

# Planning for the Future











ASCL Professional Development, we can provide support that is suitable to your specific needs and circumstances.

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# Planning for the Future

#### Introduction

This consultancy service provided by ASCL Professional Development provides support, guidance and advice to ASCL members for the next stage of their career following a significant and/or sudden job loss or job change which may or may not be of their own volition, and for those who lose their senior post in difficult circumstances.

It will normally follow the support members will have received from a Regional or Field Officer. If this is not the case, members may wish to get some personal advice by calling the ASCL hotline, a confidential service, on 0116 299 1122 for immediate advice and help.

ASCL Regional and Field Officers may, if circumstances allow, be able to arrange funding to provide this advice and support for members. Alternatively, members may wish to access the support themselves using their own funds.

"Thank you for all your wise words and support - greatly appreciated."

"Whilst it will never be the same as before, you will come to a point where you do not look back and wonder why you haven't done what you are doing now for a lot longer." A member who was supported.

"Thank you for your support in the dark times." A member who was supported.

For more information about this bespoke support programme, please email Ramila Patel at consultancy@ascl.org.uk

This publication is designed to be interactive so as you go through the different sections you can chart your progress and get the support you feel you need to move forwards. Equally, if a particular section is more relevant then you can just focus at the one that best meets your needs and consider the other sections as/when/if they become useful to you.

Beyond ASCL, support from Education Support is available free. They provide practical and emotional support to all staff in the education sector and their families. Confidential information, support and coaching is available 24 hours a day (call: England: 08000 562561; Wales: 08000 855088; text 07909 341229). Support lines are available 24hrs a day, every day. Calls from landlines are usually free. For further information visit: www.educationsupport.org.uk/

# Section A: Looking after Yourself

# **Personal Circumstances**

Sudden/drastic changes in our circumstances affect us all in very different ways. The full impact cannot easily be quantified, nor can the severity of the situation be over emphasised as it is very personal to each individual. Once current employment has ended, or is ending, then there will be the need to come to terms with the new, quite often, unwelcome, circumstances. Depending on your situation, there may be a need to start rebuilding careers and/or lives, especially in the face of the unfamiliar turmoil of enforced job and life changes, regain your self confidence, self worth and self esteem as these can often be lost or diminished and plan for your future career.

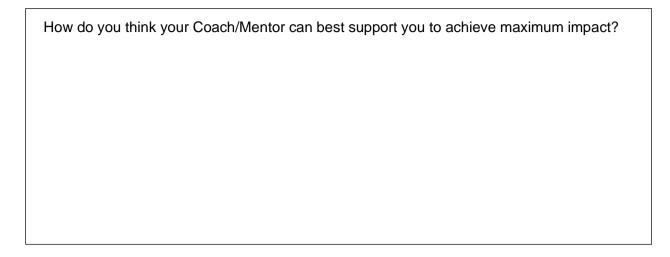
It may be that you are re-evaluating your future, either by choice or because you have to do it for a whole variety of reasons which might include, for example, health issues, a career break, bereavement, seeking to reduce the pressure of current responsibilities, or the wish to find alternative employment from that in education settings.

Whatever the circumstances that have led to this time in your career, you will be well supported to plan for your future and 'bounce back' from this difficult time. The support will be given by consultants who have many years of senior leadership experience in schools. Most of the support (which will take the form of coaching/mentoring) will be given remotely but there may be occasions where face-to-face meeting(s) are more appropriate. The exact nature, level and type of support will be determined on an individual basis between you and the consultant (your coach/mentor).

This booklet is designed to be interactive, so as you start on the programme, it's helpful to you and your coach/mentor, if you make notes in the appropriate sections to chart your 'self-planning for the future'. As you do so, identify, if you can, specific areas where you feel you may need particular support and share this with your coach/mentor.

The length of the programme/support will vary in accordance with each individual case but be largely governed by your circumstances, how quickly you are able/need to get back into employment and the funding.

What are your expectations of the support you receive from your Coach/Mentor?	



It is a sad but true reality that many members go through the difficult times that you find yourself in at the moment. However, you, like them, will emerge stronger and happier once you have come through it. It is important to remember that you are not alone and with the support that this service provides, you will be able to navigate your way through to a happier, successful future again.

#### Your Health and Wellbeing

Everyone's situation is unique. Deciding where to start will depend on a variety of personal factors including your health, age, financial circumstances, and short, medium and long-term goals. However, the fact that you are no longer a member of a senior team is a radical change. The sudden loss of authority, power and responsibility with no one to lead or support and no pressures on your time are significant changes.

For everybody, there will be some impact on personal relationships. One of the services offered by Relate is relationship counselling, call 0300 100 1234 or visit www.relate.org.uk

Remember that those closest to you will be most affected by the change in your circumstances. You may even find that friendships also change or are affected.

There is also the question of what to say to those who query what has happened. You may find that being open and straightforward is the best way forward. Whilst very traumatic, the loss of a job is sadly, widely experienced throughout many areas of employment. Unfortunately, it has become a relatively common occurrence in today's economic environment. Where appropriate, your Regional/Field Officer will be able to advise you on what to say.

Loss of employment in difficult circumstances can affect your general health and wellbeing. Thinking about the future may make you feel anxious about your finances and future plans may leave you feeling stressed which could lead to depression.

You may not immediately feel well enough to start to think about the future, or to seek an alternative post if that is what you decide to do. It is important though to focus on your own well being, both physical and mental. That, in itself, is an investment in your own future. It may be necessary for you to visit your GP to check your state of health. You may find it helpful to receive some counselling.

The ASCL Benevolent Fund makes grants in support of specialist treatment or facilities not available from the NHS. Contact Nita Makhecha, Secretary to the Trustees, at ASCL headquarters on 0116 299 1122 or email nita.makhecha@ascl.org.uk

The questions that follow are a possible starting point; add others that are relevant to you and, if it helps you, keep a log of your activity, tracking your progress.

Activity/Actions	Progress/Impact. How can I improve?	Do I need support in this area? If so, who from? eg: Mentor/Coach, Counsellor, GP, Field Officer, Hotline, other
Am I getting enough sleep?		
Am I keeping physically active? Eg: gym, swim, walk, run, gardening?		
Am I getting enough fresh air?		
Do I have people around me to talk to?		
Can I visit family/friends?		
*Do I feel able to update my CV?		
*What assistance might I require with my CV?		
*Do I need support in writing/checking job applications?		
*Would I like help with interview practice / preparation?		
Other actions I need / wish to take		

\*These questions require you to pinpoint exactly what area of support is required in so that both you and your coach/mentor can use the available funding to best meet your needs.

Alternatively, you may wish to make up your own list and write down tasks you need/wish to complete and by when, tailored to your circumstances. The important thing is to try and establish new routines and structures that will help you refocus on the positive and regain your self confidence and self esteem, both of which may have taken a 'knock'. It is also important to remember that you are not alone in this.

Taking small steps every day will enable you to achieve your future goals. It is important to try and focus on the future whilst coping with and dealing with the negative impact of your experience. Be realistic with yourself and do not expect too much too soon. Equally, do not be overly critical of yourself and acknowledge the progress you make along the way.

When you are ready, your ASCL coach/mentor will be able to provide professional support in preparing for future appointments, for example one-to-one help in interview practice, presentational skills, the writing of application letters and preparing CVs.

#### Section B: Finance

#### Financial issues

A break in career is likely to raise financial questions. Both the immediate and longer-term issues may need to be addressed as soon as possible.

You will need to assess your essential outgoings and discretional payments against the money you have. Assess/review what is non-essential and explore outgoings where money can be saved eg ASCL membership could be reduced temporarily from the senior leader rate. You can make enquiries by emailing membership@ascl.org.uk

Similarly, other memberships eg gym, may offer a reduced rate in the event of loss of employment. Assess how long your current income will sustain you as this will determine the point at which you must be back in employment or seek income from other sources.

Another important consideration is what are the implications for your pension? This is best addressed with professional advice, either from an independent financial adviser or you can contact ASCL Conditions of Employment Specialist: Pensions, Jacques Szemalikowski via the hotline service on 0116 299 1122. You can also visit the pensions sections on the ASCL website: www.ascl.org.uk/Pensions

# Sources of financial support

There are many sources of help available:

- 1 The ASCL Benevolent Fund. The fund can make grants or loans in cases where a sudden drop in family income poses short-term problems. Contact Nita Makhecha Secretary to the Trustees, at ASCL on 0116 299 1122 or email asclbf@ascl.org.uk
- 2 Lighthouse Financial Advice Limited. This is an ASCL Premier Partner. As an ASCL member you are entitled to a no-obligation initial consultation with one of the company's independent financial advisers on: 01273 523749 or email appointments@lighthousefa.co.uk Alternatively, you can find a local independent financial adviser at www.ifa.org.uk or www.unbiased.co.uk
- 3 The government website www.gov.uk includes financial advice, including mortgage and benefits advice.
- 4 Education Support offers financial advice and information on grants available and sources of further monetary advice. Their numbers are: England 08000 562561; Wales 08000 85508 or text 07909 341229. For further information visit their website: www.educationsupport.org.uk/
- The Financial Services Authority (FSA) has a comprehensive Money Advice Service available by phone, and a range of publications that offer advice on money management, retirement and redundancy. The publications are very detailed; for example, *The Redundancy Handbook*<sup>1</sup> contains these sections: Alternatives to redundancy, Know your redundancy rights, Redundancy pay, Decide what to do about your pension, Leaving work, Claim State Benefits, Make the most of your redundancy pay, How to manage on less money, Get help with borrowing and debts, Safeguard your home, Work on your job search, Useful contacts. Call the FSA on 0300 500 5000 or visit www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk The site also has a budget planner.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> 2011, The Redundancy Handbook: Steps to help you cope with Redundancy

Martin Lewis' MoneySavingExpert.com includes a comprehensive budget planner:

www.moneysavingexpert.com/banking/budget-planning#tools

#### Section C: Pensions

#### The options available

In the first instance, you can get most of the information you require on your pension scheme website. For members in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) it is www.lgpsmember.org and for those in the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) it is www.teacherspensions.co.uk It is vitally important that you create an account to regularly access your pension forecast, download your benefit statement and check your service history. You also need to regularly check for any secure messages you may have been sent. There is further information available on the ASCL website www.ascl.org.uk/pensions If you then have specific queries, you can talk to ASCL Conditions of Employment Specialist: Pensions, Jacques Szemalikowski via the hotline service on 0116 299 1122.

Please note that neither your pension provider, nor ASCL can provide you with a definitive figure as this is deemed regulated financial advice. It is very good practice to consult a truly independent financial adviser before making any final decisions. Again, please contact ASCL Premier Partner Lighthouse Financial Advice Limited on 0800 0858590 or visit the ASCL website www.ascl.org.uk/addmembenefits Members with tax concerns can also get advice from ASCL partner BHP Chartered Accountants, their contact details can be found on the ASCL website www.ascl.org.uk/addmembenefits

Members need to be aware that the Public Sector Pension Bill is making its way through parliamentary legislation this academic year. Members in scope will be asked to make a one-time binary choice at the point they take their benefits from the scheme as to whether to take their original legacy scheme benefits or the reformed scheme benefits, covering the remedy period. Until then, everyone will be put back into their legacy scheme.

With this caveat in there are a number of options available to someone leaving their post before their Normal Pension Age (NPA).

Your NPA will vary depending on your scheme and when you joined. Many ASCL members will have different NPA's for different parts of their pension. From April 2022 everybody will be on the new reformed scheme with any accrual from then linked to the State Pension Age (currently usually 67).

The best option will depend on personal circumstances, including overall financial situation, amount of pension accrued to date and, importantly, future intentions with regards to work and lifestyle.

The options include:

#### **Phased Retirement**

You can access up to 75% of your pensionable benefits if aged 55+, so long as you reduce your income by 20%+. The remaining benefits left in the scheme continue to grow as you carry on working and contributing on a reduced salary. You may choose to do this by reducing responsibility or going down to four days a week. If you are below your NPA, your benefits in payment will be actuarily reduced accordingly.

Retiring, return to work and continue to contribute to the scheme
If you choose to return on a lower salary your Final Salary portion of your pension will be
paid on an average of the three best consecutive years in the last ten (including inflation
increases) in the TPS and 13 in the LGPS. So you could work for several more years,

adding to your pension, and still have your Final Salary pension based on your higher salary. Clearly if you are on a lower salary then your new contributions may will accrue more slowly. Please note, however, that if you take your benefits at your NPA there is a limit to how much you can earn, called abatement.

#### 'Defer' your pension

This means that you stop paying into the scheme. The pension will grow with inflation each year until you choose to take it, so long as this does not exceed five years. You can begin to pay in again should your circumstances change. However, ASCL cautions against this without due diligence as the generous life insurance element of three times your annual full salary as well as the security of ill health benefits are negated. However, you could take alternative employment and pay into a different pension scheme.

# Purchase additional pension

You may use severance or redundancy pay to do this, but you cannot use your pension lump sum for this purpose. It can be worthwhile depending on your particular tax situation. Take individual advice on this. Additional pension has to be purchased in units of £250 per annum pension up to a maximum of approximately £7k per year additional pension income. You may be able to negotiate some additional pension benefits from your employer as part of a severance or redundancy scheme but this is less common in the current economic climate.

#### Take your pension early

Taking Actuarially Reduced Benefits (ARBs) means accessing your pension before retirement age. It will be reduced by approximately 4% for each year early that you take it before your normal retirement age. The lump sum (pre-2007 members) is also reduced pro rata.

Taking pension early may not be as damaging as it first appears. Although the annual pension is lower, you receive it for longer and this extra period of receiving benefits largely mitigates the loss. Additionally, if you take an ARB pension you can return to work (after a break) with no salary limit whilst receiving your pension.

If you would like to talk over any matter referred to in this section with someone from the Association, please contact the ASCL Hotline initially on 0116 299 1122 or get in touch with your Regional or Field Officer who will be pleased to help you.

# Section D: Deciding on your Future

The most important and most difficult decision is to decide exactly what you want to do with your future. There are many options for the future, but for most people, paid employment will be essential. For some, there is no question as to what they want to do; they have thought the situation through and made a decision. For others, it may not be clear at all, what they want to do.

Having faced the loss of a post, it is, for many, difficult to decide what to do in the future. Part of this is due to the fact that you may have suffered a loss of confidence and question your own decision-making which may now seem demanding. *What Color is Your Parachute?*<sup>2</sup>, is a book which may help as it is designed for those seeking jobs and changing careers. It details approaches to helping you reach some decisions about this fundamental matter.

There are numerous options open to you, some of these include:

# Paid employment in education

- Resuming your career in education at the level of post you most recently held in a similar context, be it school, college, academy or local authority.
- Seeking a post in education in a similar context and lower seniority.
- Changing your career in education.
- Providing education consultancy through an organisation, or by setting up your own company.
- Fixed term, part time or temporary contracts.
- Day to day contracts eg advisory work, supply.
- Self employed consultancy work.

# Paid employment in a post that is not in education, which may or may not involve retraining

If paid employment is not an imperative, you may wish to consider:

#### **Unpaid work**

Voluntary work.

Returning to full-time or part-time education.

• Fulfil an ambition that has had to take second place to your career, such as travelling. If circumstances allow, you may wish to consider a mix of paid and voluntary work, at the same time as pursuing existing or new interests.

Spending time thinking about your future, and having a focus on determining what to do, is essential. Everything else depends on being sure of what you want to achieve, what you want to do with your future. You may need to take several smaller steps to get into the job

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Bolles, RN 2020, *What Color is Your Parachute?* A practical manual for job-hunters and career-changers. Ten Speed Press ISBN-13: 978-1984856562

ambitions.
What do I need to find out more about and what are my thoughts at this stage?

you want so persevere with your thinking, plan your actions until you fulfil your goals and

# **Section E: Employment Options**

Finding employment usually takes time, persistence and resolve. In the case of redundancy, the maxim that your post was made redundant, not you, is worth remembering.

You will need to be clear about how you present your current circumstances in seeking further work. If you entered into a compromise agreement you may only say what has been agreed as your reason for leaving.

Although not out of the question, you are unlikely immediately to earn the salary you had in your last school or college.

While the majority of senior managers live within commuting distance to their workplace, you may consider employment further away. The implications of living away from home need to be considered carefully. While some people adjust easily to being away from Monday to Friday, others have found the personal and family impact difficult to sustain, not solely from a cost perspective, but also in terms of relationships and family life. Discussion and assessment of the possible impact of such a change in lifestyle is recommended before making applications that, if successful, would bring such a change.

## **Employment in education**

Those most successful in resuming their careers start the process quickly. Even so, it can take a year or more to find employment at a similar level of seniority.

Seeking a post in education in a similar context and not at the same level of seniority is a possibility; for example, if you have held the post of deputy principal, seeking a post of Assistant Principal or as a Head of Faculty may be a realistic option.

# Changing your career direction in education

The skills of leadership and management are eminently transferable. For some education posts or roles, re-training or additional experience may be needed. For example, skilled course facilitation and consultancy require very different skills from being a school leader, although they are strengthened by the experience of a senior role.

There are a wide variety of salaried roles, these include working in interim management. Further ideas can be found in *Transferring your Teaching Skills to the Wider World: Life Beyond the Classroom*<sup>3</sup>.

#### **Employment in an area other than education**

There are posts in the private sector, and in local or national government. Information can often be found on the government website: www.gov.uk

You may decide that it is time to change your career completely. While the Association will be pleased to offer initial advice, further professional advice may help.

You undoubtedly have a range of skills that are transferable to other sectors. Consider these: analysing, arbitrating, coaching, communicating, diagnosing, directing, empathising, implementing, improvising, investigating, leading, listening, managing, mentoring, motivating, resolving, solving, training and writing, along with dedication, drive, honesty,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Lewis, D & White, H 2008, *Transferring Your Teaching Skills to the Wider World, Life Beyond the Classroom* Routledge, ISBN: 978-0-415-42870-5

pride, and reliability. You will have many practical skills, experience of teamwork, and understand accountability.

Members have decided to pursue a wide range of careers, from buying and running a hotel to bus and taxi driving, from becoming a careers adviser to training for the ministry. The world may be your oyster, but appropriate advice is essential.

# Self-employment/consultancy

You may wish to become self-employed within education, offering consultancy or a specialist service. This is not a decision to take lightly. Preparation for the future as a self-employed person needs to be meticulous and has a number of likely consequences for you and your immediate family. You may wish to get advice from ASCL Conditions of Employment Specialist: Pensions, Jacques Szemalikowski via the hotline service on 0116 299 1122.

Working as a self-employed person is very different from working in a school or college. You are no longer the client if working with a provider. You become the provider. You will be working for a client. Unless you appoint one, you will not have the support of a secretary; you will be responsible for making sure you are insured and you will have to keep financial records of your work, as well as ensuring that your diary is up to date and realistic in terms of work and travel.

Acquiring new knowledge and skills will become part of working life. Designing and printing materials may be your responsibility. Leaving enough time to fully prepare for one assignment and ensuring you have enough time to travel to where you will be working has to be built into the diary to ensure you arrive on time.

Your working days may be even longer than those in school, and weekends are unlikely to be free if you find you have a full weekday diary. You may find yourself working during half-terms and holidays so making sure that you have time for family and leisure will be crucial.

You are unlikely to earn as much as when a member of a senior team; the hours you spend are likely to be long and the pattern of work, at least initially, is likely to be irregular and may involve long journeys and staying away from home.

At the outset, you will need to answer the fundamental question, 'Why will people employ me?' You will need to be clear about the skills you have to offer that are not necessarily widely available and consider who might employ you and for what purpose. Working as a self-employed person for one or a number of the agencies and organisations mentioned may be a goal.

Unless you intend only to work infrequently and declare the money as earned income to be assessed along with any other income you earn personally, you are strongly advised to set up a framework in which to work as a self-employed person. The online resource at www.gov.uk/browse/business/setting-up is comprehensive. Among many topics covered are sections on choosing a legal structure for a new business and insurance, as well as helplines. Initial discussion with a professional accountant or tax adviser is very strongly recommended.

There are a number of possible legal frameworks for your business. You may set up a limited company within which to work, become a sole trader or, if working with someone else, a partnership. Again, seeking professional advice about this important matter, and getting the initial paperwork right, is strongly recommended before you start working in your

chosen field. You may find it useful to contact ASCL Professional Development bespoke consultancy on consultancy@ascl.org.uk for support with this.

You will also need to be clear about the tax and accountancy implications of your work and legal framework. A good place to start is the advice from HM Customs and Revenue: www.hmrc.gov.uk/startingup/

Finding a local accountant who can advise you initially and provide accountancy support while you are self-employed may then be the best way forward. You will also require a business bank account. All major banks offer business accounts. The quality of advice and support from the bank will be as important as the bank product.

Insurance is an important consideration before you start work. Two types of insurance, professional indemnity and personal liability, are needed. Some organisations specify the amount of cover you need. Appropriate insurance is offered by many companies and through professional associations. Alan Boswell Group is a partner with ASCL and provides preferential rates to ASCL members. www.ascl.org.uk/alanboswell

Talking over your specific requirements is strongly recommended. Whether seeking to be salaried or self-employed the information on the next page may be of help in providing advice and contacts.

-	What options appeal to me at this stage? What do I need more information on? How can I access it?			can I	

#### Sources of information

There are numerous online sources of information about employment both within the education sector and outside of it. Some of these are detailed below but the list is not exhaustive and you may know of others not mentioned. There is always 'word of mouth' through friends/colleagues.

# **Looking for Employment**

Some of the main parties advertising posts are listed below. Many eg *TES* will allow you to set up a job search against your defined parameters and send you email alerts if you have requested these:

The *Times Educational Supplement* is still the largest advertiser of jobs in education and education leadership posts www.tes.com/jobs

Eteach www.eteach.com also publish an Eteach education newsletter weekly

SecEd is a digital weekly newspaper focused on secondary education www.sec-ed.co.uk/

The Guardian and its website carry many education posts as well as many posts in other sectors: https://jobs.theguardian.com

The Times website carries posts in and out of education https://appointments.thetimes.co.uk

As does the Daily Telegraph https://jobs.telegraph.co.uk/jobs/

There are other agencies such as:

Hays, an ASCL Preferred Supplier: www.hays.co.uk/jobs

Navigate Group: www.navigategroup.co.uk/about-us/

Chess Hub: www.chesshub.co.uk/Services/3585

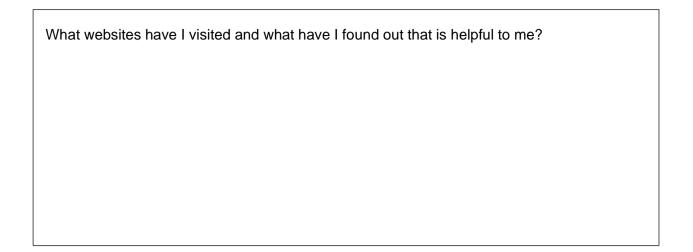
Academics: www.academicis.co.uk/

Judicium Education: www.judiciumeducation.co.uk/leadership-recruitment.htm

In addition to those detailed, other agencies and education support services carry advertisements for a wide range of posts in schools, including senior team posts in the UK and abroad, and education posts in the wider education sector. A selection of these agencies is detailed in the table overleaf:

www.camb-ed.com
www.education-jobs.co.uk/CER-capita-education-resourcing
www.educationdevelopmenttrust.com
www.gabbitas.com
www.jobtrain.co.uk/nordanglia5
www.protocol-education.com
www.randstadeducation.co.uk/jobs
www.reed.co.uk
www.teacheractive.com/jobs/
www.tribalgroup.com/careers

<sup>\*</sup>Gabbitas Education and the Independent Schools Council specialise in independent sector posts.



#### **Tutors**

Tutors are recruited primarily for work with individuals, in home-school tutoring and as part of distance learning. Basic skills tutor posts and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) are also available. There are national and local agencies recruiting tutors. National agencies include those below.

Home-School Tutoring	www.homeschooltutoring.co.uk
Open Study College	www.openstudycollege.com
Personal Tutors	www.private-tutors.co.uk

# Other educational areas

You may wish to consider posts in areas related to education but not directly back in a school/college setting such as: qualifications, examinations, publishing, British Council, charities, child care, civil service.

School improvement and continuous professional development (CPD) delivery. There are many independent providers, including many of the agencies above. Others include:

ASCL Professional Development: www.ascl.org.uk/events

Creative Education: www.creativeeducation.co.uk

Dragonfly Training: www.dragonfly-training.co.uk

EdisonLearning: http://edisonlearning.net/curriculum/

Lighthouse: www.lighthouse.co.uk

Pivotal Education: www.pivotaleducation.com

Educational sales representatives. There are a large number of organisations and publishers that list posts and companies that have sales posts. A starting point might be Simply Sales Jobs www.simplysalesjobs.co.uk/jobs/education\_sales\_jobs/ and for publishing recruitment, Atwood Tate www.atwoodtatepublishingjobs.co.uk

Educational charities (and other areas of activity). There are organisations that enable searches of educational charities to be made, such as Charity Portal and UK Charities

www.ukcharities.org as well as agencies recruiting for charities. Many well-known charities have education as an important element of their work, including the Children's Society www.childrenssociety.org.uk and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) www.rspb.org.uk/vacancies

Working with awarding bodies: exam marking, moderating, and other roles. Awarding bodies such as AQA (Assessment and Qualifications Alliance) www.aqa.org.uk/contact-us and https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/home.html

OCR (Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations) www.ocr.org.uk/about/jobs/

There are also specialist bodies such as CACHE (Council for Awards in Care, Health and Education) https://www.cache.org.uk/our-current-vacancies an awarding organisation in the fields of Early Years, Care and Education, and Playwork.

The International Baccalaureate www.ibo.org/examiners/

A full list of awarding bodies is published by the DfE www.education.gov.uk/section96/awarding\_bodies

Museums and libraries. These usually advertise on their own websites.

Building projects and improvement of learning environments. Many organisations such as HCP Social Infrastructure (UK) Ltd

www.hcp.co.uk are involved in a variety of projects.

What websites have I visited and what have I found out that is helpful to me?		

#### Jobs in other fields

There are many roles where senior staff skills may be readily transferable or added to by appropriate training.

Accountancy	Healthcare	Media
Administration	Hospitality	Recruitment
Arts and Heritage	Housing	Retail
Board member	HR and Training	Sales

Charities	Insurance	Science and Environment
Environment	IT and Telecoms	Secretarial
Finance	Management	Senior executive
Government	Marketing and PR	Social care

Graduate posts in many sectors are advertised on the Government Jobs Direct site, the Prospects website www.prospects.ac.uk

The Professional Careers website https://jobs.totalprofessions.com features numerous professional bodies and is designed to show how membership of a professional body can improve your career, enable you to find out how professional bodies can assist your career aspirations, and has a section enabling you to search for an appropriate future role.

There are specialist recruiters. Odgers Berndtson www.odgersberndtson.co.uk is an executive recruitment agency for the private and public sectors. Most of the agencies listed recruit to other sectors of employment. Agency Central www.agencycentral.co.uk carries lists of recruitment agencies and job sectors and enables a job search by your defined area.

Before any financial transaction or entry into any agreement, you are advised to seek advice about the organisation's quality and standing.

As mentioned, national newspapers such as *The Guardian*, *The Times* and *Sunday Times*, *The Daily Telegraph* carry advertisements for a wide range of jobs.

#### What succeeds best?

While all the previous methods are valuable, *What Color is Your Parachute?*, a book which reflects the American situation, lists the following as most successful:

- approaching employers directly by 'knocking on the door'
- identify organisations in the fields of interest that attract you and then visiting employers
- asking for job leads from family, friends, people in the community and using social networking sites
- joining a job club: the UK has many job clubs. A good starting point is the National Work Clubs Christians against Poverty runs clubs nationwide and is able to help anyone through courses and individual advice: www.capuk.org/i-want-help/cap-jobclubs/introduction
- a life-changing job hunt involving detailed analysis, described fully in the book *What Color is your Parachute?*

With the caveat that no particular method works for everyone, these methods in finding a job in the UK should not be discounted.

The links presented here are not an exhaustive list but rather a helpful starting point. All the advice given in this booklet is designed to be supportive, helpful and positive.

What area of employment am I attracted to at this time and what do I need to find out, from whom/where to get more information?

# **Section F: Applying for Jobs**

In deciding which job to apply for, visit the organisation's website and research it thoroughly. Read very carefully through the person specification, job description and all other key documents the employer may have included in the advert pack. Match your own knowledge, skills and experience to the advertised post and then decide if you want to apply for it. Having decided what post you wish to apply for, you now need to make an exemplary application if you want to be called for interview.

# **CVs and Application Forms**

It is good practice to have an updated Curriculum Vitae (CV) in the event that your chosen employer wants you to submit one. There are numerous examples of CVs online, so ensure you select the one that fits your chosen post. You may want to talk this through with your coach/mentor before submitting. S/he can then advise you on any areas that could be better presented.

If you are required to complete an application form only then do not submit a CV. However, the exercise of completing one is a useful activity for you to capture all your key knowledge, skills and experience in one place, ahead of making any applications.

CVs, and applications forms have one purpose only which is to impress the employer enough to want to call you for interview. They must therefore be presented professionally, clearly, with no omissions, spelling mistakes, grammatical errors, factual inaccuracies, untruths, or unreasonable exaggerations. They must show you possess the knowledge, skills, experience, values, behaviours and attitudes that the employer is seeking. These documents effectively demonstrate your ability to communicate, and how you present yourself as a possible future employee. Poorly written/constructed applications are likely to cause immediate rejection.

Choose appropriate referees. One should be your previous or current employer. Always ensure you have asked in advance before using someone as a referee.

If you are receiving support from a Regional or Field officer, seek their advice about what to say as the reason for leaving or not being in post, if that is the case, and about who to use as referees.

#### The letter of application

The letter is of vital importance. If well written it will make you stand out from other applicants. It should initially answer positively the question 'Why should I see you at interview?'

Depending on the post and the organisation's culture, your letter may be read by a variety of people of differing backgrounds. So, beware of over-use of acronyms, abbreviations and educational jargon: their use can alter the feel of a letter as well as leaving some readers mystified. Unless a word has entered common parlance, such as 'Ofsted', write it in full the first time it is used.

There may be no indication of the desired letter content. Never use the same letter for every application: the shape, emphasis and content will differ for each.

In the first paragraph say why you are applying for the post, for example:

'I wish to apply for the post of Business Manager. I believe I have the required qualifications, experience and skills that you seek.'

In the following paragraphs, you should address the criteria detailed in the person specification and how your experiences to date, demonstrate that you have the skills needed for the post. Demonstrate that you have them, using concrete examples, and evidence your ability and track record in bringing about improvements, leadership and management skills and ability to lead, manage, support and hold to account, all staff. The selection panel should readily gain a positive picture of your values and, above all, what the benefits of appointing you are.

Ensure that you come across as enthusiastic and motivated; never say anything derogatory about current or past experience. And be careful in using 'I' and 'we': say what you have contributed specifically and ensure team contribution is acknowledged where appropriate. Rehearsing past achievements or current practice alone is not what the selection panel seeks.

The letter should be balanced between past experience and the future contribution you will make. Your assessment of the demands of the post and how you will approach the issues and challenges is likely to be favourably received.

# Section G: Preparing for the Selection Process/Interview

There is very good advice available on www.businessballs.com/team-management/job-interviews/

As a senior member of staff, you will have extensive experience of the selection process of posts at this level. However, the experience of applying and being interviewed as a candidate may not be recent. This guidance is offered as a starting point against which to reflect on your personal position.

Many of the principles of the selection process in relation to senior posts in schools and colleges apply equally well to all posts.

It may be useful to request a copy of the company's employment terms and conditions or employee handbook before the interview.

From the job advertisement it is sometimes possible to discern whether there is the opportunity or intent to re-define or develop the role itself. Sometimes it is a stated requirement and most jobs offer this potential. Therefore, it is well to rehearse for this, in case the question arises.

Job interviews in the private or public sector rarely follow a set pattern; companies will vary the length and types of activity to fit the post. They may consist of a single one-on-one interview or a full day of interviews, presentations and exercises. You should be given some indication when invited as to how long you will be expected to be there and if there is anything in particular to prepare beforehand, such as a presentation.

Particularly think about how to deal positively with any negative aspects of your situation, skills and employability. Evading or distorting facts rarely succeeds. Seek advice if in doubt.

Selection panels are all seeking an outstanding candidate to fill their vacancy. You need to ensure that you are able to convince the panel that you are just that. Therefore:

- Make sure you have read through, very carefully all the details sent out by the
  employer when you made your application, in particular the person specification and
  the job description. Read through your application again. It has clearly done its job in
  getting you the interview, now you have to convince the panel.
- Read through everything sent out by the employer regarding the selection day(s) activities and prepare yourself for each activity
- Research the organisation again by perusing their website and ensure you get a good understanding of the type of person they may be looking for.
- So, ask yourself: What are the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities of the institution?
- If you have any questions jot them down and ask at the appropriate time during the selection day(s)
- Your physical appearance must be smart, business like and you must arrive on time, ideally a little earlier than required.

Some common questions include:

- 1 Why have you applied for this post, why now, why here?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses? Show that you know your areas for development and try to turn them into strengths.
- 3 How has your career so far (in particular your present or last post) prepared you for this role?
- 4 What have been your major achievements?
- 5 What outstanding benefit will we get from appointing you?

#### Selection days

Remember the time-honoured phrase, 'You only get one chance to make a good first impression'. Everything counts on the day, not just the formal programme where how well you fulfil the person specification is central.

Be unfailingly courteous to everyone, and in talking about colleagues: the candidate who deprecates their current or previous school or college will be seen as disloyal. Building a relationship with the selection panel is also really important.

# Some tips:

- Arrive on time/early as the prospective postholder. Be that person. Behave and speak as the new appointee.
- There may be many differing selection activities. Thinking carefully about what the selection panel hopes to get out of each, is important.
- Don't spend 'free time' between activities talking to the other candidates.
- In all activities, apart from an assumed knowledge base, how you relate to people, the panel or audience (and other candidates in the activity if in a group situation) is crucial. Above all, be yourself.
- Meeting for an introduction to the organisation what will be the first impression you give?
- If given a tour of the organisation, tour guides will be asked for feedback.
- In meetings with different groups or members of staff, get the balance between listening and speaking right. They will be providing their feedback.
- If you are asked to do a presentation ensure the material is appropriate to the topic, try
  to use as few notes as possible and never read out a script. At least know by heart the
  opening and closing sentences.
- In group exercises, when working with other candidates do not dominate; draw others into discussions.
- Written exercises will assess your ability to distil out the important and key facts and
  what you might do to improve those aspects that need improving. Typically, they may
  include an analysis of performance data.
- Observation and feedback activities assess how perceptive you are in assessing (in the case of schools) the quality of learning and teaching and giving feedback accurately and in an appropriate manner.

Social interactions to observe how you relate to others.

#### Formal interview

Various panels will test your expertise in specific areas or all. Be mindful of the tips below:

- Wait to be offered a handshake, sit down when invited; make eye contact with each of the interviewers.
- Adopt an enthusiastic, alert, positive mind-set.
- Answer every question honestly and openly.
- Watch for how long you are speaking: good interviewers will tell you the length of the interview and how many questions they will be asking.
- Be confident and positive about your strengths, but do not 'big yourself up'.
- Seek clarification where needed.
- Relate your current experience to the post you seek.
- When discussing improvements, you might make if appointed, be constructive, pointing out areas for development.
- Never become aggressive if your answers are challenged
- Use humour advisedly. What may seem amusing to you may not be to particular members of the panel.
- And, as for all activities, turn off your mobile phone!
- Prepare appropriate questions to ask at the interview.
- Assemble hard evidence to show how you achieved what you did in the past. Proof will
  put you ahead of those who merely talk about it.

I would benefit from support in the following areas in preparation for job applications/interview	

# **Section H: Volunteering**

This section is made up of charities, voluntary organisations, social enterprises, and businesses trading for social and environmental purposes. There are international, national and local organisations in the sector.

Paid and voluntary posts are available. However, moving directly into paid posts can be difficult. Gaining relevant voluntary experience first will enhance the possibility of paid employment.

The National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA) website www.navca.org.uk is a good source of information to get you thinking. There are websites that have information on a wide range of posts. The following may be useful starting points:

Third-Sector jobs: http://jobs.thirdsector.co.uk

Charity jobs: www.charityjob.co.uk

Voluntary Sector jobs: https://ukcharityjobs.com

# Volunteering

There is a vast range of opportunities in the UK and abroad for which to volunteer.

There is also a wide range of work available, even within a particular organisation, including administration and office work, advice and information giving, architectural and building work, befriending, care and support, catering, committee work, computer work, conservation, counselling and listening, DIY and practical, driving, entertainment, finance, fundraising, gardening, home-based work, information management, legal work, marketing and PR, online volunteering, retail work, room steward, teaching and tutoring, and trusteeship.

Sources of volunteering opportunities can be found nationally, by county, city or town, or by sector.

Overarching organisations provide a range of information and details about many vacancies. Some specialise in their information.

Area registers of opportunities can be found by putting Volunteering followed by the name of a county, city or town into a search engine. Volunteer centres coordinate and advertise volunteering opportunities in particular places and areas. Your nearest volunteering centre can be found on the website: www.do-it.org.uk or www.gov.uk/volunteering/find-volunteer-placements Contacting your local council may be a useful way to find out about community projects in your area. Libraries have information about local groups, charities and any seasonal opportunities.

You may have a particular sector of interest such as animals, children, health, the homeless or those with sensory impairment. Putting Volunteering followed by the interest into a search engine is likely to set out many opportunities. Many organisations have a wide range of volunteering opportunities available. Some have specialist programmes; for example, Community Service Volunteers has a programme for those over 50, the Retired and Senior Volunteer Programme (RSVP) www.csv-rsvp.org.uk, provide people with volunteering opportunities in England, Scotland and Wales.

There are many ways in which to volunteer, depending on how much time you can spare. Full-time, part-time, evening and night volunteering are offered by various organisations. It is possible to go overseas for weeks, months or years. Organisations have programmes for 'grown-up gappers' and retired volunteers.

In deciding what type of volunteering to do and with what organisation, important questions to answer include:

- What do you hope to get out of volunteering, for example meeting new people or gaining new skills?
- What kind of voluntary work appeals to you?
- Are there particular organisations you would like to support because of what they stand for or the work that they do?
- How legitimate and sound is the organisation?
- What skills or experience can you offer?
- What support and/or training will you receive in the work you will be doing?
- What does the organisation offer and what does it expect from you?
- How much time can you give and when can you give it?
- What are the monetary implications?
- What impact will volunteering have on your existing commitments, family, paid work if you have any, and leisure commitments?

# A selection of overarching organisations

Community Service Volunteers: www.csv.org.uk

Do it: www.do-it.org.uk

Reach (skilled volunteers)

Becoming a trustee: www.reachskills.org.uk www.reachskills.org.uk/trusteeworks

Volunteering England: www.volunteering.org.uk

Volunteering Northern Ireland: Volunteer Now www.volunteernow.co.uk

Volunteer Scotland: www.volunteerscotland.net

Volunteering Wales: www.volunteering-wales.net

#### A selection of specific organisations

Age UK: www.ageuk.org.uk

The Conservation Volunteers (TCV): www.tcv.org.uk

The Cinnamon Trust: www.cinnamon.org.uk support for pets whose owners are unable to provide sufficient care.

Deafblind UK: support for those who are both deaf and blind www.deafblind.org.uk

Eden Project: eco-visitor attraction and education charity www.edenproject.com/support-us/volunteer/index.php

English Heritage: www.english-heritage.org.uk/support-us

Guide Dogs: www.guidedogs.org.uk

Home-Start: helping families with a variety of problems www.home-start.org.uk

Hospices: www.hospiceuk.org/

Learning volunteers: www.macmillan.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering/learning-

development.html

Bletchley Park: www.bletchleypark.org.uk

British Museum: www.britishmuseum.org

Macmillan Cancer Support Cancer Research UK: www.macmillan.org.uk

www.cancerresearchuk.org

Magistracy: www.judiciary.gov.uk/about-the-judiciary/judges-magistrates-and-tribunal-

judges/judges-career-paths/becoming-a-magistrate

National Autistic Society: www.autism.org.uk/advocacy

National Trust: www.nationaltrust.org.uk

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), including Childline

www.nspcc.org.uk

Red Cross: www.redcross.org.uk

Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA): www.rspca.org.uk

Samaritans: www.samaritans.org/volunteer-us

Talking Magazine for the Blind: www.tnauk.org.uk

Time Bank: tackling social issues: http://timebank.org.uk

Witness support: www.victimsupport.org.uk

Royal Voluntary Service: www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk

Young Enterprise: www.young-enterprise.org.uk

Salvation Army: www.salvationarmy.org.uk

#### Opportunities abroad

Progressio: www.progressio.org.uk

Projects Abroad: www.projects-abroad.co.uk

Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO): www.vso.org.uk

Work and Volunteer Abroad (WAVA): www.workandvolunteer.com

# Section I: Continuing Education / Training / Leisure Activities

# **Education and training**

Continuing with personal education or taking up training could be a full-time or part-time way forward. There are sources of funding available to support some areas of study.

Whether you are interested in a further degree, or gaining a new skill, you can begin to look at the possibilities online locally and nationally by entering 'Adult Learning Opportunities'.

Advice on postgraduate studies can be found at: www.prospects.ac.uk/postgraduate\_study.htm

There are many distance learning opportunities, such as through:

FutureLearn: www.futurelearn.com

Learndirect: www.learndirect.com

National Extension College: www.nec.ac.uk and the many private providers, for example, The International Correspondence School www.icslearn.co.uk. You may consider joining the Open University www.open.ac.uk

## **Pursuing leisure activities**

Looking after yourself by pursuing existing interests or developing new activities will undoubtedly help to overcome feelings of helplessness in the circumstances surrounding the loss of a job. These are some suggestions that have worked well for others:

- Take up or resume a regular physical activity: walking, the local gym, swimming, sport or other active leisure activity.
- Join a local or regional social group: writers' circle, language conversation class, painting group or music group. Libraries, your local council and the internet will have details.
- Join the University of the Third Age (U3A). Membership is not age-specific and there is no lower age stipulation for membership. It was established for people who wish to pursue interests after employment. There are many local groups www.u3a.org.uk
- Travel independently in/with a group.
- See a life coach.
- Join the National Trust to walk in beautiful scenic gardens and explore historic places of interest.

# **Keep in Touch**

If you read this publication in circumstances you are finding hard to deal with, don't despair.

In the experience of those of us who have worked with and for ASCL, the vast majority of our colleagues who find themselves in exceptional, difficult circumstances do come through with a new sense of purpose and often, a much happier lifestyle.

Don't hesitate to get in touch with the Association at any time.

We wish you well.

### **Section J: Case Studies**

**X** was appointed the headteacher of a comprehensive school which was in some difficulty with Ofsted as the results at GCSE had led the school to be designated as having serious weaknesses.

In spite of improvements the Trust decided to terminate his employment as progress was not seen to be consistently good enough. Initially buoyant, X had a breakdown.

He needed to find paid work as he was in debt to a number of organisations, including a large mortgage with a building society.

After some months of help from a counsellor and consistent support from a Planning for the Future (PftF) Consultant with CV and a Headship application, X was successful at the first attempt in being appointed to another Head Teacher post and is succeeding in the role.

He still keeps in touch with his counsellor and PftF Consultant.

Y lost her post as headteacher when a new Trust took over the school. It was their policy to change the head in those circumstances.

She decided on the geographical area in which she would seek another post. Following help with her CV and her letters of applications from her PftF Consultant, she applied for a number of posts.

She pursued many avenues, including speaking to former employers, and eventually was appointed as a headteacher to a successful school, a post she found out about and pursued through one of her contacts.

**Z** was deputy head in a school and was made redundant. He spent a lot of time considering his future in conjunction with a PftF Consultant.

He found temporary work as a supply teacher, as a head of department and a support worker with individual students.

He was unsure as to whether he wished to pursue a role as a deputy head. He eventually decided not to do so.

His partner had a successful fitness business - which he eventually decided to join to give business support in expanding it.

This altered his career plan completely with a noticeable initial drop in income; he decided, however, that the personal benefits were significant enough to make the change.

## **ASCL Planning for the Future**

Whilst the information provided in this booklet was correct to the best of the knowledge of the authors, neither ASCL nor ASCL Professional Development Ltd (ASCL PD) can accept liability if at a later date this should not prove to be the case.

#### **Disclaimer**

This booklet refers to many companies and organisations in order to illustrate generic opportunities and to help identify a starting point for thinking and research. ASCL does not endorse any specific companies or organisations.

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