

## ADDED VALUE FROM WORKPLACE CHAPLAINS

- **Understanding the workplace** – Chaplains know the pressures and issues of management, from their visits and experience.
- **Emotional Intelligence** – Chaplains have been trained to listen, to empathise, not to cast judgement. They understand the discomfort of bereavement, guilt and uncertainty.
- **Confidential sounding-board** – Chaplains are professional and recognize the importance of boundaries, especially in discussions around restructuring of a business

### A Redundancy Situation?

Redundancy can mean that a situation is outside our normal control. Although redundancy is a normal part of the work cycle, in the current economic climate it may be even more frightening and unwelcome.

Deciding about redundancies may be delivering news that staff really do not want to hear. In difficult situations it helps to receive news if communication is consistent, clear and caring.

Staff who remain may grieve for those who have gone and may feel guilty. There may be distrust and concern about new workloads. Relationships may need rebuilding in order to get back to productivity.

Managers want to handle the situation well and show that they genuinely care, even in a difficult situation.

Managers need support through this: talk to a Chaplain.

[Contact your Chaplain: www.cigb.org.uk/chaplaincies](http://www.cigb.org.uk/chaplaincies)

## MAKING REDUNDANCY DECISIONS



Support for Managers from Workplace Chaplaincy CIGB



*Managing a business restructure is not easy for any manager*

*Making jobs redundant and saying good-bye to staff is emotional*

*Having to downsize a business in order to survive is a bereavement*

### Talk to a Workplace Chaplain

Chaplains do not judge; they understand emotion  
They keep confidence and boundaries

Chaplains are experienced in areas of loss and change

They understand human motivation, working life  
and the sense of purpose we get from a job

## Redundancy as Bereavement

When a job is taken away from us it can cause us to lose our sense of identity, put us in financial difficulty and make us feel bereft. Redundancy produces a lot of emotions and worries. Managers may be struggling to manage their own feelings, as well as coping with responses from staff.

Throughout our working lives we most can define ourselves by where we work, what we do and the relationships we have. Many of our colleagues will also become friends.

Redundancy often comes when we least expect it, and it is out of our control. If we choose to leave work by either resigning or retiring, in the main we are in control. Even if redundancies are happening around us, we live in hope that it may never happen to us.

In the Covid context, there may be additional factors and emotions. Some people have suffered a bereavement of a member of their family, or indeed themselves have been ill. Some people have struggled with working from home or have been furloughed and felt abandoned.

Dealing with bereavement and major change is a process that consumes time and energy. It is not always rational or logical. Different people react in very different ways. Most people work through bereavement over a period of time and find new opportunities and interests.

Anger is a common and uncomfortable emotion. But anger can be a positive emotion and people need to feel angry, it is neither right nor wrong. It is best to avoid being drawn into responding in anger too: try to respond afterwards with a calm listening and responding.

Managers may find themselves at the sharp end of raw emotions and worries. They can probably understand and empathise with many of the concerns. Yet, while caring, managers need to maintain boundaries, confidentiality and the necessities of the position. Managers need energy and support to play that role well.

## Tips for Managers

- Follow guidance and legal advice for the whole redundancy process. ACAS ([acas.org.uk](https://www.acas.org.uk)) has comprehensive information.
- Try to take time to recognize your own emotions and thoughts in this situation. What care can you give yourself to handle this situation? Who can you talk to about your feelings?
- It's ok to be human. Can you think about how you might like to be treated, given what you know? Have you got the capacity to do the same for your staff? Even if you are not comfortable with the situation, it is probably not helpful to share that with the person losing their job.
- Try to speak to people regularly face to face; share bad news yourself. Communicate clearly, consistently. Even if things are uncertain and in flux, you can still inform people accurately.
- Staff will have lots of questions and want to know lots of detail. Try to prepare and have as much information as possible. You can point them to places of further support: 'This might be really hard for you'.

## Wellbeing Tips for Managers

- There are 8 steps for everyday wellbeing that really do make a difference. The 'CLANGERS': Connect with others, Learn something new, (be) Active in body and mind, Notice the world around, Give back to others, Eat well, Relax, Sleep well.
- Learn to monitor changes in your own wellbeing and discover (and practice) what helps to bring you back into equilibrium – what helps you relax, gives you joy, nourishes your integrity?
- **Speak to a Workplace Chaplain or an independent friend.**