

# A Useful Guide to Facing Redundancy

**NOTICE OF TERMINATION**

Members are requested to visit the Human Resources department prior to leaving the company.

Social Insurance No. 01234

Staff ☐

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# A Useful Guide to Facing Redundancy

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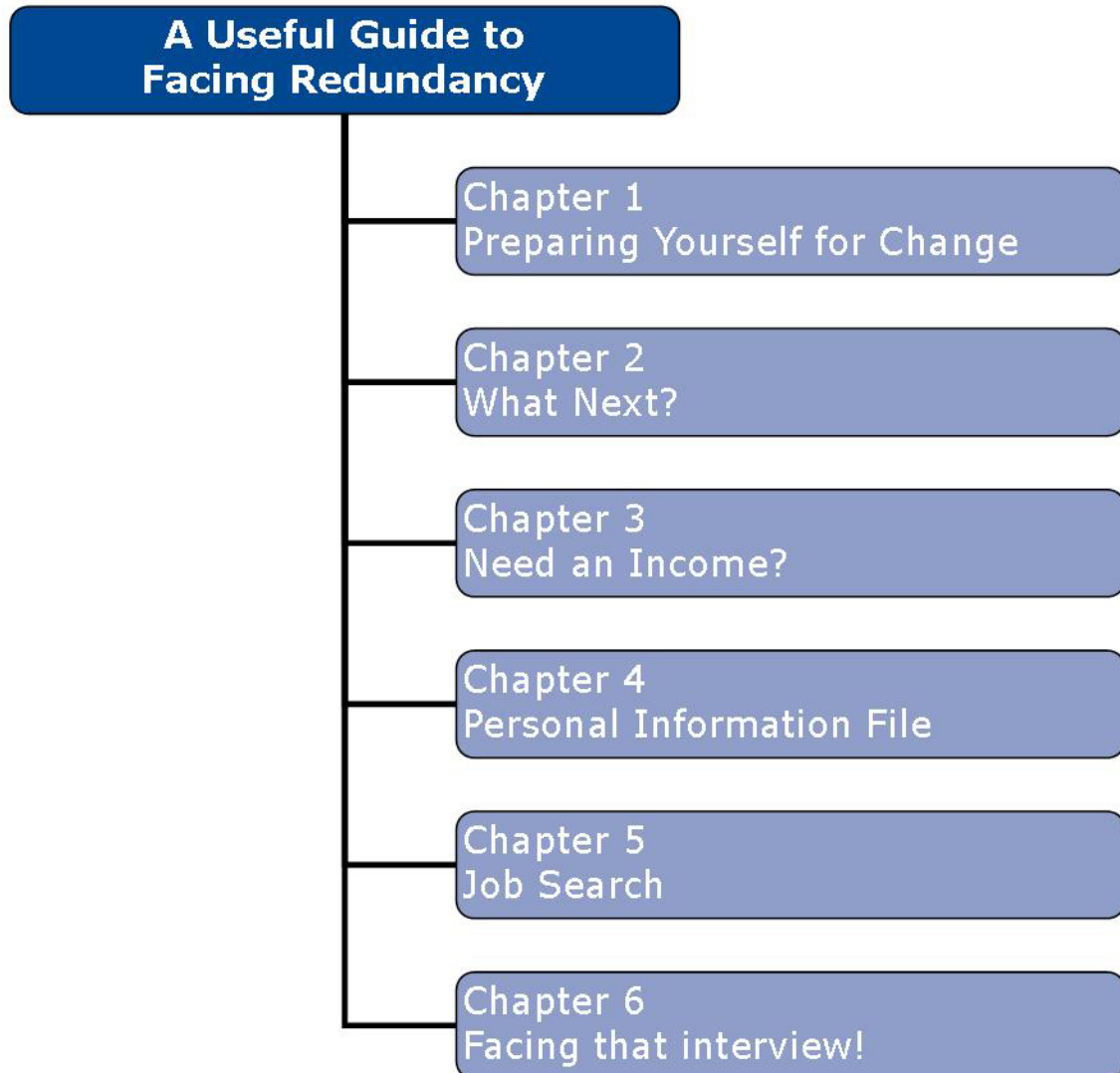
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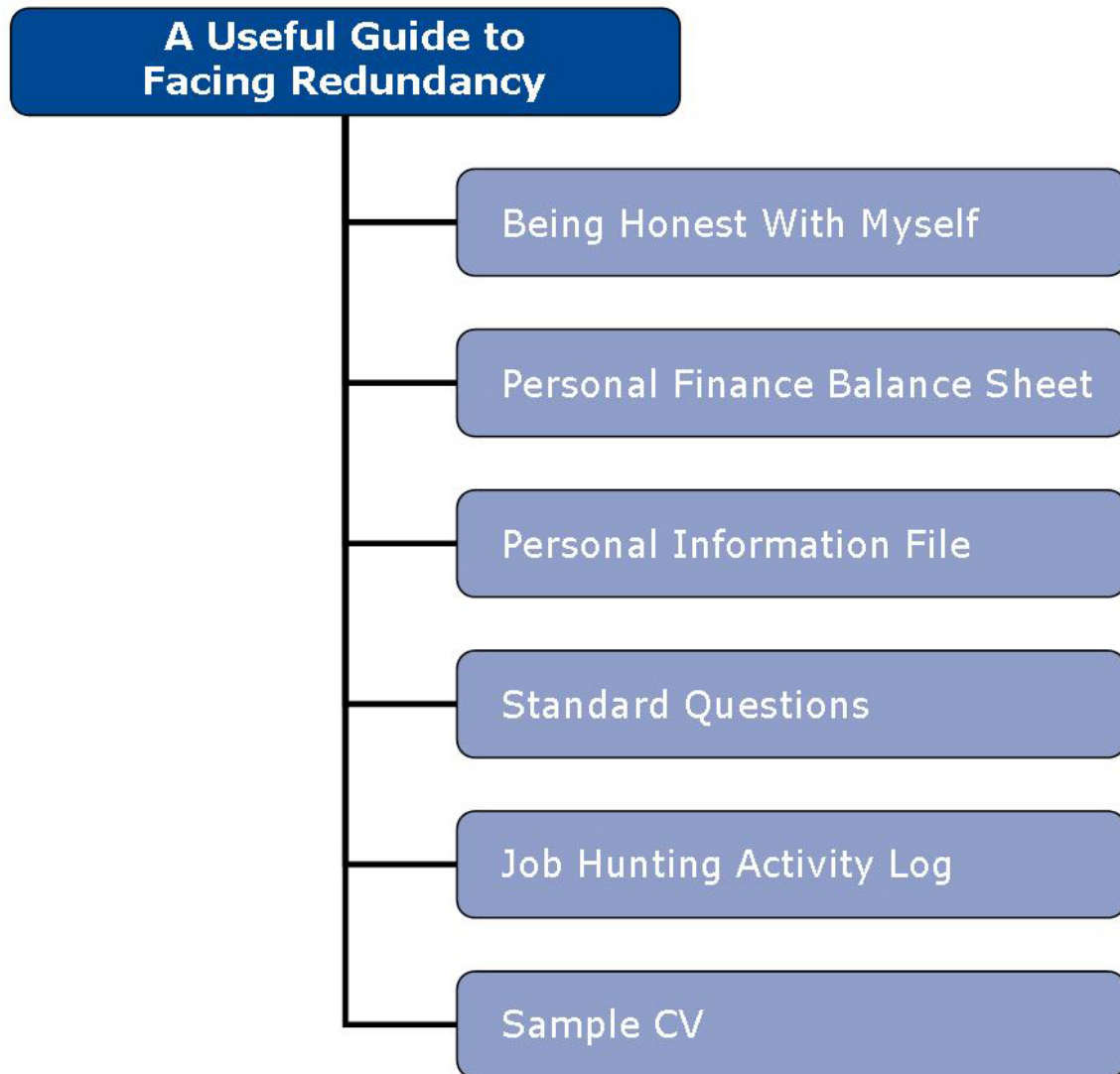
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First of all an overview of the Chapters ...



... and an overview of the Toolkit.



You can download your toolkit from [here](#). The toolkit contains MS Word® versions of the tools you will find in the Appendix. This allows you to use the tools on your own computer and easily keep your data up to date.

## Chapter 1

### *Preparing Yourself for Change*

"Before everything else, getting ready is the secret of success."

Henry Ford (the Car Man himself)

### **Purpose of this Chapter**

To provide you with some insight into the activities required to find a suitable job following redundancy, company closure or to help you plan a job change.

### **Starter Tips**

Before you start on the main chapters, let's take a few minutes to help you get the most benefit out of them for the least effort!

1. This Useful Guide will not "teach" you anything. It will provide you with the understanding, the tools and techniques, to eliminate the errors in presentation which so often lead to rejection by the recruiter. Knowledge that you discover about yourself and your situation will be of future benefit.
2. The Guide will enable YOU to present yourself in ways most likely to result in a job offer.
3. You don't have to work through the chapters in sequence but you may find it helpful if you do.

Please, Don't Panic!

Work through this Useful Guide giving each of the steps enough time.

4. If you are still employed, book time in your diary to work through this Useful Guide. You may feel more comfortable undertaking your normal daily routine and putting this "to one side", because tomorrow will do. BUT do not fall into that trap.

This Useful Guide is to help YOU so make it work for YOU!!

5. If you have left employment or are on "gardening leave", schedule some time each day to undertake a task. This situation will not go away - unless you have a fairy godmother!

## How much time will I need?

We reckon about one hour per Chapter and there are six Chapters.

However, there will be a lot of activity you will need to undertake to support your career change. Your learning will come from the material, the challenges you will be set, and the tasks you must complete in order to "find that next job".

## What resources will I need?

Apart from time, you will need access to a PC/word processing facility, telephone, fax and/or e-mail.

## Key Activities

This Useful Guide is built around the premise that emphasis on certain key activities contributes towards successful job search, namely ...

- Defining immediate career aims
- Preparing and using your Personal Information File which is in the Appendix and your Toolkit which can be downloaded from [here](#).
- Presenting yourself to a potential employer in an appropriate manner
- Prospecting for potential employers
- Preparing and presenting yourself at interview.
- Ask for, and document, feedback and use it to improve next time.

We are trying to create an environment whereby ...

1. You book time for yourself to look through the Chapters
2. You have a plan to succeed.

## Why me?

If you have been told this Useful Guide is available from your manager or HR/Personnel Department, you no doubt know that your time at this particular employer is limited.

Life is tough, but it is their loss!

If you are using this Useful Guide because you want a career change – good for you – there are still opportunities in the marketplace.

This Useful Guide is written from a recruiter's perspective, just follow the steps and make the right move.

When many started their careers in the 1970s and 80s with the blue chip companies, they all thought they had a "job for life". How it has changed!

- Globalisation
- "Credit Crunch"
- Pound vs. Euro vs. Dollar
- Privatisation
- Legislation
- The World Economy

Too many considerations to list them all, but their effect is the same: the drive for lower costs, greater efficiency, improved productivity, and higher returns - all resulting in a continuing review of the workforce.

Rest assured, you are not the only one going through the pain of having been told you are leaving the company or are under threat. It is happening all the time.

## **Use it as a POSITIVE.**

### **How Do You Feel?**

**Action:** write down how you are feeling about your situation. Yes, right now, write down your feelings.

Please do this before moving to next section.

Are you ...

- Angry?
- Demoralised?
- Frightened?

... or ...

### **Do you see an Opportunity?**

#### **BE POSITIVE and THINK POSITIVELY**

- You could change career and take up the career/role you have always wanted.
- Depending upon age and finances, you could consider early retirement.
- If finance allows, you may only need to work part-time.
- You could become your own boss!

The opportunities are endless.

Be open and honest with yourself and those close to you.

### **So What Do I Need To Do?**

1. Open up the Being Honest with Myself document which is in the Appendix and also your Toolkit, which can be downloaded from [here](#).
2. Start filling in the document. Having generated some thoughts, talk to family members. Get their input.

If necessary seek professional input e.g. use an Independent Financial Adviser.

You need to be REALISTIC. We can't all run Microsoft or Formula 1 Motor Racing.

## Summary

- Book time in your schedule to work through this Useful Guide. Plan to consider at least one chapter a day and then an activity every day until you have reached your goal!
- This Useful Guide is to help you to your next job, not to teach you.
- Use this time to really reflect on what job/career/lifestyle you want and identify the challenges.

## Chapter 2

### What Next?

"The World stands aside to let anyone pass who knows where he is going."  
David Starr Jordan (American Naturalist)

### Purpose of this Chapter

To facilitate the review of your financial and life plans.

### Discussion

So, you are getting over the shock of feeling rejected, your family knows that things will change and you are coming to terms with the fact that you will no longer have the same employer. You may even be at home waiting for the final pay-cheque.

What can you do about it?

During Chapter 1 you should have made a list of your feelings.

Did you?

Find that piece of paper.

Look at what you wrote down.

Would you write the same things down now? We hope not.

What options have you seriously thought about?

What have you already done?

- a) Have you told your mortgage company that you are being made redundant? This is important because they may be able to help you over this difficult period.

### Am I eligible for help with my mortgage?

You must receive either Income Support, income based JobSeeker's Allowance or Pension Credit to be eligible for housing costs.

Normally you will not receive any help towards your mortgage for the first 39 weeks of your benefit claim. This means that if you have not claimed

benefit before, generally you will receive help after 39 weeks. This also applies if your mortgage was taken out after October 1995. The 39 week waiting period does not apply for Pension Credit claims.

If you are eligible, payments towards your housing costs will not cover all mortgage liabilities, for example no payments can be made towards capital payments, insurance premiums or arrears on your mortgage.

Payments towards your housing costs will be made through your Income Support or income based JobSeeker's Allowance.

## Help with your Rent

Are you on a low income?  
Are you paying Rent?

You can claim Housing Benefit. Discuss this with your local [Jobcentre Plus](#) advisor.

However there are some rules ...

- If you get the guaranteed part of Pension Credit, you will normally qualify for Housing Benefit, regardless of savings.
- If you have savings over £16,000 you will not normally qualify for Housing Benefit.
- If you are single, and have savings over £6,000 (£10,000 for some kinds of residential accommodation) this will affect how much Housing Benefit you can claim.
- Special rules apply if you are single and under 25.
- If you have come to the UK within 2 years of your claim, this may affect your Housing Benefit.
- You will not normally get Housing Benefit if you live in a close relative's household.
- You cannot normally get Housing Benefit if you are a full-time student, unless you are disabled.

Go to [www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk) for more information.

- b) Do you have a mortgage/income protection insurance policy? If so, have you told the insurance company you want to make a claim? We strongly advise you to follow this up. You have been paying the insurance premiums for such an eventuality!
- c) Have you made an appointment with [Jobcentre Plus](#)? They can be very supportive in these situations.

As soon as you know that you are being made redundant and when the likely final day will be, telephone your local [Jobcentre Plus](#) office, ask to make a written claim and get an appointment.

If your employer is making a number of people redundant your local [Jobcentre Plus](#) office is probably already aware and making plans to interview individuals.

Ask your employer.

By completing form HR1, your employer should have complied with Government Directives regarding notification of employees being made redundant and the necessary agencies should be aware.

There are various Government initiatives to support those being made redundant. Always seek advice from ...

- Your Trade Union representatives
- the [Citizens Advice Bureau](#)
- [Nextstep](#).

If in doubt contact your local [Jobcentre Plus](#).

As soon as you stop work, you are entitled to receive Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA) for a period of 6 months provided you are ...

- capable of, and available for, employment (do not mention part-time or taking "time out")
- unemployed and actively seeking employment.

The amount and start date of your Job Seeker's Allowance will depend upon your personal situation. (e.g. a personal pension payment may reduce the amount) and payments in lieu of notice will affect start date.

However, [Jobcentre Plus](#) will arrange for National Insurance contributions to be paid from your last day of employment, even if your Job Seeker's Allowance payment is delayed.

You may be entitled to other benefits and details of these can be found by looking in the Benefits Agency website ...

<http://www.benefitshelpline.com/Security-Social-Benefit-11.htm>

These are "means tested"/income based.

Currently the first £3,000 is ignored but if you have more than £8,000 you will not be entitled to income support. For a rent rebate or a reduction in council tax, the £8,000 limit is raised to £16,000.

The Job Seeker's Allowance payment is one of the contribution payments you are entitled to as a result of paying National Insurance. The others are sickness, maternity and retirement.

Of course, all of the above may not be necessary, if you decide to retire or find another job that commences when you leave this one!

Only your activity and enthusiasm will make that happen!

This Chapter is all about YOU having a total understanding of YOUR situation and creating some sensible options.

Some of us dream of winning the lottery but with odds of one in 14 million, we know, in reality that we are going to have to make those changes and plans happen for ourselves.

## **So, what is your personal situation?**

Do you have a mortgage?

Do you have other financial commitments? E.g. Rent? Children at University?  
Child Support Agency payments? Loans? Credit Cards?

What regular payments do you need to cover? E.g. Utilities (Gas, Electricity etc)? Council Tax? Insurance Premiums (life, property, personal effects, car)? Health Scheme?

How much do you need in order to live?

Are you getting "redundancy compensation"? If so, do you know the terms?

What about your Pension – can you take your pension early? There are normally three choices open to you ...

**1. A refund of what you have paid.**

With less than 2 years service you are entitled to a refund of the contribution YOU have paid. If the scheme allows it, you could take a deferred pension with under 2 year's service.

**2. A preserved pension with your old employers scheme.**

If you have been in a scheme for 2 or more years, you are entitled to a pension from the scheme, available at "retirement". Pension rights built up must be increased annually by 5% or at the rate of inflation, whichever is the lower (SS Act 1990).

**3. A transfer.**

There are 3 options.....

a) Having left service since 1 January 1986, you have the right to transfer your pension benefits to an insurance company of your choice.

You also have the option to transfer to your new employer's scheme, should your employer be happy to accept it.

You also have the option to transfer to a personal pension plan.

b) If you transfer to a new employer's scheme, the value of your fund will do one of two things ...

- If your new scheme is a final salary scheme you could buy years with the fund value you are transferring from your ex-employer or
- If the scheme is a money purchase scheme, the transfer value will be transferred on a £ for £ basis.

c) Any redundancy payment could be used to ...

- provide an annual income/allowance
- pay off your credit cards/loans.

Use the basic Personal Finance Balance Sheet (MS Excel version), in your toolkit, to review your situation. Your toolkit can be downloaded from [here](#).

Be honest and sensible.

Everyone's situation will be different, so please adapt to suit YOUR situation.

Having completed as far as possible YOUR Personal Finance Balance Sheet, you will now have an indication as to what is achievable in order to satisfy your life plans. Remember at the end of the last Chapter you were asked (in the document Being Honest with Myself to consider ...

- What do you want from your next job?
- What do you want out of life?
- What do you want to achieve in the next 5 years?
- What can you afford to do?
- What does it mean to the family? Dependents?
- What does your "situation" allow you to consider?

You now have some financial data upon which to start making some choices ...

- Can you afford to retire?
- Can you make savings?
- How much do you need to earn to keep your lifestyle?
- What do want to do to earn that money?

Below are some useful contacts in order to help you start refining your choices ...

- [JobcentrePlus](#) not only provides advice on benefits and job opportunities but offers assistance on training opportunities (local labour shortages will attract training support) and self employment with access to local/small business advisers.
- Various government programmes exist to support particular groups. E.g. New Deal 18-24, Over 50's, Lone Parents.

### Useful websites and addresses are ...

- [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)
- [www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk) (The Department for Work and Pensions)
- [www.opas.org.uk](http://www.opas.org.uk) (Occupational Pensions Advisory Service - OPAS). OPAS offer a free advisory service that helps people get pensions benefits to which they are entitled.
- [Pensions Ombudsman](#) (The Pensions Ombudsman). Matters that OPAS cannot resolve are passed to the Ombudsman whose findings are legally enforceable.
- [www.opra.gov.uk](http://www.opra.gov.uk) (Registrar of Pension Schemes) Offers a free service to retrieve from its data bank information about company pension schemes.
- Retirement Pension Forecasting Scheme  
Room TB00  
Tyneview Park  
Whitely Road  
Newcastle-upon-Tyne  
NE98 1BA

To get a forecast of your state pension ...

- download an application form from ...  
[http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits/PensionsAndRetirement/StatePension/DG\\_10014008](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits/PensionsAndRetirement/StatePension/DG_10014008) or
- telephone 0845 60 60 265 or
- ask at your local [Benefits Agency](#) office for an application form which should be sent to the address above.

### So What Do I Need To Do?

1. If you have a mortgage, contact your mortgage company.
2. If you have mortgage/income protection, contact your insurance company.
3. Make an appointment with the [Jobcentre Plus](#).

4. Understand the options available to you re your pension.
5. Obtain a Retirement Pension Forecast.
6. Complete the Personal Finance Balance Sheet (MS Excel version)
7. Reflect on what you wrote down in your Being Honest with Myself exercise in Chapter 1.
8. Be absolutely clear about your financial situation.

## Summary

It is very important that you start by reviewing and, if necessary, take action with regard to ...

- YOUR financial situation
- YOUR life plans
- YOUR Pension entitlements
- YOUR Mortgage/Income protection policy/policies
- [Jobcentre Plus](#)

In the next Chapter we look at how you should start considering your next career, assuming you want one.

You may have decided that the family can keep you!

## Chapter 3

### Need an Income, Doing What?

"Wisdom is knowing what to do next, skill is knowing how to do it, and virtue is doing it."

David Starr Jordan (American Naturalist)

### Purpose of this Chapter

To assist you in considering a new opportunity – this could be in the same industry or you may want to make a clean break and try something new.

### Discussion

So, you have looked at your finances and need to balance the books by continuing in gainful employment.

But at what?

Are you going to change careers or will more of the same be OK for you?

To undertake a career change you will need to consult with a qualified Careers and Occupational Guidance Specialist. Every County and major town in Great Britain has a Careers Service, so find out their contact details by searching on local authority websites and make an appointment with a Careers specialist.

They will discuss your views and probably take you through one or more of the computer-based careers and guidance packages available. These are designed to isolate your preferences in terms of job levels, job content, working styles, working environments and personal values, before guiding you to alternative occupations appropriate to your choice.

Most packages contain information about entry and training requirements and provide contact lists of associated or controlling bodies.

Typical examples of the type of packages used are ...

- [Adult Directions](#)
- Microdoors
- Occupations2000

Your Careers Service counsellor may also suggest undertaking one of the many psychometric tests currently available. Access to these may be available through

[Jobcentre Plus](#), careers offices and even some libraries as well as qualified practitioners.

If we were to offer any advice on psychometric tests, it is simply ...

- Don't try to out-think the test. There are in-built checks and counter-checks that soon defeat that tactic.
- Where a time limit is imposed, it is important to complete all the questions. Do not get hung up on those you find difficult to answer.

Having gained advice and assistance from the Careers Service, you may now wish to consider whether some form of upgrading or re-training is required in order for you to meet your objectives. You should ask yourself ...

- Can I afford to take advantage of re-training or other learning opportunities?
- When, after training, I re-launch myself on the job market, will it accept me and what I now have to offer?

Only you, with your inside knowledge of your prevailing family and financial circumstances, can answer the first. People "in the business" e.g. recruiters will help you with the second.

When you have defined your job/career aims and are satisfied that you are appropriately equipped, you can move on to the first of the job search key stages - compiling your Personal Information File (in your toolkit which can be downloaded from [here](#)) which you will do in the next Chapter.

## **So What Do I Need To Do?**

1. Contact your local Careers Service and make an appointment with a Career Service counsellor.
2. Consider whether upgrading or re-training will help you meet your objectives.

## Summary

- If you are looking for a change - seek advice and guidance from Careers Service and/or career counsellor.
- Cost out any upgrading and/or re-training required to support your job search/career plans.

## Chapter 4

### Your Personal Information File

"Organizations exist to enable ordinary people to do extraordinary things."  
Ted Levitt, Professor of Business Administration Emeritus at the Harvard  
Business School.

### Purpose of this Chapter

To provide you with a recommended format for recording ALL your personal  
information.

### Discussion

Recruiters estimate that ...

- 70% of CVs received fail to give the factual information they need.
- 65% of people, who attend interviews, when asked a question cannot  
provide a ready answer.

### Why such a failure rate?

It is because those concerned have not taken the time to assemble and have  
ready the information a recruiter will need.

They have not taken the time to prepare a Personal Information File.

"To fail to prepare is to prepare to fail."

A sales person will never attempt to sell without sure and certain knowledge of  
his/her product. You are selling! Your product is YOU and the first contact with a  
recruiter is via YOUR CV!

Before compiling a CV, it is first advisable to compile your Personal Information  
File from which to select items to include in it. This file is your working  
document, to be regularly reviewed and updated as you go through your job  
search process.

## Personal Information File Content

Essentially your Personal Information File, which you can download from [here](#), should contain all those items you are ever likely to include in a job application whether submitting a CV or completing an application form. Break it down into 5 sections ...

1. Personal details
2. Education, qualifications and training
3. Employment history
4. Generally useful information (the "nice to know")
5. A glossary or compendium of skills & knowledge

Remember, all the information contained in your Personal Information File will never be needed in all CVs or application forms. YOU will select what is appropriate to any particular application.

Use your Personal Information File to make sure you have assembled all the information you are ever likely to require.

## So What Do I Need To Do?

- Compile your Personal Information File.
- Check you have been comprehensive but concise.
- Read it as if you were assessing the candidate's credentials.

## Summary

- Collect and record ALL the data required to complete your Personal Information File.
- This will be required to support your applications and career change initiatives.

## Chapter 5

### Job Search?

"Make voyages! Attempt them... there's nothing else."

Tennessee Williams (Noted Playwright)

### Purpose of this Chapter

To provide you with the "tools" and steps necessary for your job search.

### Discussion

"Somewhere there is a buyer - there always is!" and YOU are selling!

In selling the sales person needs ...

In job search you need ...



- A Product!
- Good product knowledge
- Sales aids e.g. brochures
- A sales plan and strategy to locate Customers
- To plan sales presentations and to feature benefits against potential employers' needs
- To elicit and overcome objections to You!
- To be aware of, and have available, the information a recruiter needs:  
your Personal Information File
- A sales brochure: a CV and covering letter
- A sales plan and strategy to locate potential employers
- To prepare a personal presentation to give the recruiter confidence that ...
  - you meet the job needs
  - the job meets your needs
  - you will "fit in"

If you find that they are reluctant to "buy" try to persuade him/her that he/she is wrong by responding constructively to any objections raised. This is the last step before an "order" is signed!

## **Rules of Selling**

Locate and deal with the Decision Maker.

Design professional, quality literature and aids to support your sales presentation (your CV and accompanying letter) and always be prepared to substantiate what you say you can do (quantified achievements).

Never attempt to sell until you understand your potential employer's needs.

Convert your features (what you have in terms of experience and qualifications) into benefits (what you can do for the potential employer); sell benefits against the potential employer's needs.

People buy when they ...

- Have confidence in the sales person
- Have confidence in the product and can afford it

Remember that, in your career to date, you have acquired knowledge, experience and expertise as well as a range of job-related, personal and communication skills, much of which is transferable across occupational sectors.

What to do first?

## **GET ORGANISED!**

- Find a space where you can hopefully work uninterrupted.
- Set this up as your "office" where you can apply yourself to your current job of "job search".
- Get some good quality stationery i.e. some good quality A4 paper for your CV.

Think about using something other than white - make it stand out from the rest! Not blue or red but off-white or a pale magnolia.

- Use A4 envelopes so you do not have to fold your CV.
- Use A5 paper for the covering letter, which will be very short, so that it does not detract from your CV - your sales brochure!

Your CV should attract attention and encourage the recruiter to meet up with you!

**You have 20 seconds to make an impact!**

If you do not have a PC or word processing facilities, try and find someone that can help. (Libraries and internet cafes can be a useful source for PC facilities.)

- **Access to the internet** will help you find more opportunities and increase your marketability.

More and more recruiters are going "online" and uploading your CV onto websites will provide a greater opportunity for selection. (See page 31)

- **Contact Information - Telephone.**

Make sure you can be contacted at all times. If you put your mobile number on your CV make sure you turn it on and listen to messages!

Tell your family what you are doing so that they also answer the telephone professionally! No recruiter wants to listen to Radio 1 or hear the current soap blaring in the background.

Looking for your next job is a job in itself.

You have to ...

- produce the sales literature (CV).
- maintain all your records.
- organise yourself and plan your approach.

... and you have to do it all yourself - nobody can, or will, do it for you!

You can see a [sample CV](#) in the Toolkit which you can download from [here](#).

## Where is that job?

It is generally accepted that there are four activities any one of which, if carried out properly, is likely to lead to a meeting with a potential employer. Briefly, they are ...

1. Responding to recruitment advertisements
2. Approaching "prospects" directly
3. Networking
4. Using agencies, including [JobcentrePlus](#) and the internet.

Do not forget that specialist trades have specialist journals/magazines.

Refer to the Job Hunting Activity Log in the Toolkit, which you can download from [here](#), to keep a record of all your activities/initiatives and, most importantly, your follow up.

Use the information in the sections below to help you complete your log.

## Recruitment Advertisements

These appear in local, regional and national newspapers; periodicals, professional and trade magazines and now, on the internet.

Before you attempt to respond to an advert, try and define the potential employer's need. Be prepared to telephone or email the contact given to try and glean more information.

Good questions to ask would be ...

- Why is the job vacant?
- What are the promotion prospects?
- I don't have "X" but I do have "Y". Is it worth applying?

Try and get through to the person with the requirement rather than just dealing with the receptionist or personnel dept.

You can outshine the opposition just by making sure your submission meets the potential employer's requirement.

Be prepared to change the words you use on your CV. After all, a supervisor and team leader may be exactly the same thing, it just depends on the language used by that potential employer!

Make sure you read and re-read the advert and fully understand the potential employer's needs before trying to respond.

So, when looking at adverts, what do you need to consider?

### **Job Title**

Don't just scan to find a match. Their Administration Control Manager may be required to do exactly what you achieved as an Office Manager.

### **Company Information**

Usually tells you what the company "is" and "does" and frequently outlines the reason for the vacancy.

### **Job Specification**

Tells you what the job is about and its place within the company. It sets out the first of their needs and is usually the point when you can tell if this job would suit you.

### **Person Specification**

Spells out the type of person they are looking for: qualifications, age, experience etc.

### **Essential Needs**

Prefaced by "must have" or "it is important that".

### **Desirable Needs**

Usually identified by words like "useful", "an advantage", "helpful".

When reviewing an advert, list all the needs with regard to that vacancy. Then consider how YOU satisfy those needs and ensure your CV provides as many matches as possible. If you find a way to express how far you meet their needs, you will go far in the selection process!

### **The Covering Letter**

- Keep it simple and make your CV do the selling.
- Put it on A5 paper so that your CV can be seen.
- Type it rather than write it by hand.

### **What is wrong with this approach below?**

Dear Mr ...

Vacancy for ...

With reference to the above vacancy, I enclose my CV.

Yours sincerely

### **Think about it!**

Before attempting to sell, ensure you are dealing with the decision maker

Take the case of the door-to-door salesman selling vacuum cleaners. He would want to talk to the person who does the house cleaning and also the one who decides what the cleaner has to do. The good salesman would not make any assumptions. He would not assume he needs to talk to the "lady of the house"! He would ask some questions to find out who does the cleaning and who makes the decisions.

You must do the same. Don't assume you think you know who the decision maker is. Find Out!

When you approach a potential employer, who will decide whether or not you meet that company's needs?

If you opt for the Personnel Manager or HR Director, think again! They may advise or carry out the recruitment process but, in most cases, it is the role of the line manager to take the final decision on whether you meet his/her requirements.

This applies particularly to technical, specialist and managerial positions.

## Approaching Potential Employers Directly - the Speculative Approach

Newspaper articles, TV reports, business information companies all provide a wealth of information on the state of market sectors and businesses.

"New contract guarantees future of site and likely expansion" "Re-location of Head Office will mean 800 local vacancies" "... re-structuring to make savings ..."

All these provide an "opportunity".

Get the information on the company, find the right person to write to/talk with and make an approach.

Remember to prepare ... or fail!

When sending out speculative letters, take the initiative and state when you will be telephoning them to see whether it is worth you meeting with them.

Try and find the first and last name of the person so that you can address the letter to an individual rather than "Dear Sir".

Most people will respond to this approach rather than spending time and money sending out a "No Thanks" letter. Just make sure you make that call. If they do not have an opportunity, do they know someone who may!! This is extending your approaches.

Information on companies can be found in your local library and

- Dun & Bradstreet Business Register <http://www.dnb.co.uk/>.
- Chambers of Commerce <http://www.britishservices.co.uk/commerce.htm>.
- Companies House website <http://www.companieshouse.gov.uk/>.

Alternatively, at a cost, access can be provided from one of the leading business information providers.

## Networking

As we go through life we make many contacts.

List all the people that you have come into contact with and do not forget family and friends. Let them know what has happened and what you are looking for.

Try to treat them as potential employers.

Send them a CV and arrange to follow it up at their convenience.

How many times has someone sent you something and you have misplaced it or forgotten about it?! The same will happen to your CV unless you follow it up with a telephone call.

If your networking contact provides you with a name/further contact, send a letter and CV and do not forget to mention your contact (with their permission) as this becomes a "reference sale" and should ensure your information reaches the decision-maker.

If you want to learn more about how you can improve your networking skills you can purchase [A Useful Guide to Networking](#) which includes an online questionnaire to assess how good you are at networking!

## Using Agencies

The High Street agencies are in business to make a living. They will take your CV and be interested if they can make money by introducing you to an employer.

They like to keep a number of "applicants" on file in order to satisfy potential vacancies but you will have to keep pushing them to ensure they consider you at all times.

Do not forget [Jobcentre Plus](#) either.

## Using the Internet

Having searched for online recruitment companies, you can search the relevant pages of your preferred agency (e.g. JobServe, Monster, Reed).

A list of links is shown on the next page ...

- <http://www.jobserve.com/>
- <http://www.monster.co.uk/>
- <http://www.reed.co.uk/>

Only get in touch with as many agencies as you can handle, preferably those that inspire confidence in the way they handle your CV and assist in your job search.

Contact the Recruitment and Employment Confederation at <http://www.rec.uk.com/home> or seek out recruitment consultants in your local area or agencies specialising in your industry or skills.

Be clear about your objectives and make yourself easily available to recruitment consultants/agencies. Stay in control of your CV and keep in touch!

## Record Keeping

With all these "routes to market", sending out amended CVs to suit particular adverts, speculative letters and follow up telephone calls to make, network contacts and agencies to keep in touch with, YOU need to keep **detailed** records.

Make sure you know which CV you have sent where.

Make sure you make the follow up telephone call on the day and at the time you said you would.

Make sure you are making full use of your Job Hunting Activity Log.

## So What Do I Need To Do?

1. Get organised!
2. Prepare your covering letters and CVs.
3. Prepare your Personal Presentation.
4. Always try and contact the "Decision Maker".
5. Get access to a computer.
6. Get good quality stationery.

7. Get access to the Internet.
8. Make sure you can be easily contacted.
9. Look carefully at adverts.
10. Keep up to date with the News and approach organisations that you feel may be able to take advantage of your talents.
11. Keep the contact details of everyone, yes everyone, you meet. (You never know!)
12. Contact the agencies.
13. Keep very good records. Do not rely on your memory. Use your Job Hunting Activity Log.

## Summary

If you have been following the Chapters diligently ...

- You now have the information and knowledge to draft an achievement based CV.
- You have got yourself organised.
- You now know what to do to "sell yourself".
- Make sure you keep complete records of your activities.

## Chapter 6

### Facing that Interview!

"To accomplish great things, we must not only act but also dream, not only plan but also believe." – Anatole France.

### Purpose of this Chapter

- To assist you in overcoming interview nerves.
- To help you "sell" yourself to the recruiters.

### Discussion

Your hard work has paid off.

You have received your first invitation to attend for interview.

Remember - "To fail to prepare is to prepare to fail".

You are setting out to attend a meeting during which you hope to convince the other party to say "Yes".

### **You are going to sell yourself.**

Preparing for the interview can be broken down into five areas ...

1. Information
2. Rehearsal
3. Arrangements
4. Conduct
5. Planning

### 1. Information

Find out about the company ...

- You should know about their products/function; size in terms of turnover, ownership and structure; success and reputation; plans for the future.
- Access their sales and promotional material using their website and company reports.
- Make a few notes and summarise on one side of A4 for easy revision/reference

## 2. Rehearsal

Below is a list of questions, some of which you may recognise from previous interviews ...

- Be prepared with answers for the common starter ones e.g. "Tell me about yourself?"
- Rehearse your answer - in front of the mirror, with a family member. It may take courage to do this - but it works!
- Remember, to appear interested and enthusiastic you need to smile, maintain eye contact, keep your backside at the back of the chair and for the standard questions have answers that roll easily off the tongue.

## 3. Arrangements

- When you are contacted to arrange the interview, see if you can find out how many people will be interviewing you, their names and positions within the company.
- Make sure you know where, when and any necessary security access arrangements.
- Ask the Company to send a map if you are unsure.
- Consider making a trial journey to ensure you know where you are going and try to foresee any problems.
- Do not forget to confirm your attendance.
- Companies do pay travel expenses; do not be afraid to ask what their policy is.

## 4. Conduct

- Do dress appropriately.
- Do arrive on time.
- Do smile at the receptionist and interviewer.
- Do speak clearly.
- Do give simple answers demonstrating achievements and personal development.
- Do not swear.
- Do not criticise previous employers.
- Do not interrupt.

- Do not smoke.

## 5. Planning

Perfect Planning Prevents Poor Performance (The "5 Ps")

Remember you are there to provide the interviewer(s) with the information they need.

You need to give the recruiter confidence that ...

- you meet their job needs
- the job meets your needs
- you "fit in".

You have already considered their needs when reviewing the advert and compiling your CV.

You will need to have, and be ready to recall at the interview, examples and experiences that support your CV. e.g. ...

- how did you help your company increase sales?
- how did you reduce costs?
- how did you improve performance?

Whatever achievements you have included in your CV should be expanded upon to demonstrate your ability to undertake that job.

The interviewer will also be looking for confidence that, if you are appointed, you will stay and be a success.

Think about what your needs are - make a list and consider such things as; travel (business as well as to/from work), training, career prospects, pension scheme, working environment.

How can you demonstrate that you will "fit in"?

How can you get the interviewer to say "I liked him/her..."?

Think about ...

- internal/external relationships
- integrity
- commitment and flexibility
- appearance and dress

Be enthusiastic - remember your objective is to get the job offered!

Some of the "standard" questions used at an interview are listed in the [Standard Interview Questions](#) listing shown in the Toolkit which you can download from [here](#).

Understand how you should answer them and rehearse!

## Summary

- Attending an interview means that your activities have worked for you.
- All you need to do is confirm that you are the best person for that role.
- Rehearse and practice. You know it makes sense.
- This course of action works. It has been proven to work by many people in your situation.
- Persevere - do something every day and there will be a successful outcome.

I hope this Useful Guide has provided you with the basic steps to review this opportunity and to make decisions for the future.

Just work at your objective(s). You will achieve.

Good luck and best wishes

Ian Ransome  
Pansophix Limited

## About the Author



Ian Ransome has extensive experience in personal and management development training and outplacement support to a range of major clients whose people are being made redundant including providing “back to work” assistance to employees of EEF Member companies and companies in the Retail /Motor Manufacturing Sectors.

He is also an advisor to numerous insurance companies offering mortgage protection insurance policies.

As we are always trying to improve our Useful Guides we would appreciate any feedback you can give us on **A Useful Guide to Facing Redundancy**. Please click on the link below to access our online feedback form ...

<http://www.pansophix.com/useful-guide-feedback.html>

If we use your feedback to improve **A Useful Guide to Facing Redundancy** we will email you a copy of the updated version.

You can register to access our free online Learning Support Centre which contains a growing range of mental exercises, tips and tools at ...

<http://www.pansophix.com/learning-support-centre/index.php>

## Appendix

The following tools are included in your toolkit which can be downloaded from [here](#). The downloaded toolkit gives you the tools in MS Word format so that you can use them on your own computer. The toolkit also contains an MS Excel spreadsheet for working out your finances.

- Being Honest with Myself
- Job Hunting Activity Log
- Personal Financial Balance Sheet
- Personal Information File
- Sample CV
- Standard Interview Questions

If you prefer you can print out the following pages and complete them by hand.

## **Being Honest with Myself**

**How to Use:** Take time to answer these questions. Your answers to these questions will influence how you tackle the other sections of the Useful Guide. Don't be tempted to leave questions out. Don't be tempted to move on to the other chapters in the Guide until you have answered these questions to your own satisfaction. Save a copy of this Word file on your PC, or take a printed copy, so that you can keep coming back and making sure your answers are still valid as your thoughts develop.

**What do I want from my next job?**

**What do you want out of life?**

**What do you want to achieve in the next 5 years?**

**What can you afford to do?**

**What does it mean to the family? Dependents?**

**What does your “situation” allow you to consider?**

## Job Hunting Activity Log

### 1 Advertisements

For Read Out loud Readers: The following table has 7 columns and 14 blank rows.

Job Title	Company	Source of Advert & Date	Ref. No.	Date of Application	Date of reply	Remarks

**For Read Out loud Readers: The table has finished.**

2 Speculative Approaches

Company	Contact & Telephone No.	Date		Outcome	Next Contact
		Letter Sent (Y/N)	Follow up (Y/N)		

3 Networking

Company	Contact & Telephone No.	Date		Outcome	Next Contact
		Letter Sent (Y/N)	Follow up (Y/N)		

4 Agencies

Agency	Name & Contact details (Email, Telephone, Address)	Date		Next Contact
		Contact Made (Y/N)	CV Sent (Y/N)	

## Personal Finance Balance Sheet

### Expenditure

The third column heading: The following table has 3 columns and 10 rows

Monthly Outgoings	£
Mortgage / rent	
Council tax	
Loans	
Credit cards	
Insurance(s)	
Direct debits (utilities)	
Subscriptions/donations	
Phones - fixed and mobile	
Savings (Holiday)	
Savings (Other)	
<b>TOTAL (A)</b>	

Weekly Outgoings	£
Food	
Petrol/Diesel	
Papers/Magazines	
Drink	
Smoking	
Entertainment	
Children's expenses	
<b>TOTAL (B)</b>	

**How to Use:** Be honest and sensible. Modify to fit your own circumstances.

<b>Weekly Outgoings</b>	<b>£</b>
Total A / 4	
Total B	
<b>GRAND TOTAL per week</b>	

<b>Monthly Outgoings</b>	<b>£</b>
Total A	
Total B x 52 / 12	
<b>GRAND TOTAL per month</b>	

<b>Weekly Income</b>	<b>£</b>
Self	
Partner	
Other family members	
Benefits (Child Allowance etc)	
Other (Interest, etc)	
<b>Total Weekly Income</b>	

<b>Monthly Income</b>	<b>£</b>
Self	
Partner	
Other family members	
Benefits (Child Allowance etc)	
Other (Interest, etc)	
<b>Total Monthly Income</b>	

## Personal Information File

**How to Use:** Put all your details into the boxes. You can then copy and paste the required information into a CV, online application form etc. Be thorough. It is very unlikely you will need all this information in a single application or CV. The idea is to have all your personal information readily to hand. Make sure you also have all your qualification certificates readily to hand.

### Personal Details

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Tel:**

**Fax:**

**Mobile:**

**Email:**

**Web Site:** <http://www>

**Date of birth:**

**Status:** Single / Married / Divorced / With Partner (delete as appropriate)

**Children:** None / X Dependent / Y Non-Dependent (delete/complete as appropriate)

**Smoker:** Yes/No (delete as appropriate)

**Outside Interests:** Hobbies, Sports, Charity Work etc.

**Type of Driving Licence Held:**

## Education

**Secondary School:** (include location and dates)

**Achievements:**

**Qualifications:** (include type of exam e.g. "A" level; subject and grades)

**College / University:** (include dates)

**Achievements:**

**Qualifications:** (include type of exam e.g. City & Guilds; subject and grades)

## Memberships

List all the organisations you are a member of.

## Training

List all the training you have had with dates and qualifications/certificates achieved. This could include Personal Development, Health and Safety etc.

## Skills & Knowledge

List all your skills e.g. software packages you can use, Quality Management, Employment Law, COSHH, IOSH, Risk Assessments, Team Leading/Line Management etc.

## Employment History (latest first)

**Employer:** (include location, turnover, number of employees and dates)

**Job Title:**

**Reported to:**

**Responsibilities:**

**Achievements:**

**Reason for leaving:**

.....

**Employer:** (include location, turnover, number of employees and dates)

**Job Title:**

**Reported to:**

**Responsibilities:**

**Achievements:**

**Reason for leaving:**

## Testimonials

List the names of people who have given you a testimonial. File your testimonials with your qualification certificates.

## Referees

List at least 3 people who are willing to be a referee for you.

**Name:**

**Job Title:**

**Address:**

**Tel:**

**Fax:**

**Mobile:**

**Email:**

.....

**Name:**

**Job Title:**

**Address:**

**Tel:**

**Fax:**

**Mobile:**

**Email:**

.....

**Name:**

**Job Title:**

**Address:**

**Tel:**

**Fax:**

**Mobile:**

**Email:**

## Sample CV

### CURRICULUM VITAE

#### PERSONAL DETAILS

**Name:** Paul Rank

**Address:**

74 Leavers Close  
Great Yarmouth  
Norfolk  
NR32 4PQ

**Tel:** 01234 567890

**Mob:** 07777 123456

**Email:** paulrank@ntlworld.com

**Date of birth:** 28th September 1961. Married, two dependant children.

#### **PROFILE**

*An experienced engineer with a progressive and proven track record.*

*Now seeking a supervisory post commensurate with previously acquired skills and experience.*

Key Competencies

*Computer literate*

*Influential Management Style*

*Organised & Disciplined*

Personal Attributes

*Results Focussed*

*Attentive To Detail*

*Loyal/Reliable/Conscientious*

*Strong Work Ethic*

*Supportive Of Colleagues*

*Self Confident*

#### EMPLOYMENT

**1991 – date TINSELTOWN Ltd.** Great Yarmouth Turnover £10.5m, 170 employees

A wholly owned subsidiary of the Disney Corporation specialising in the design and manufacture of moulded scenery and partitions.

Comprising the following positions:

**1997 – date      Engineering Team Leader**

Reporting to the Maintenance Manager, responsible for leading a team of engineers and technicians, co-ordinating and facilitating their activities to provide a cost effective breakdown and preventative mechanical maintenance service.

### **Key Responsibilities:**

- Planning and supervision of between 5 and 12 staff.
- Preventative and breakdown maintenance
- Diagnose defects and provide practical solutions
- Parts ordering and stores management
- Liaison with production and H&S adviser for planned works.

### **Main achievements:**

- Increased productivity (output) through machine running speeds
- Introduction of Planned Maintenance Schedules
- Training of personnel on machines.
- Multi-skilling of staff to improve resource utilisation
- Reduction in machine downtime (5%) through machine modifications to improve reliability.

### **1991 – 1997      Mechanical Engineer**

Reporting to the Engineering Team Leader and responsible for the repair and maintenance of production equipment.

### ***July '79 – 91 Norwich Engineering, Norwich Turnover £6m 50 employees***

A medium sized engineering company producing piece parts for automotive and oil/gas industries.

Milling machine operator and Jig Boring.

### **EDUCATION / TRAINING**

**1972 – 77**    Trowse High School – 6 GCSE's.

**1977 – 79**    Norwich City College, ONC Mechanical Engineering

**2000**        Institute of Leadership & Management ILM Introductory Award

### **OTHER INFORMATION**

Computer literate.

Full clean driving licence

Non - smoker

Lifestyle / leisure interests include computers and gardening.

## Standard Interview Questions

**How to Use:** Prepare yourself for interview by “bullet pointing” your responses to the following questions. Practice your answers so you look, and sound, confident as you answer.

### Tell me about yourself?

Answer this from a commercial point of view not a personal one.

Answers to the following questions should come from the thinking you did when compiling your CV.

### What were the main responsibilities in your last job?

### Tell me about some of your achievements?

### What targets were you set and what were the results?

Answer the following questions without highlighting any weaknesses. Try and talk in the past tense e.g. there was a problem identified at an appraisal and a programme was undertaken to overcome that problem.

**What have you found to be the main problem areas in your past jobs?**

**What are your weak points?**

**What aspects of previous jobs have you found most difficult?**

**Are there people you find difficulty working with?**

In the following questions, don't be trapped into feeling you have to give detailed answers. To answer these you would need detailed knowledge. Your priority, if given the job, will be to establish the facts and review resources rather than arbitrarily make changes.

**How would you hope to develop this job?**

**What changes would you make if you were given this job?**

In the following questions, talk about the contribution that you will make and what you hope to gain.

**Why do you want to join this organisation?**

**What appeals to you about the job for which you have applied?**

**Why should we employ you?**

**Why did you leave your last job?**

Be honest without emphasising problems or criticising your last employer.

**Do you not feel over qualified for this job?**

If you really are over qualified you will need to put the interviewer's mind at rest that you will not be after your boss's position.

**Tell me about a work success you have had and your personal contribution?**

**Tell me about a work disappointment you have had and what you have done since?**