

Redundancy - problem or new opportunity?

Rachel Brushfield, Career strategist at Charlbury based company Energise, explains how redundancy does not have to be the end of your career.

How are you feeling about the 'R' word? If you are over 40, then you will remember the late 1980's/early 1990's when redundancy and negative equity were commonplace.

I was made redundant in the late 80's. It was very stressful at the time, but a problem became an opportunity as it was the beginning of my career going in a direction that was more true to me.

I used my redundancy money to pay off my debts and give my discoloured teeth a face lit, so redundancy ironically helped put the smile back on my face!

All the clients I have ever worked with who have been made redundant have gone on to something better. Did you know that only 20% of people actually enjoy their work?



Often we fall into a job almost by accident, choose a career because our parents did it or thought it a 'proper' profession e.g. law, or perhaps a teacher influenced our thinking.

Companies can take a short-term view of saving costs, cutting headcount without considering the longer-term implications of losing people or having a talent shortage post recession.

If redundancy is a possibility for you, it's worth having a chat with your employer about your skills being redeployed in the business differently, reducing your hours, or having a sabbatical.

Redundancy can be a push to make a positive change, even if it feels out of your hands and more like an unwelcome shove that makes you angry and steals your confidence.

There is a talent shortage in the world and it is the no 1 issue preoccupying CEOs. A skills shortage is an opportunity for people being made redundant to skill-up in the areas where there is a shortage. Sheep shearing or being a trained ballet dancer may not be your thing, but jobs such as an engineer, maths teacher or



specialist nurses could be. Markets such as care homes and security are growing for example.

The British are very modest and we all get so close to ourselves that we find it hard to see what makes us unique and marketable and how we can use these transferable skills in a different way.

The older we are and the more financial responsibilities and dependents we have, the harder and more risky the change feels.

A career crossroads is a positive opportunity to take a step back and look at who you are, what you want and how to get it.

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