



Leading learning and skills



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PAUL HEAD HUNTED AFTER EURO-FUNDED ADVICE

When father of two, Paul Smith (55) from Lois Weedon, Northamptonshire was made redundant from Farnell UK back in April 2009, he was disorientated and in denial for quite some time until he received help from a new Euro-funded 'Response to Redundancy' (R2R) training programme.

Paul built up many years experience in the electronics and telecoms industry, even running his own business at one stage. Being made redundant was a real shock for Paul as his role as a corporate account manager was gaining momentum and he was achieving his targets.

When Paul went along to Towcester Job Club, he met Sue Concannon from Apricot Management who explained more about some of the services they offered. After face-to-face meetings, interview coaching and preparation and a review of his CV, Paul has now started a new job as sales manager for Milton Keynes-based Inov8 Science Ltd.

Apricot Management's R2R project is being funded out of an additional £12.5 million from the European Social Fund (ESF) and LSC funds managed by the Learning and Skills Council across the East Midlands. The funding will help people who are currently in the consultation process of, under notice of redundancy or have recently lost their jobs, by offering them free, flexible training to boost their skills so they can move quickly back into work.

Paul said: "I applied for my current job after being head-hunted by an agency. Sue's direct one-to-one coaching on interview techniques was absolutely crucial two days before my second and final interview for my new job.

"I'm really happy in my new role as a sales manager for a small engineering company who manufacture an air-disinfectant product targeting infections like MRSA,

Swine Flu and C. Difficile. I have been hired to expand the product into the education sector which means I can take advantage of the contacts in universities and schools that I built up in several of my previous roles.

"I would certainly recommend attending an appointment with Apricot Management. Sue helped me address a lot of my underlying issues and helped me restore my confidence.

And for anyone in a similar position, Paul gives this advice: "Sign-on immediately, sort out any mortgage insurance and seek advice from a training and career specialist on day one."

Sue Concannon from Apricot Management said: "Like Paul, many people who are made redundant feel angry, disappointed and are anxious about the future. People's confidence can be knocked and for others who have been in the same job for years, the prospect of re-training or having to learn new skills can be daunting.

"Paul was out of work for six months but during this time I helped Paul with career direction and what his choices were, what jobs would most suit his personality and current skills and most crucially, reviewed and updated his CV. It's great that Paul was head hunted and that he was able to use my help and advice to secure a job which he is really enjoying."

NOTES TO EDITORS

Photos of Paul are available from Laura Gurnett at COI East Midlands – 0115 852 4358

- Apricot is an independent not-for-profit company that assists companies, organisations and individuals to grow through learning, training and development. Working with a wide range of private, public and third sector organisations, we design and deliver training, employment, outplacement and enterprise services across the East Midlands.
- Given the current economic climate, an extra £12.5 million European Social Fund (ESF) and LSC funding has been made available in the region to help those under notice of redundancy or who have been made redundant. Adults over 18 are being offered training to help them find sustainable jobs. It is part of a £100 million national package providers will continue to support individuals once they are back in the workforce through LSC Train to Gain or Apprenticeships funded programmes.

- It is hoped that 15,255 learners will benefit from R2R in the East Midlands.
- The main ESF programme for England 2007-2013 is investing £376 million in the East Midlands.
- More than 50 providers across the region are already offering over 90 projects designed to boost skills and job chances for individuals.
- ESF is focusing on the following priorities:-
 - **Local communities** – helping to cut unemployment, up-skilling communities and helping them to become more sustainable in the long term, particularly those who have lost their jobs because of the current economic downturn.
 - **Social minorities and excluded groups** – helping long term unemployed, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, lone parents, the homeless, ex-offenders and people lacking the basic skills needed to get a job aim to develop a highly and appropriately skilled workforce.
- ESF is managed by four co-financing organisations in the region – the Learning and Skills Council East Midlands, Department for Work and Pensions, and a Local Authorities Consortium (Lincolnshire County, Derby City, Derbyshire County and Leicester City councils) and NOMS.
- Government Office for the East Midlands oversees the programme.
- For general information on ESF see <http://www.esf.gov.uk/>

ISSUED ON BEHALF OF LSC BY COI NEWS AND PR. For further information contact Laura Gurnett on 0115 852 4358 or email laura.gurnett@coi.gsi.gov.uk