



Positive Steps Back into Employment

GUIDE ONE - Facing redundancy? Already out of work? You are not alone. Follow this 11-step guide to support a positive journey back into employment.

We know that losing your job and livelihood is extremely stressful. It is also a major life event for many people, marking a significant change in their life. Life events are recognised to have an impact on health and wellbeing. Losing your job can be one of the most difficult life events that can happen to an individual and ranks alongside bereavement, separation and moving home.

We also know that not working or worklessness is strongly associated with much poorer long-term physical and mental health compared to those who remain in work.

Our team at Healthwork have compiled a list of 11-ways those experiencing redundancy, or those already out of work can take positive steps back into employment:

1. **Take control of the situation.** Avoid burying your head in the sand and make sure you take advantage of everything your employer has to offer and if you are not sure you are being offered sufficient support, consult the ACAS website or seek advice.

Uncertainty and a loss of control can be a big cause of anxiety. Try to be proactive in managing your uncertainty.

You might not be able to change your immediate circumstances, but you can take simple steps in your everyday life to regain control.

For example, if money is a worry, try to put together a weekly budget. This will help you take control of the situation and manage the anxiety.

Try not to worry about things outside of your control and focus your energies on positive activities that you can control.

2. **Take time to reflect and be kind to yourself.** Being made redundant is a big change and it is normal to feel a mixture of emotions which can be difficult to make sense of.

Take some time to appreciate that feeling this way is normal, and that it will take some time to adjust to the change.

Remember, it is not your fault you have been made redundant and you should not blame yourself.

Be kind to yourself & try to focus your energy positively by considering all the qualities and skills that you possess, and how you can harness these to develop opportunities for the future.



3. **Take immediate action.** If your aim is to get back into employment it is essential to take action early whilst motivated to do so.

Start by updating your CV and identifying the best platforms to search and apply for jobs and start applying. Seek Government-managed financial support during any periods of unemployment.

4. **Don't let barriers get in the way of your job search.** If you are not sleeping or worrying excessively, talk to your employer if still in employment and take advantage of the support they provide. Failing that, consult your GP who can support in suggesting coping strategies or other routes.
5. **Don't feel ashamed or embarrassed.** You are not alone. The more people who know you are seeking employment, the more chance you have of hearing about opportunities.
6. **Choose your company carefully.** Surround yourself with positive people who motivate you. Being made redundant can impact your confidence, so it is important to rid yourself of company that might bring you down and find those who pick you up.
7. **Spending time on you & keeping busy.** Take some time to enjoy & indulge your hobbies. Some of you may already have a passion that you love doing. Spending time on things you enjoy can be a great stress-buster. It might be an idea to try something new that you haven't attempted before.
8. **Stay active.** If you haven't found employment by the time you leave employment, make sure you keep yourself physically active through exercise and other activity. Walking each day for an hour is a good baseline but more demanding exercise such as running, swimming or cycling will also have benefits. Doing these types of activities in pairs can spur you on.
9. **Stick to a daily routine.** The early bird gets the worm, so don't treat redundancy like a holiday. Get up early and follow a daily routine eating nutritional meals, and get plenty of fresh air during the light of day.
10. **Consider volunteering if you can't find work.** Even in this new Covid world, there are plenty of options for voluntary work in all sorts of sectors and maintaining work-like activity will help prevent your physical and mental health deteriorating. Keeping your brain active, meeting new people, and having a sense of purpose or achievement is really important in helping you to remain work-ready.
11. **Take strength in accessing support.** If you are struggling with your mental health remember that there is always support available, and there is no shame in asking for help.



You can contact your NHS GP who will be able to discuss your mental health with you, make specific recommendations and refer you for additional support, e.g. NHS counselling.

There are also several free and easily accessible resources at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-tips>

https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/?gclid=EAlaIQobChMI_oLZocmY7AIVU-3tCh0yew5IEAAYASAAEglyNfD_BwE