

## Skills Development Scotland Case Study:

### Providing guidance and employability support to D as part of our PACE service

Client was part of mass redundancy from Tullis Russell paper makers in April 2015.

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#### A time of concern

D worked in manufacturing processes for most of his career history and had been at Tullis Russell for nearly 10 years. Due to the role he had there, he was retained for a few months beyond the first mass redundancies made in April but knew as he expressed it “the tap on the shoulder could come at any time”.

#### PACE response

He made full use of the support offered by PACE- coming along to the redundancy support event held locally within a week of the announced closure. Employers, recruitment agencies, training providers, DWP, advice services and SDS were on hand to help. This event was attended by the majority of the TR workforce – a busy, informative day. At this event I met D for the first time, initially explaining what we do and checking with him if any of our services were of interest to him. He felt that it was “all a bit much to take in”, that he’d keep our details and get back to us when he knew more about his redundancy date. He did however go on to appreciate being able to meet on-site for a more tailored group information session soon after, delivered by SDS and colleagues from DWP.

#### 1:1 support

Because D had been making good use of the various events offered to staff, I felt it would be useful to contact him again to check how his situation was going and make sure he had opportunities to react quickly to any changes in his employment. He did express real concern about seeing colleagues leaving daily, at short notice. There were also worries on his part that he wouldn’t be able to plan ahead because he didn’t feel he had time and that making any applications to other jobs might jeopardise his remaining contract terms at TR. By discussing what to expect in a guidance appointment, the time involved, the fact I could meet him close to his place of work and the value in hopefully feeling better placed after it to consider his options, we agreed now was indeed a good time to meet for a guidance appointment.

Like many of the TR workers, D was trying to re-look at his work history and find a way of fitting into the job market out-with paper manufacturing. He was determined to be positive about opportunities but needed help to review what skills and strengths he had. He had not had to do this for a long time so I worked with him teasing this out, to raise awareness of the Fife area job market, plus help him to be clear about the skills other employers were looking for. He found being able to go over what he wants and what he can offer helpful and reassuring. When we considered what his network of helpful people might be, it reminded him that he had contacts in his previous area of work – Semi Conductor processes.

He used to work in the semi-conductor industry, but it was over 10 years ago and he doubted his skills and knowledge would be up to date. Hearing from me that lots of ex-TR staff were starting to plan ways to get back to work and accessing funding to cover costs of re-training, **D** initially decided he would look into a chance conversation he'd had with a previous employer. His contact told him there were jobs available if he could bring his skills in line with current industry standards, although the training was very specialised and costly. **D** initially felt this would be unlikely to go any further because he couldn't imagine an employer being willing to take someone not fully trained, plus anything requiring funding negotiations seemed to him to signal too many problems / delays. He started to look at putting himself forward for other types of training (logistics plant driving). This seemed to be basically a back up option for him, a default and a type of work he didn't really relish. I fed this back to him and encouraged him to explore every possibility, assuring him I would support him to do this and make it easier for him by advising on the right resources to use.

He was at risk of losing the early optimism he'd tried hard to use so at this stage I agreed with **D** that I would contact the employer myself to discuss how PACE and the Task Force fund could help move the situation along. He appreciated this advocacy as he felt it might carry more influence and allow the employer to get the facts needed to make a decision.

I spoke to the employer at Simple Tech Solutions straight away to explain the Task Force Fund and the process involved in accessing this. I then made the necessary connections with our partner agency to take the lead on procuring training and liaise with the employer from there.

### **Successful outcomes**

As a result, **D** finished up at TR holding a firm job offer as a Process Operator from this semi conductor company, knowing that his skills would be developed to current industry standards. His new employer was greatly relieved to know he had a vacancy filled with an excellent candidate. This has allowed **D** to move out of redundancy towards a new career that is a good match with his skills, knowledge and interests – a positive choice rather than just 'making do'. The employer has full intention to move **D** to an even more skilled role as soon as the training is complete.