is not solely due to there being fewer jobs but also because there are greater incentives to set up a new business which were not there in the 1990s. In addition, with the power of the internet more people can research opportunities online and a new generation of entrepreneurs has emerged.

“Is it too late to set up my own business and how do I know if I have what it takes?” You might ask. Careers advice is more available and very detailed. Job interest and temperament questionnaires and inventories are increasingly comprehensive. Risk taking is an important - but not essential - ingredient to have as a business owner but there are other key values as well which are covered in 3 above.

To summarise, if you are looking at your next career move you should take stock of the pros and cons of going into a start up business and really consider whether a move away from traditional employment is right for you before launching into the unknown. Equally you should not rule it out quickly just because it is an alien concept and you are naturally risk adverse or not commercial. The reverse might be true and after all would it not be better to be doing something that you enjoy for the rest of your working life?

5. Reactive Marketing

The Traditional Job Market

Most job seekers know about the advertised open job market. It is made up of hundreds of job sites and boards, recruitment consultancies and advertisements. It can be a real nightmare if you are looking for a job to navigate through and is compounded by the current 'dog eat dog' nature of the job market where organisations increasingly call the shots.

Traditional recruitment agency short lists may be losing importance as many companies decide on candidates from immediate applications and won't wait long. In the fast pace of work today companies don't often invest in developing people or recognise long term potential.

Is it worth continuing to use this market? The quick answer is “yes”, as an initial action only, but not as the main strand of your job or career search strategy. Why is that? We believe that you should approach job boards and make contact with recruitment agencies online but only where you are very clear of your job or career direction from the outset and know for certain that you can deliver on at least 75% of any required job criteria. Agencies are also useful to give you feedback on what your worth is in the market and how place able you are. They will give you this information but only if you approach them in the right way and nowadays not if you merely respond to an advertised vacancy. It is all about developing a relationship with them, ideally face to face, and this is increasingly difficult given that many are only going to respond to applications around advertised vacancies and not speculative enquiries. This is because the market is saturated with candidates and the agency just has not the time to devote to you. Remember you are a commodity to them and nothing else!

6. Proactive Marketing

Job search in the Advertised job market can be referred to as “reactive marketing.” In today’s current jobs climate this is not going to be sufficient to guarantee results by itself. It is essential that you also take some proactive steps which will ensure that you stay ahead of the competition. We call this “proactive marketing.” It is all about using the Hidden Job Market creatively and effectively.

The Hidden Job Market

At the moment at least 85% of the job market is unadvertised and within this 70% of vacancies are classed as hidden. As it is hidden you can spend many hours and the majority of your time chasing the 30% of visible vacancies - an area where thousands of others are also concentrating their time. This makes visible vacancies far more competitive than hidden vacancies, leaving you with less chance of getting the post.

Now you know about this hidden job market, you can devote the right ratio of time between hidden and visible vacancies and spend more time on the hidden and less competitive vacancies that do exist. In some cases, you may well even be the only applicant.

How to find jobs that are never advertised? Advertising a job costs time and money, and is potentially risky when you don't know who you're going to get. This is why a large number of employers would

rather recruit someone that they already know, without the hassle and expense of advertising the job. Statistics quoted by various respected sources suggest that as many as 80% of jobs are never advertised.

So how can you make sure that potential employers already know you at the time when they need to recruit someone? One answer is to write carefully targeted speculative applications. Most job seekers tend to apply only for advertised jobs. So you will have less competition if you approach organisations directly with a speculative application. You will also demonstrate initiative, an essential quality which most employers seek. Here are 10 tips on how to write a speculative application that will stand out.

- Be clear about the specific type of job that you are looking for. This shows that you know what skills and experience you have to offer; have done your research on what is involved; and are focused on the type of job you want. Don't approach an organisation suggesting that you could 'do anything', as you will appear unfocused and possibly a bit desperate. If you are unsure what you do want to do, consider talking to a career coach who can help you to get clear about your ideal type of job.
- Make sure your letter has the maximum chance of landing on the desk of someone who is likely to be recruiting for your type of position. Do some research to find the best target companies?
- Do not apply speculatively for jobs that legally have to be advertised – most jobs in the public sector, for example, must be advertised. Do your homework with appropriate job sites to check which types of jobs are normally advertised.
- Make sure your covering letter is well prepared.
- Send it to a named contact.
- Capture their attention. One way of doing this is to show that you know about the company. Request an information pack or surf their website to research information. Professional journals or business newspapers (often available in your local library) may have relevant news items.
- Give clear evidence of your skills and ability. If you say you have good copywriting skills, give a specific example of an achievement that demonstrated your copywriting ability.
- Don't say 'I'll work for nothing'. Whilst this might be true if part of your strategy is to get some relevant experience or knowledge, it can create the impression that you don't value your skills and experience – so why should they? Instead, say you'd like to

discuss 'potential opportunities', and leave the discussion as to whether these would be paid or unpaid until you've had a conversation about what you could do for them.

- State in the letter that you will phone them to follow up, and when – then make sure you do follow up with a phone call to arrange a meeting.
- Enclose a well written CV (no more than 2 sides of A4) which is targeted to that organisation and the type of role that you would like to perform within it.

Further Information

For further information or support about Six Step Redundancy Process contact:



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