

# Redundancy - from here to Opportunity!



If you think the axe will fall and need to make the best of it **for you** when it does, this is a short guide to help you

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## Redundancy - Fear or Reality?

Redundancy means CHANGE. So before we launch into this just stop, relax for a moment and remember you've already experienced many changes in your life:

- Going to your first school
- Moving up to bigger schools
- Losing some old friends, making new ones
- Moving house
- First Saturday job
- First 'proper' job
- True love that maybe resulted in marriage
- Breakdown of relationship maybe ending in divorce
- And so on...

Some of the changes you'll have chosen and others will have been inflicted on you. And what happened each time? If the change was of your making you would have been more likely to have wholeheartedly embraced it. Whereas if it wasn't your choice you might have railed against it and tried to recover the status quo.

Here's a couple of true stories as examples.

## Dreaded Change

The first concerns a sixteen year old who, many moons ago, had her world turned upside down. Her parents had divorced a couple of years earlier (rare, back then) and her mother had decided to start a new life. So guess what was to happen to the girl? Uprooted from trendy seaside Brighton to live in London – not London, England – London, Ontario, Canada.

Was that her choice? You can bet it wasn't! She even blindly carried on having meetings for a while with teachers to choose 'A' Level subjects to study till it became obvious even to her that she wouldn't be in England long enough to complete any courses.

Yet did she survive? Of course she did. She was a pain in the rear to her mother and older sister (both of whom she blamed entirely for what she saw as her misfortune) for much of the time.

Yet she got a job in a bank (no mean feat when Canadians don't graduate from high school till they're eighteen), made new friends, was promoted twice and within three years had been back to the UK once for a holiday and saved enough money to return for good.

I was that girl, so I know from experience that whatever the change, sooner or later, you adapt and get on with life. I'd have made it a whole lot easier for myself back then if I hadn't spent quite so much of the time being determined to wallow in misery around my mother and sister, but, as they say, you can't put an old head on young shoulders...

## Inevitable Change

Now fast-forward a couple of decades: I went into a young fledging Institute 'for a couple of weeks' to do a specific job.

That went well so they kept finding more things that needed my skills to help promote the Institute's value to its members.

By the time eighteen months had passed we realised that I'd effectively done myself out of a job, as any reasonably competent person could follow the guidelines we'd created and do what was needed now for a lot less than they were paying me.

If there had been only ONE thing the whole Canadian experience taught me it was certainly that burying your head in the sand and **ignoring the obvious doesn't make it go away.**

The MD of the Institute suggested that a talk with the CEO of a European business-to-business advertising agency who lectured on the Institute's flagship residential diploma course might be worthwhile.

To cut a long story short, contact was duly made and the CEO and I decided we wanted to create a job for me at his agency, yet that would take time. So to survive, I found a temporary job at a company that had one tiny, almost airless room in managed premises, made even worse by it being one of the hottest summers in the UK on record.

Yet within 6 months the Agency CEO and I had 'sold' me to the Board and I was ensconced in fabulously quirky offices in London's elegant Bloomsbury district, in a role that, to my knowledge, didn't exist anywhere else.

Then followed six glorious (and, as often as not, nail biting) years working directly for that CEO as Group Director of Business Intelligence.

Could a completely unexpected opportunity be there for anyone in today's economic climate? We can't give a definite answer for each individual but it's happening to people and, surely now, more than ever, we need different ways of thinking and approaches.

There are three points to this story:

1. Nice people though they were at the Institute, they weren't going to keep on someone who was over-qualified for the role as it was now
2. There was nothing in it for the MD of the Institute other than a little bit of lateral thinking to help someone out – he didn't even make the introduction – just suggested it and allowed his name to be used
3. I can't for the life of me see how that career development would have come about through 'normal' application channels, can you?

## So how about you?

If yours is a **fear of redundancy** then one of the positive things you can do (apart from updating your CV – which just about everybody will be doing) is **look at your situation objectively**.

If it's decidedly shaky and there's little you can do in the short term to improve it, you might as well admit it to yourself rather than just ignoring it. How about thinking what your options are rather than just hoping the axe won't fall on your head?

You may already be on, or decide to take a skills course in your own time, yet the results from that will take time to 'kick in'.

What other opportunities could be under your nose or round the corner, just waiting for you to notice them? Who do you know that you haven't been in touch with for a while that you could catch up with and maybe bounce ideas off?

How well do you **really** know your contacts – what each of you wants and needs – and how you can help each other? You'll need to invest in more than just being on 'nodding terms' with people for this to work. Why should they care about you when their own livelihoods might be in the balance?

So don't just look at it from your own situation. Maybe you could put two people together who could trade experiences and opportunities in some way and who wouldn't otherwise have met. And something else may come out of that.

Now is a great time to remember the saying:

“It’s not **what** you know – it’s **who** you know”...

And, when it comes to your contacts, it’s also who **they** know. It’s called networking nowadays. And the breadth, strength and depth of **your** human network will have a tremendous impact on the success or failure of what happens next:

- Who you know (or they know) might help you keep your job
- Who you know (or they know) might help you find another
- Who you know (or they know) might help you in a new venture

People can’t help you if you don’t know each other well enough and probably won’t if there’s no relationship.

### **Your human network**

What does it look like right now? You will see ways you can put it to use in **Our 6 Tips** later in this Guide.

# Redundancy Reality

## Do you have a financial 'cushion'?

If you have some savings, received a 'golden handshake' or a good enough redundancy package then you may feel you have some breathing space.

That's fine yet we've probably all heard of, or know of, people who've had windfalls of various descriptions – lottery wins, cash prizes, unexpected inheritance – and within a year or so all of the money has gone.

Psychologists could probably have a field day explaining why this happens – they don't believe their worthy of it, it takes them outside their comfort zone, whatever – we're interested in the practical side.

## Beware The Seduction of Rest

You may feel you don't need to rush to find income replacement. And you could well be tempted to take a break.

A break of defined length, a holiday to regroup and think, might be 'just what the doctor ordered'. Provided you don't allow yourself to be seduced by rest:

The money alone may make you comfortable enough not to pay too much attention to the fact you may be gradually becoming without purpose - have a 'bit of a lie-in' which turns into getting up later and later. Start watching the odd bit of

daytime television but ignore the news (it's so depressing) and don't go out much, after all you're being careful with your money.

Costs you used to automatically put on company expenses or had a wage to replace now come out of your nest egg and, unless you're careful you may find that what money is there can have a nasty habit of dwindling before you realise it...

Or maybe you're really feeling 'gung ho' and think: "Right - now I can do what I always said I would if I had the money!"

You may feel relief, experience a sense of elation and freedom and see this as a wonderful opportunity to do something completely different.

That's great, yet how often do we hear stories of people who've enthusiastically sunk their entire nest egg and energies into a venture with disastrous results?

So a pause for considered thought to evaluate all your "what ifs?" could well be worth its weight in gold, couldn't it?

### **What if no financial 'cushion'?**

There's no fear of the seduction of rest for you, is there?

Not many folks made redundant these days have the luxury of a financial cushion so immediate moves are likely to involve finding replacement income pretty darned quickly.

Yet wouldn't now be a good time for a reality check?

Are you **READY** to deal with Redundancy?

Before we answer that, let's play a little word game. Let's take **ready** out of redundancy and see what's left:

### **REDUNDANCY**

Now let's take the **UNDNC** and use them to introduce approaches that have a more positive slant:

- **U**nemployment is rife - just because you're out of a job doesn't mean you don't have value
- **N**otice how choosing to feel positive affects your interaction with others
- **D**on't be 'seduced by rest' but don't burn yourself out either
- **N**ever give up and never give in
- **C**ontact and collaborate with those you can help and who can help you

Now you're ready to start beating redundancy.

## So how are YOU feeling?

All sorts of things can be going through your mind when the axe falls and you're out of a job.

It's not just the money, important though that is (look how often the term 'breadwinner' is used to describe those who provide financial income). You no longer have **one of the** main **anchors** in your life, if not **the** main one.

You may feel

- Panic
- Anger or unfairness – “Why me?”
- A weird kind of relief that the suspense is over if you were half expecting it
- Release from a job or workplace atmosphere you didn't particularly enjoy, so a sense of freedom
- Self-confidence that you'll find something else swiftly or can now get on with what you really want to do
- Elation if you were fortunate enough to get a good pay out

It's down to you to make the best of you and the situation you're now in and we have some practical ideas on your approach to help.

## 6 Things We'd Suggest To Do

Invest in a bit of positive 'you' time and, to help these suggestions hit home, we'll give each the space it deserves for you to think about, print out, scribble on, whatever...

- 1 Don't bottle your feelings up inside** – share them with those who are close to you and whom you trust

Most of us don't exist as an island – many of us have someone or some people we care about and feel responsibility to and for – so it's worthwhile involving those people. You don't want to inadvertently give an aged relative a shock or heart attack, yet, is it wise or fair to keep your partner, close mates or kids completely 'in the dark'?

Having said that, it's best to be careful that you don't then become a pain in the rear to them...

## **2 Deal with any negative feelings and channel the positive ones**

Nobody wants to be around or hang out with, let alone employ, work alongside or for a miserable grump who's blaming the world and its wife for what's gone wrong. So if that's you, the sooner you deal with it the better and the sooner you'll be able to move on.

(If you want to practise a bit of tough love on yourself look at the redundancy statistics: You're not the only one – Job loss statistics have been growing from the closing months of 2008 through 2009 so far with no signs, either current or expected, of a trend reversal.)

### **3 Take a deep breath** (or several)

Anyone in an emotionally stressful situation will agree that taking a few deep breaths is incredibly calming.

So be conscious of your breathing and whenever you start to feel panicky, slow your breathing down until the panic passes.

#### **4 Have some fun each day**

It doesn't have to cost money

If you're up and about for say, 15 hours a day, isn't it perfectly reasonable to allocate at least half if not a whole one of those hours for some 'you' time to have fun and get those endorphins working for you positively?

## **5 Get clarity about how you feel about your old job 'warts and all'**

Look dispassionately at your old job and workplace. Be honest about what you liked and didn't.

If you're one of hundreds to have been laid off from a single car production plant, retail chain or the financial industry where several thousand have been made redundant nationally, you may have no choice but to think differently about your transferable assets.

What skills and experience did you enjoy putting to good use? Where could you transfer them and use them in future?

## 6 Start thinking what would be ideal for you next

Looking ahead, how would you **ideally** earn your money?

This may sound a strange question yet, whether you currently **have** all of the skills and assets to do it may not be as relevant as how **important** what you want to do is to you.

If it **means enough** you're far more likely to find the way. So, whilst you're looking for that immediate income replacement, why not also pay attention to what you **really** want?

Here's another bit of fun with words: How about **JOBLESS?**

One of the definitions of a job is Just Over Broke, so this one's even easier because you don't need to remove any letters to have fun with it:

- **J**ust
- **O**ver
- **B**roke
- **L**ies behind you!
- **E**xplore and enjoy ways to earn
- **S**ustainable
- **S**uccess

If these seem awful to you and you want to make up your own then **do so!**

The point is, whatever gives you a grin or a laugh, sits right with you, gets you going, makes you think you can do better - great - **Get to grips with your attitude** - and make it work for you.

Use any help that's on offer to you and help anyone you can, too.

## Check out JobCentre Plus

Being practical, if you're **suddenly jobless** and find yourself **careering nowhere fast**, you may feel the overwhelming need to **do** something, especially if you need another job yesterday because you've bills to pay and they're just going to mount up.

The urge to get out there and find income replacement in this situation is going to be stronger than pride.

One of the things you're probably going to need to do is get to grips with your local [Jobcentre Plus](#) – a necessity if you want financial help from the government while you're looking for work (and/ or maybe investigating alternative incomes streams).

Even if you'd rather be starting up on your own, and fully intend to do so, or believe you have all the skills and contacts you need to 'walk into' another job, you might as well hedge your bets in case it all takes longer than you think.

### Register immediately

The day you do is the date from which you're officially in their system and the date any financial help will be calculated from – so even if you feel like curling up in a ball and telling the world to go away, wait till after you've registered.

You can do this either online or use the free phone number on

the government's web site. Then you can arrange your first face to face appointment.

Use this at the very least to find out what's expected of you and what you can expect from your Jobcentre Plus.

Get any advice you can, be prepared to go on interviews for jobs you might not previously have considered and keep your appointments:

You don't know who you might meet or what it might lead to...

## Searching the 'visible' job market

Let's say you know someone who knows someone who's 'looking for somebody with your skills and experience' (don't forget to register with Jobcentre Plus immediately anyway – you may need it). It may well be absolutely right for you to go after that job and, hopefully, get it. It might not pay what you're used to earning but it may solve your immediate problem.

There may be some help and guidance from your former employer as part of the 'letting go' process. You may get further help if you're a member of a union.

And there will be temporary and permanent recruitment or executive search agencies to go to, advertisements to respond to, and maybe job interviews as a result – or maybe not.

That may be nothing to do with you: Even when the employment market is buoyant you may have heard of cases where jobs that don't exist are sometimes used to attract high calibre candidates and these stories may be true.

Earlier this year a friend who specialises in project management contracts was contacted by three different agencies she's registered with. Each checked her availability, said there was an imminent need for someone with her skills - one on the Isle of Wight, one in the Midlands, one in London - and in each case she was told the client company would call her for a telephone interview on a specific time and date. She didn't receive one call.

Her husband, who does similar work, **did** get a contract via the agency route around about the same time...

With so many suddenly out of work at the moment – not just thousands but millions of people in our own country and round the planet with the numbers growing on a daily basis – the competition for any real work that is on offer via the normal application routes is bound to be fierce.

One local council representative said on a TV programme aired in Spring 2009 that they had already received applications in person from 800 people for the 37 jobs that needed to be filled – and there were another five hours to go for more applications to come in on that (presumably designated) day...

And we heard of one lady went for a job a couple of weeks later to be told there were already 300 people applying for it...

So how about some practical help:

## The Big Job Hunt

### - Lord Digby Jones' Top 5 Tips

(Reproduced from Channel 4's [Dispatches](#) site)

(1) Treat trying to get a job as a job in itself - with all the disciplines, standards and follow-through that that entails.

(2) Tailor your CV to the person who will read it. "Different strokes for different folks". It might be your baby, your work of art, but it's just another CV to the reader.

(3) Be prepared to "get on your bike". Try other areas, even other countries. Others will.

(4) If you behave like a no-hoper at an interview, don't be surprised if you're treated like one. Clean skin, nails and hair. Wear smart (but not bling) clothes. Be on time. Look people you're talking to in the eye. Have a firm handshake. Shaking hands with a wet fish does not fill one with much hope for the person's "get-up-and-go".

(5) Above all else, believe in yourself and never ever stop doing so. You are in a part of the world where disappointment is the norm. Do not take it personally if you are rejected. Just keep hanging on in there. Stay cheerful, helpful, and clear. Never give in!

## Our 'take' on Digby's Top 5 Tips

Much of what he says makes sense and is, indeed common sense. So don't be surprised if nearly everyone else is doing the same thing.

So, by all means, we'd say:

Take them on board, do everything to the letter of the law to get paid employment and provide for yourself and those you care about. And get any financial help you're entitled to.

And whilst you're doing this, do more...

It's sometimes not easy for us to recognise where our real value lies because we're too close to 'see the wood for the trees'.

Yet that's exactly what you need to do, so we'd add 6 more Tips of our own.

## Our 6 Tips

### 1. Talk to people you know

You might want to talk to people you know well to begin with and that's fine yet it's good to realise that this isn't just a backslapping 'aren't we wonderful' exercise (though that might play a part in giving your ego a welcome lift).

So do include social, work and business contacts that aren't your best mates for a balanced feedback and maybe some real enlightenment:

- How would they describe you to a third party?
- What do they see as your strengths and your value?
- What's your uniqueness?

How does this compare with your self-image – is the impression **you've given them** right or wrong or a mixture?

How did they get that impression and what do you need to say or do to help them get it 'spot on'?

## 2. Don't assume anything

A recent offhand comment from someone I've known for years resulted in her contributing to the book I was writing on networking and we realised that, up until then, **neither** of us had much of a clue about what the other did for a living...

- Do the people you're talking to know what you do and what you're looking for?
- What would make them think of referring or recommending you for work they may hear about?
- Come up with stories you can tell – snippets, even – that would make it easy for them to describe what you do

### 3. How about how you can help them?

This isn't a one-way street! There may not be an obvious way you can help your friend right now yet you won't know unless you ask

- You'll improve that favourable remembrance of this conversation no end if you're not all 'take'
- Something may come 'out of the blue' that could be beneficial to either of you whilst you're giving 100% of your concentration to them
- You've no idea whom they may meet or bump into tomorrow or the next day or next week...

#### 4. Now you should be into the swing of this

You should have a much clearer idea of how you're positioning yourself in the best, most positive light so you should have the confidence to share it with a broader audience.

So how about getting together a list of **all** your contacts (if you haven't already done so) and speak to each to

- Catch up on each other's situation
- Find out what each of you wants
- Think who you could put each other in contact with
- Explore how you can help each other

## 5. Get together with like-minded people

It's people who make things happen

- Online (Internet based platforms), offline (groups that meet up in person), or both
- Join an existing network that provides what you're looking for
- Or set up your own if what you want doesn't exist
- Bring each other's contacts together

## 6. Remember you're not selling

One of the biggest mistakes people make is making contact with people out of desperation – that's why the 'feel good' factors we've covered (getting rid of any anger, controlling panic waves, having fun, knowing your strengths, genuinely wanting to help others, and so on) are so important to your frame of mind.

- These aren't people you're going to eye up in 3 seconds, shove your business card (or contact details) under their nose, or not, and move on
- You'll want to build trusted relationships with some, several or, hopefully, many that will still be there in years to come
- You'll want to be able to say in weeks, months and years to come: "Look what we've helped each other achieve!"

## Go for it!

It's easy to think you're the only person with challenges and problems. Especially when something big and surprising hits you from nowhere.

In our experience, most people who are used to being gainfully employed associate a large proportion of their value in society and self-worth/ self esteem with that status, **even when** it's been partly or wholly their decision to change it by opting for redundancy.

In short: Redundancy creates a void that's crying out to be filled. And, in the majority of cases, that void includes the need to find replacement income. And that **can** bring on a sense of panic.

That's why we say it's important to stop, take a moment or several and gather yourself together.

After that it's about applying yourself.

This free guide represents the first steps you can take from turning what you may see as a disaster into a great opportunity. If you're still thinking:

*"Yes but I can't be that upbeat all the time"*

Few can. So please read the guide again carefully as many times as you need to identify the parts that resonate most with you and enable you to focus on your best direction.

Believing in yourself and having a focused, determined positive attitude is the best and most important tool you will have for turning this situation to your advantage. And you got that advice for FREE.

Yet most of us know that there are no 'free lunches' in life. Success comes from investment. We invest with our emotions first ... that's what you're doing here: Investing your time reading this guide and thinking about how you can make our ideas work for **you**.

Putting the steps outlined here into action will require further investment ... whilst continuing to maintain a positive attitude (emotion). It will require sustained effort and "know how". To translate your attitude into action will require you to invest money to travel, call, print documents and even buy coffees or lunches for contacts.

The next weeks and months will really test your mettle and nowhere in this guide have we said or intimated that this is going to be easy.

We at CoZo/The 9 Rules are experts at and make our living by helping people become successful in many different situations, and what we offer here is just the tip of the iceberg in terms of helping you make redundancy work for you.

So please make the best use of it, take it slowly, consider each page, each paragraph and each sentence carefully: There is plenty on what to do to get you off to a great start and, for many of you, that will be enough to 'pick up our ideas and run

with them'. Please share your successes with us!

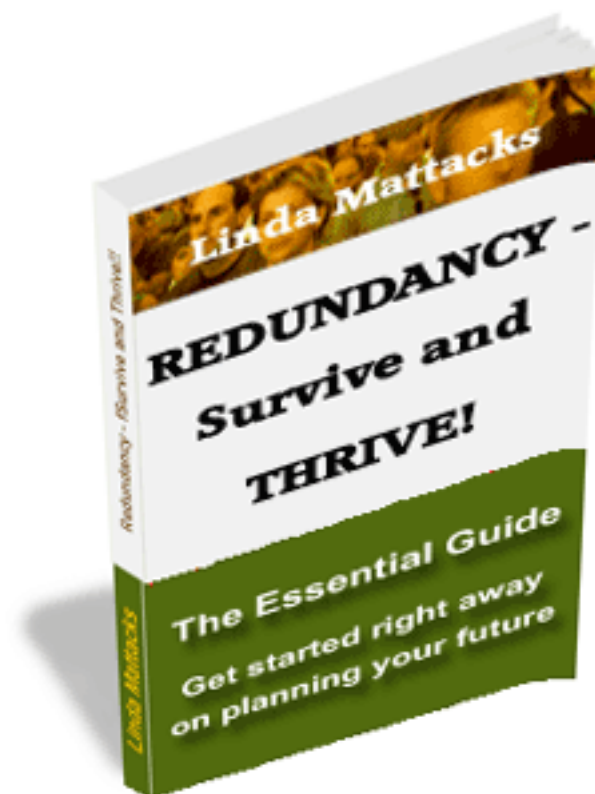
But what if, as you start putting our ideas into practice, you find your results are a bit hit and miss and you need some help on the "know how"?

Are you prepared to invest some more to get it?

Are you one who wants and is prepared to put more into shaping your future as opposed to muddling along, struggling to put ideas into effective action or waiting to see what happens next?

If you want help in getting more control over the direction your life takes from now on, for **you** we have our ebook

**Redundancy - Survive and Thrive!**



In it you will find not only ways to implement the ideas raised here, but also much more information, many more ideas and plenty of tools and techniques that we have learned, tested and improved over many years.

Together with your own experience and efforts they will enable you to assess yourself, find or create opportunities, overcome challenges and improve your chance to make this enforced change a golden opportunity for your future.

Just some of the ways **Redundancy - Survive and Thrive!** will help you:

- Recognise the danger of the Seduction of Rest and learn how to avoid it
- Discover why NOW is a great time to find and follow your driving force - ALL successful people do
- Understand why now is NOT the time to be 'one of the crowd' and find out how to maximise your personal brand
- Get ready for the Triple Whammy and learn how to cope with it
- Learn the ONE simple thing that can make a HUGE difference to the impact you make on people
- Evaluate whether you have what it takes to set up your own business and be a successful entrepreneur

- Learn to recognise and evaluate options that you will not have yet considered
- If a replacement job is the answer for you, learn the most successful strategies to find or CREATE one - the LEAST likely way is to respond to an advertised vacancy...
- Learn how to 'put your best foot forward' and be prepared for every eventuality

As well as much more:

How to think creatively...

The difference that bothering to do the things that most won't will make to your chances of success...

Being aware of ways to optimise your CV to best match an existing job specification...

Knowing how to prepare for the interview (or any business meeting)...

Learning methods and strategies to focus your time and efforts...

Getting lots of links to sources of good, independent information...

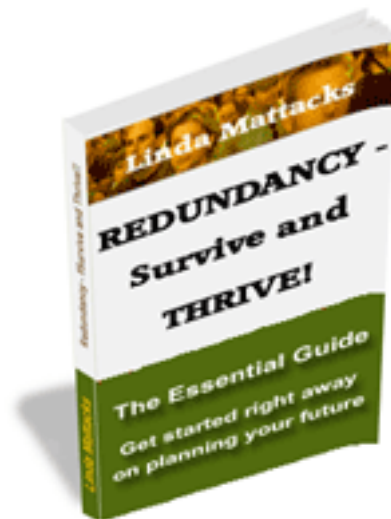
So here's a question for you:

Is your future worth a monetary investment of **under £10** to help you reach the best conclusions for you?

Is it worth it to ensure you can make the best of the skills at your disposal to create the future you want?

Is it worth it to learn ways to create opportunities?

If you're answering: "Yes!" go [here](#) to get your copy now of **Redundancy - Survive and Thrive!**



On a final note:

Many people are facing the same challenges as you.

By meeting the challenge, going about it in a focused, professional and dignified fashion you not only help yourself you will become a role model and inspiration to many, many more people.

Good luck and don't forget to enjoy this adventure ...

Remember you can get the book [here](#)

And you can share your experiences with us by commenting on our [Blogs](#) or by [email](#)

Linda