

REDUNDANCY: Training, Recruitment, or Role Swap

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-PANDEMIC CAREER OPTIONS?



With the end of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, individuals still on furlough will no doubt have the challenges of returning to the workplace on their minds.

Some sectors, such as retail, tourism and hospitality, have been hit hardest, but the anticipation of recession that the U.K. economy would have to recover from could affect millions more employed across all sectors.

While no-one can predict what the economic recovery from Covid-19 will look like, the one thing we do know is that the employment market is very different now from what it was pre-pandemic.

Many people are facing redundancy, and a significant portion has used the lockdown period to assess their careers. There will be lots of people looking for new roles over the coming months – are you ready to compete in this competitive employment arena?

If the prospect of looking for a new job feels daunting, if you are worried about the future of your career, or if it has been years since you were in the market for a new role – this guide is here to help.

We will walk you through everything you need to know about looking for a new role in the post-pandemic job market.

Sarah Warne

MANAGING DIRECTOR [Change Recruitment Services Limited](#)



While there is no doubt that Covid-19 is one of the most significant challenges the world's economy has faced in generations, recent data is emerging which shows that the extent of the impact will not be as severe as some first predicted.

The Bank of England has revealed that the economic shock triggered by the pandemic will be less than initially feared, although the return to normal might be slower than expected. A GDP loss of 14% was predicted; it is thought now that [growth will only shrink by 9%](#).

The knowledge that the economy will not be as badly affected as some feared is, of course, good news for U.K. jobs, but we still have several months to endure in the 'bounce-back' period – and this will, unfortunately, mean job losses.

As mentioned in the introduction, some sectors have been hit much harder than others, but job losses across a range of industries and at different levels are still very much a reality.

Despite the redundancy crisis appearing bleak, it is essential to remember that there are currently millions of job vacancies. But competition for these roles is now at an all-time high, with the applicant to job ratio [rising by 84% since the pandemic](#).

If you are currently facing redundancy, your plan should focus on seeing where you fit into the post-pandemic job market – where the opportunities are, and how you can make yourself the most attractive candidate to employers for the role you want.

This guide is to help you to start making plans today to help give you the best career opportunities in our post-pandemic world.

THE REALITIES OF STILL BEING ON FURLOUGH

Chancellor Rishi Sunak said in the House of Commons: *“The more time on furlough, skills will fade, and people will find it harder to get new employment.”*

By July 2020, there were already 650,000 fewer people in employment than they were in March, with this number only set to rise as the scheme comes to an end.

The government have produced official guidelines aiming to help those who were initially put on furlough but are now redundant due to their employer either struggling to gain clients or becoming insolvent.

The guide on the government website, [which you can find here](#), has a disclaimer at the beginning that the government are still working through the complexities of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, and that the document will be updated as

these challenges are worked out. This highlights the unusual nature of the problem both employees and employers are facing – the current redundancy crisis is like nothing the country has met before.

It is not known how many jobs will be lost, but what we do know from previous recessions is that now candidates must compete from a smaller pool of positions, those who ‘sell’ themselves best to employers will have a better chance at securing roles.

So, what can you do as a candidate to ensure you have the best possible chance of securing a new role after redundancy?

Let us start by looking at a potential redundancy scenario and how you process what is happening to you as you move forward.

BEING MADE REDUNDANT

If you are going through redundancy, it is essential to remember that you are not on your own, and there is help out there.

Remember that it is not you personally who is being made redundant – rather it is the role which has been made redundant.

Many people take being made redundant personally, but we want to remind you that it is not a personal decision, it is an unfortunate fact of the business’s current financial situation.

Mental Health charity Mind has created some helpful information and resources to help people currently dealing with redundancy due to the pandemic. They cover knowing your rights, how to cope with uncertainty and coping with the emotional upheaval that losing your role brings. You can [find the information by clicking here](#).

Aside from the emotional stress caused by redundancy, it can also be a worrying time financially.

If the reality of redundancy has created financial problems for you, there is also specific guidance out there to help.

Martin Lewis, the Money Saving Expert, has created a detailed guide on how to manage your money through Covid-related redundancy, with advice on how to apply for monetary help, managing debts and your mortgage and your legal rights. [Click here for the guide](#).

Processing the fact that you have been made redundant can take some time. Remember that redundancy is one of the most

stressful life events a person can go through, and be kind to yourself and give yourself time to recover and regroup your thoughts.

In some cases, if your role is being made redundant, you might be offered a role swap within your organisation – let’s now look at how to approach this situation.



ROLE SWAP

If you are being made redundant, at some point during the redundancy consultation, your employer may discuss the possibility of a role swap within the organisation.

These opportunities will be limited and will depend upon the size of your company and the number of redundancies that are being made.

Opting for a voluntary role swap if one is offered can benefit you in two ways.

1. It will help you avoid redundancy altogether, although the new role might be in an area you had not previously considered.
2. It could be the chance to try a new role you have previously been interested in, and the start of a new career path for you.

If you are faced with the decision of accepting a role swap in your current company, you should think carefully about what you will get out of the role, and ultimately, if you think this is the best decision for your career.

With your line manager, you should be able to discuss what you are going to get out of taking this new role, and they should be able to provide you with a development plan.

If, as I mentioned, the role swap will provide you with a position in a department you have been interested in exploring, then you can view this as possible career development. You might be offered a job in the Finance department after previously being in administration – the scope for career development here is huge.

Think about how the role offered to you will benefit your personal and professional goals.

If you are sure the new role you are being offered is not suited to you, then declining and working on finding a different position with a new company is the way forward.

Once you are in the position where you know that looking for a new role in a new company needs to be your next move – what are the steps to take to put this plan into action?

Next, we look at how to upskill yourself for the current job market.

UPSKILLING

An incredibly proactive step you can take right now is to upskill yourself in an ability you know you need for the future of your career.

This is advisable if you are certain that you know where you want to take your career and is a great strategy for anyone who wants to build on the skills they already have.

Later in the report, we will go through how to identify and use your most useful transferable skills to give yourself the best chance of landing a new role.

But first, let's look at how you can build your existing skillset.

For example, someone with experience in administration could take a digital media course so that they have a broader range of the now commonly needed office skills such as social media,

digital communications, photoshop, or design.

Think about your most recent, or most longstanding role – what are your three main strengths? Write them down.

Now think about how you could build on these skills to make you a more attractive candidate. For example, in your chosen industry, you could join and become an active member in online communities on LinkedIn or Facebook (there are plenty out there). Being able to put on your CV that you are an admin or an active and prolific member of an online community will make you stand out from the other candidates.

As well as enhancing skills within your current area of expertise, there is always the opportunity to retrain a new area, and the pandemic might be the perfect opportunity for you to do this.



TRAINING

With the job retention scheme officially coming to an end early Autumn, for those returning to work after this, their furlough period could have lasted many months. This is a significant amount of time which will have an impact on your role and your career whichever way you look at it.

Many furloughed employees have undertaken training while on furlough, as this was one of the stipulations legally allowed by the scheme.

For lucky employees, their employers might have been proactive with setting up training; others will have been left to their own devices.

If you have been on furlough for some months, you might have been able to undertake valuable training then, but if you haven't - it's not too late.

[Recent research found](#) that significant numbers of people in the U.K. are upskilling and reskilling to get ahead in the job market.

Online courses in teaching, programming and people management have surged in popularity.

The Open University provides a number of free courses, [which](#)

[you can view here.](#)

[Future Learn](#) also has a variety of free and paid courses, [which you can browse here.](#)

If you are facing redundancy from a large employer you may be eligible for help from the government's [Rapid Response Service](#) – this is an excellent way to take advantage of a range of free training courses and can be accessed through the Jobcentre.

While the Jobcentre can provide help and advice, their services are limited, and they will not be able to provide a tailored job search for you based on your skills and abilities – this is why it is always best to work with a recruiter too. There is more information on the benefits of working with a specific sector recruiter at the end of this guide.

Retraining might not be what you had in mind for this year, but it's time to view the positives which can come from a change.

Making such a significant change is not something to be considered lightly. As recruiters, we are on hand to discuss your future career options with you to help get the best results from what is currently a very challenging time. Get in touch with us here at [Change Recruitment.](#)

WHERE ARE THE JOB OPPORTUNITIES?

Navigating the job market right now might feel like an uphill struggle.

If you are looking in the same narrow range of job types that you have always done, it might be time to broaden your horizons.

John Adams was the leader of the American Revolution and was the U.S. president in 1797, and I love his famous quote of the time; which is just as relevant today:

“With challenge always comes opportunity.”

While Covid-19 has cut jobs in some sectors, others are growing.

Growth is happening in public services, I.T. and tech (especially online sales and transactions), project management, as well as industries which have switched to 'online only' of late such as digital, communications and media, as well as online tutoring and virtual customer services.

But if these sectors which are currently growing feel a million miles away from your current skill set or knowledge, this does not mean that you won't have a chance of securing a new role in a new industry.

A recent study found that 42% of people who apply for a new job don't have the skills listed on the job description. What's even more encouraging is that 84% of companies are willing to train up applicants who lack the required skills if they have other 'must-have' attributes. The study was conducted in the U.S., but this trend is the same in the U.K. too.

A positive 'can-do' attitude goes a long way when applying for a new role.

So what are these 'must-haves' that employers are looking for? They are the skills you already possess – it's about presenting them in the right way; let's take a closer look.

UTILISING YOUR SKILLS

No matter what line of work you have primarily worked in, you will have built up a repertoire of skills, and now is the time to call upon them.

Let's look at the way you can use your previous experience to your benefit in the post-pandemic job market.

Hard Skills

Your hard skills are the skills you have been trained in, for example formal specific sector qualifications and job responsibilities.

Your hard skills will be the abilities you feel most comfortable using in your job every day, and will probably be the area in which you focus your job search. This is fine if your industry has not been badly affected by Covid-19, but we understand that in many sectors, job availability feels tight at the moment.

Many applicants get caught up thinking that these skills are the only ones which employers are looking out for, but this is not the case anymore; increasingly, employers are looking for soft skills.

What can you do if jobs in your preferred Sector are few and far between and you are not getting anywhere with your applications?

It's time to showcase your soft skills to employers.

Soft Skills

[A 2019 survey by International talent and outsourcing company Yoh found](#) that 75% of employers are more likely to hire an applicant who has soft skills, rather than the exact experience or qualifications, in case you were wondering how vital soft skills are in landing you a new role.

So what are soft skills?

- Enthusiasm
- Communication
- Dependability
- Flexibility
- Emotional intelligence
- A growth mindset
- Active listening
- Work ethic

Your soft skills denote what kind of a person you are, what your character is like and how you work on a day-to-day basis.

A candidate who is personable, emotionally aware with a great attitude and a hunger to learn is always worth a second interview - employers know they can teach skills, but they cannot teach attitude.

Transferrable Skills

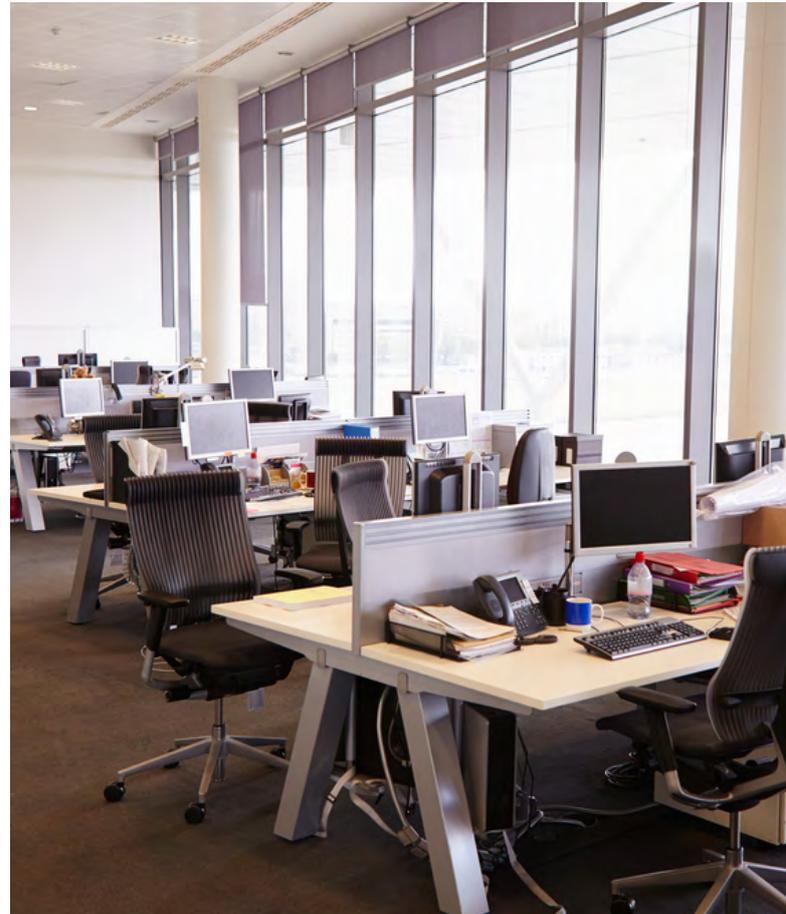
Similar to soft skills, these are another set of invaluable attributes that you can focus on to give you the best chance of securing a job in an industry which you aren't explicitly trained.

Transferable skills include -

- Creative thinking
- Time management
- Leadership
- People skills such as delegation and negotiation
- Literacy and numeracy skills
- Research and analytical skills

For a more in-depth look at transferable skills, check out this transferable skills guide [by clicking here](#).

Great candidates with a range of hard, soft and transferable skills are always of value to any employer and hiring managers will be looking out for the candidates who can bring extra value to their organisation.



UPDATING YOUR CV

No matter what line of work you have primarily worked in, you will have built up a repertoire of skills, and now is the time to call upon them.

As recruiters, we always advise any applicant to tailor their CV and cover letter to the role you are applying for (more on cover letters in the next section).

And this is still true, although some additional changes are advised in our post-pandemic world.

Typically, C.V.s will have the employment history at the top, with skills and other experience listed underneath.

To increase your chance of landing an interview, instead, we suggest that you detail your skills – hard, soft and transferable (more on these in the next section) at the top of your CV.

Including your skills at the top of your CV will pique the hiring manager's interest instead of them dismissing your CV for not having relevant industry experience.

Additionally, now is the time to include skills and experience from previous jobs that you might have thought were irrelevant.

Past experience, achievements, volunteer work – now is the time to bulk up your CV to make you stand out from the crowd.

At this time, it would also be a good idea to contact previous colleagues and managers to get them to give you online recommendations on your LinkedIn page.

After a hiring manager looks at your CV, usually the next thing they do is to research you online. Make sure they're impressed with what they find there, too.

The key thing to remember with your CV is that even though you want it to contain the maximum amount of the most relevant information, you also need to keep it succinct.

Keep it ideally to two pages, but three is acceptable if you have lots of relevant experience.

Remember to tailor your CV heavily to each specific job you are applying to – make your CV mirror the job application as much as you possibly can.

Next, we talk you through making the most of every job application.

YOUR POST-PANDEMIC JOB APPLICATION

Right now, you need to make sure that you are making the most of every available opportunity to make yourself stand-out as the 'must-have' candidate.

Some job seekers are under the impression that sending a cover letter with their applications is somehow an old-fashioned concept – this is not the case.

Most online applications will give you the chance to attach a cover letter along with your CV – you should **always** take advantage of this function.

A cover letter explaining your situation and a smart link between your previous experience and what the employer is looking for will go a long way. A shocking [74% of job applicants in 2019](#) didn't use a cover letter.

So say you've spotted a job you want to apply for, but your CV looks very different from the required skills that are listed on the job description, or you feel you lack knowledge in this Sector – what can you do?

Call upon the soft and transferable skills mentioned earlier and find a way of relating as many of the required skills or attributes that the job application lists to your previous experience.

Aim to relate your own experiences to the job listing as much as

you can, but remember – a concise application and a positive, friendly 'can-do' attitude go a long way on a job application.

Finally, let's look at considering temporary employment and how working with a recruiter can help you find the role you have been looking for.



TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT

If your job search is still proving unfruitful, the option of temporary employment is one which can be hugely beneficial to you, but one area which candidates often overlook.

In the past, 'temp' work had a stigma attached to it as lower-skilled or less prestigious than a permanent role, but this is not the case anymore.

Pre-Covid, with the rise of the gig economy, increasing numbers of skilled employees were looking for temporary contracts, to give them that elusive work-life balance we all strive for.

But when you need a role fast, this type of work can also be a saviour.

The Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC) revealed that the numbers of people signing up for temporary employment in July [was at the highest point ever since records](#)

[started in 1997.](#)

Taking a temporary role should not be viewed as a failure; it is an excellent way to reboot your career in what is a tough time.

Many businesses are in preservation mode, which is why roles are seemingly harder to find. But this is a safety tactic to preserve finances. As we have seen from previous periods of economic downturn, recruitment will start up again once the economy finds a settling point.

Taking a temporary role with a company is a great way to get on their radar for future permanent openings, which will happen over the coming months. Once you have your 'foot in the door', you can prove your employability and have a much better chance of being taken on for a full-time role in future.

Finally, if you haven't considered working with a recruiter to find your next role – here's how you can benefit.



WORKING WITH A RECRUITER TO FIND YOUR NEXT ROLE

Working with a recruiter is the most effective way to boost your career prospects if you have been affected by redundancy.

As a recruitment company, we are helping candidates like you find their way through these difficult times.

We can offer the following forms of support to candidates looking for work right now.

- Career & CV advice
- Library of Blogs like this one

- Access to our online portal and tailored job alerts
- Tailored job search
- Interview arrangement and feedback
- Offer management

All for free.

Many candidates don't realise the enormous benefits of working with a recruiter, and now really is the best time to work with one.

To view our current vacancies, head to our [vacancies page](#), alternatively, call us to speak to one of our team and find out how we can help find your next role.

Contact us today on 01934 612288.

Sarah Warne

MANAGING DIRECTOR [Change Recruitment Services Limited](#)



As a team we have spent over a decade working with individuals who are looking to change job role and employer. From the initial thought and curiosity about what opportunities might be available, through to making the leap and succeeding in something brand new.

We are committed to offering clearly explained and effective recruitment advice and support that starts where you need us in your search for a new role.

A service that of course remains COMPLIMENTARY but is different to anything you have known before.

If you want or need to change job for one of many possible reasons, what we offer below could make everything so much easier and more useful to you AND help you to succeed when you find and start your new dream job.

Change Recruitment, our steps to your success starts with:

- A friendly and honest conversation
- A library of helpful FREE information, that can be found here
- Control of your own data at your fingertips through your own unique login to our website
- An invitation to an in depth consultative service (depending on where you are at in your journey) including behavioural profiling with written feedback

YOUR NEXT ACTIONS

Connect with us in multiple ways;

- You can connect with either of us on multiple social channels including LinkedIn and Facebook.

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- If you would like to talk recruitment with us, book a confidential virtual meeting [here](#)
- Or simply give us a call on 01934 612288 or send us an email office@changerecruitmentservices.co.uk

