

Nicola lands her dream job

Being made redundant after working for the same company for eight years was a blow for Nicola West. But thanks to the support of Next Step, the adult careers and skills service, she has been able to take the first step in pursuing her dream of working with animals after securing a new job with a local veterinary practice.

Nicola, 38, from Hull, had previously worked as a quality inspector for a local company which manufactured protective clothing and equipment and was devastated when the factory closed, leaving her out of work for the first time in years.

Luckily for Nicola, her former employer arranged for Next Step to go into the factory to help staff with job searches, update their skills and get back into work as soon as possible.

Next Step helped Nicola develop and refine her CV, look for suitable vacancies and gave advice on interview skills and techniques.

After completing maths and English qualifications and a National Certificate in animal care at her local college, Nicola managed to get a job as receptionist at a local vet and loves her new job. After successfully completing a Level 1 maths qualification, Nicola got the learning bug and has now started on her Level 2 maths qualification.

“I had always been interested in animal care and welfare but working full time, I had never had the opportunity to pursue this,” Nicola said. “While I was obviously devastated at losing my job, something good has come from it and I am delighted to be able to pursue a career in an area I really care about.”

There is a dedicated redundancy support area of the Next Step website where individuals whose jobs are under threat can access lots of useful information aimed at helping them get straight back to work.

Nicola's Next Step adviser Anthony McDonald said: "It can be very difficult for people who have worked for the same company for a long time to find themselves out of work but with a little help and support, they can improve their chances of getting back into work quickly.

By putting together tailored, functional-style CVs, individuals stand a much better chance of making a good first impression with any potential employers.

In Nicola's case, as she already had an idea about the area in which she would like to work, we were able to steer her to the most relevant qualifications and she was able to target her job search. Once she had secured an interview, we were then able to help her perfect her interview techniques.

But for people who aren't so sure about what they want to do, we can help them identify where their skills would best fit.

It is often a lack of confidence that stops people changing direction, especially after redundancy, but we can help people overcome these barriers and create a positive future by changing their lives, whether in their current job, by changing career or taking the first step on the career ladder."

Next Step offers free and impartial careers and skills advice and is available online, over the telephone on 0800 100 900 and face-to-face with a local adviser.

Everyone can register online with 'My Next Step', a secure, personal online space where they can save CVs and action plans, assess their skills, find a suitable course and discover what other support, including financial assistance, could be available.

To find out how Next Step can help you can:

- search online for Next Step
- call 0800 100 900 between 8am - 10pm, 7 days a week, for telephone advice or to make a face-to-face appointment at a location near you.

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Notes for Editors

Next Step is available to all adults in England, aged 19 and over (or 18 and over if a Jobcentre Plus customer), whatever their qualification, skill level or employment status, fuelling the potential of millions of adults, through three integrated service channels:

- Online: direct.gov.uk/nextstep
- Telephone: 0800 100 900, 8am – 10pm, 7 days a week
- Face-to-face: Call 0800 100 900 to arrange an appointment in your area

The service is also available, over the telephone, with bi-lingual advisers in the following languages:

Punjabi	0800 093 1333**
Sylheti	0800 093 1444
Somali	0800 093 1555
Urdu	0800 093 1118**
Gujarati	0800 093 1119
Polish	0800 093 1114
French	0800 093 1115
Farsi	0800 093 1116

Lines are open Monday to Friday, between 9am – 5pm. **Urdu and Punjabi lines are open 9am – 8pm

Careers services in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are the responsibility of the devolved Administrations.

Skills Funding Agency

The Skills Funding Agency, an agency of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, funds and regulates adult further education and skills in England.

It is responsible for channelling funding swiftly, efficiently and securely to further education colleges and other providers, primarily in response to customer (employer and learner) choice



on programmes. It operates through customer focused services: National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) and Next Step.

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