



Our client company operates in the telecommunications industry and due to a restructure were closing their customer service function in the Midlands. Operations were transferred to the North East of England resulting in just under 200 redundancies on the existing Midlands site.

The objectives of the project were to:

- Manage the communication process relating to the site closure, redundancy and outplacement processes
- Develop and implement the redundancy programme on a 3 month lead time
- Create an outplacement programme suitable for various levels of employee from front line telephone operators to senior managers with responsibility for teams of 20 plus individuals
- Evaluate individual job offers received by employees by the end of the 3 month notice period

As employees were required to continue in their existing roles during this consultation period, the outplacement programme ran parallel and the timings of one to one meetings and workshops had to be scheduled to fit with the operational requirements of an active call centre environment.

The process commenced with small group meetings to communicate the process. This first stage required compulsory attendance by all employees so that they could understand what was involved, confirm the timescales and outline the service offered through the outplacement provision. Following this initial meeting, employees were invited to 'sign up' for each stage of the outplacement programmes. Key outplacement services were:

- One to one coaching, incorporating outline of aspirations, identification of key transferable skills and further training options
- Workshops focused on CV preparation, job search techniques and interviewing skills
- Installation of an outplacement support area housing computers, newspaper job sections, newspapers, supporting books and instructional guides
- Organisation of 2 job fairs to which we invited local recruiting employers, recruitment agencies, training institutions, job centre representatives etc

By developing schedules for attendance at each of the coaching and workshop sessions, we enabled each of the managers to be involved in the process by managing the 'off line' time of their team members. Each one to one session was a maximum of one hour and the workshops held maximum of 14 individuals and ran, usually, twice a week during the first 6-8 weeks. Some employees wanted to attend all the workshops, others just one or two depending upon their level of confidence. In summary the participation numbers were as follows:

- One to one coaching - 162 individuals
- Workshops
CV: 136
Job search: 98
Interviewing: 122
- Job fair attendance 188

Evaluation

By the end of the consultation period:

- ▶ 85% of employees had secured alternative roles
- ▶ 4% had decided to take time off/go travelling
- ▶ 2% were going to further education
- ▶ Remaining individuals were undecided or had not secured a desired position.

This high level of participation not only provided vital services for the employees but also enabled employees to leave the business with a more positive outlook than they otherwise would have. They could see and value the time, effort and money the company had put into the support provided and evidenced this through feedback sheets and unsolicited comments to the management team.
