

Hello

Welcome to the National Careers Service newsletter for Job Centres, highlighting the range of support on offer for our customers. This issue will focus on Mock Interviews, Redundancy Support and Universal Credit Customers. **All examples mentioned in the newsletter are available across Yorkshire and the Humber.** We hope you enjoy it and find it useful, and welcome any [feedback and comments](#).

Mock Interviews

Our National Careers Service in **Wakefield** and in the **Humber** (Britannia, Market Place, Goole and Beverley Jobcentres) deliver regular mock interview sessions to Jobcentre Plus customers. These customers have sometimes been unemployed for a significant amount of time, and so they are referred by work coaches to give them '**real**' **interview experience**. The mock interviews often follow on from our 'Interview Skills Sessions' to give the customer the chance to put theory into practice.

Customers are asked to dress in formal interview attire and bring with them their CV, a cover letter and a job description of a role they would like to apply for. Prior to the interview they are encouraged to take time to prepare and research the company. During the interview, common interview questions are asked as well as some tailored to the customers preferred occupation and customers are expected to provide examples of experience when answering the questions. Interviews can take different a format depending on customer need, either with a panel of 3 or one-to-one.

Following the interview, customers are given verbal feedback on their general demeanour as well as the answers they have given. They are then provided with a copy of their responses and a full feedback sheet, so that they can reflect and make any improvements for future interviews.

Building confidence...

We also frequently run mock interviews for Jobcentre Plus customers in **Leeds** to help boost their confidence and self awareness. This provides them with the knowledge and skills to be able to sell themselves effectively to an employer in order to improve their chances of securing suitable work.

Adding employers and training providers to the mix...

In **York**, we worked with Jobcentre Plus to deliver mock interviews to customers hoping to apply for 2 new Primark stores opening in the area. The mock interviews were conducted at the York National Careers Service branch as part of an accredited course delivered by Tyro Training.



Supporting ex-offenders...

Within HMP New Hall, our National Careers Service advisers arranged 30 minute mock interviews for some residents who were job ready and likely to be shortly released. The interviewer was from M&S and responsible for recruiting and training staff for the Moortown, Leeds store - although M&S cannot guarantee an interview or a job, they will treat each applicant as an individual.

This is just one example of how we work with ex-offenders during their time in prison. We also provide tailored support following their release and can provide help for any Jobcentre Plus customers who may need it.

Redundancy Support

Our **Bradford** National Careers Service deliver redundancy support sessions in all Job Centres in the Bradford district. Following notice of a redundancy, customers are booked on to an initial session with the National Careers Service to have access to a **package of support** which includes:

- Realistic individual career evaluation
- Funding guidance including SEAF (eligibility/training)
- Self-employment
- Initial CV creation or evaluation
- Employment application assistance
- CV updates/reviews
- Cover letters
- Speculative letters
- 1-2-1 interview coaching
- National Careers Service and Careers Yorkshire & the Humber websites



Customers are then encouraged to effectively plan their next steps, taking into consideration the consequences and impact. To help them make informed decisions, and because employment in each area of the country is different, customers are introduced to our labour market information (LMI) and given help to understand the hidden job market.

We work with organisations of all sizes and from all industries, most recently including: La Redoute, InCommunities, HMRC (Bradford), Bradford University and Multi Packaging Solutions to name a few.

The redundancy support sessions have not only resulted in **higher client engagement**, but also a **more effective working relationship** between National Careers Service and Jobcentre Plus.

Following the initial session, we are often invited back to deliver bespoke group sessions around particular 'problem' areas. Customers are also able to join on to our other available sessions, including '**Connecting with employment - understanding the job market**' - a workshop aiming to give customers the understanding and knowledge they need for effective and worthwhile engagement with the employment market, whilst tackling common communication issues.

Restructures as well as redundancies...

Our **Humber** and **South Yorkshire** National Careers Service advisers worked in partnership with Jobcentre Plus and various other organisations to support those affected by the Tata Steel restructure.

These included not only the direct employees of the company, but also those who were employed within the sub-contractor chain. Jobcentre Plus colleagues worked as a team with our advisers and their presentations to employees really highlighted the benefits of seeing a Careers Adviser, which in turn resulted in high customer engagement.

And support for individuals...

A customer in **York** first got in touch with the National Careers Service team when she feared her post as a Design Technology Teacher would become redundant. When her fears turned to reality, she was grateful for our support on perfecting her CV and completing specific job application forms.

Our adviser listened to her situation, and provided a blend of practical support and much needed encouragement. Together, they discussed and utilised resources such as the Mid Life Careers Review – a resource looking at what to consider when thinking about a change of career – paired with relevant websites to use. They also looked at developing a skills based CV and how to structure the relevant information on an application form.

She heard through an ex-colleague that there was a post at a school in York and after a talk with the Head Teacher was appointed. The role was initially temporary, but has since been made permanent and she will be setting up and running a brand new Food Department!

Universal Credit Customers

Several Jobcentre Plus advisers from the **Bradford** district sat in on the 'Connecting with employment' sessions delivered by our Careers Advisers, and due to how positively this was received, the team were asked to develop another session specifically aimed at Universal Credit Customers. This led to the introduction of a workshop called '**Raising Potential**', which Job Centres across the Bradford district now mandate customers to. The aims of Raising Potential are to:

- Increase knowledge and understanding of part time working
- Increase the ability to realise alternatives via the wider job market and how this changes job search activities



The sessions look at making part time working an option for those who are currently claiming benefits and explains how Universal Credit offers the flexibility to engage with it. Sessions also consider the barriers that a customer may face, both outside of work and within the workplace, and offer solutions to challenge this.

Customers are then supported to look at the local labour market, to understand what employment in the area looks like and how to identify suitable opportunities within it, including how to navigate the 'hidden job market'. Finally, customers are presented with methods for applying for jobs and reminded of the importance of matching skills to specific job applications, especially since the rise of 'wordbots' to scan e-based applications.

As multiple customers have identified technology as a barrier, the sessions continue to be developed to change perceptions of this and involved conversations to discuss the opportunities this can provide within employment.

Easy as A, B, C...

Similar sessions are now running at **Brittania, Beverley and Goole** Jobcentres in the Humber, to encourage customers who are currently claiming Universal Credit to increase their hours. The content of this workshop has been developed based on the Jobcentre Plus strapline for Universal Credit - '**A Job, A Better Job, A Career**'. Feedback so far for the sessions has been positive, with one customer saying "*It made everything clearer for me so I can move to my desired career*".

Coming soon...

Group work is scheduled to start in June with Universal Credit Customers at **Southern House Job Centre (Leeds)**. The sessions will cover the latest LMI, educate individuals on modern job search methods; and advise on how to market skills and experience effectively both on paper and in person.

Remember - all examples in the newsletter are available across Yorkshire and the Humber

Referral reminder

In order to continue to develop and deliver workshops for the diverse range of Jobcentre Plus customers, we rely on you to continue to refer people to the support available to them from the National Careers Service. Our experienced advisers continually research and update workshop content and resources, adapting based on the needs of customers and changes in the employment market.

Not sure if we can? Just ask!

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