



surviving redundancy

In a world of economic downturns, changing markets and company restructures, redundancy has fast become a sad fact of working life.

We understand that in facing redundancy, you're also facing a rollercoaster of emotions; but it's important to remember that you're not alone.

Many people survive redundancy and go on to have rewarding careers; sometimes in an entirely new direction. In this guide we take a look at some practical steps to help you survive redundancy.

remain positive

Being positive in troubled times is never easy, but this will be your biggest tool when it comes to surviving redundancy. Allow yourself time to mourn the loss of your job, but when this period has elapsed, its time to move on.

One way of remaining positive is to accept the situation for what it is, rather than getting angry or frustrated by it; allowing you to see things more clearly and to plan for the future. Imagine yourself 10 years from now and think about what you want to achieve. Being made redundant will have opened up new opportunities that you may not have even considered, so think about the 'future you' and start planning how to get there.

consider your options

Redundancy can be a liberating experience if you're adaptable. Many people see it as an excuse to make some much-needed changes; and it's these people that often get the best out of the situation. But if you're thinking about taking your career in a whole new direction, you need to consider what really motivates you.

- What excites you about your work?
- What aspect of your work do you engage with the most?
- What gets you out of bed in the morning – other than your alarm clock?
- Do you prefer working autonomously or in a team?
- Do you enjoy travelling in your job?

If the role you've come from ticks all of the boxes, you'll want to target comparable roles; but if there's room for improvement consider alternative job paths, different industry sectors, or even retraining for a new profession. It can be a difficult to live without the luxury of a regular pay cheque, but it could be well worth the struggle long-term. Review your finances so you know how long you can afford to be out of work; and speak to a financial advisor for advice on reducing your outgoings where necessary.

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take advice

If you know someone that has been made redundant, it's worth asking them how they got through it and what they learnt from the experience. You should also seek help from a reputable recruitment consultant to find out about market conditions, what skills are in demand, and details of who's recruiting. And don't underestimate your networks of friends, family and contacts; these vital links could help to point you towards your next career move.

keep a routine

The new-found freedom of not having to go to work each day can be both exciting and frightening. Whilst it's tempting to stay up late and have long lie-ins, there's a lot to be said for maintaining a routine. Give yourself something to achieve each day, invest in some leisure time and relaxation, and set yourself goals for getting back to work in order to give your days structure. If you make the most of this time, redundancy could prove to be your springboard for success.

enhance your skills

Think of your redundancy period as a positive opportunity rather than a negative set back. Use your time to take courses and develop new skills, as this will make you more attractive to future employers. You could even learn a new language, volunteer at your local animal sanctuary, or hone your surfing skills. All new experiences – related to your career or not – will help you to stand out.

be honest with prospective employers

Don't be tempted to hide your redundancy from prospective employers. Be open and honest about why your role was made redundant, but be careful not to over-personalise things. Remember that it was your role that was made redundant, not you personally. Besides, many prospective employers will have been through some form of redundancy themselves.

Above all, avoid telling your interviewer that your redundancy was unfair or biased. If you genuinely believe this to be the case, you should raise this with your former employer, not at a job interview with a prospective one.

So take some time to think about what your next step should be and when you're there, don't look back. Remain positive, focused and enjoy a long and successful career. Good luck.