

Story 3 – Plan A or Plan B

Last time, I wrote about the stress and anxiety I faced when the initial redundancies were made. It seemed like only a matter of time before further redundancies would take place.....and unfortunately a couple of months later, that is exactly what happened. It was explained to us that with the market conditions showing no signs of improving, further cuts were necessary in order to try and preserve the business. However, unlike the previous round, the team I was in was now going to face cuts. Needless to say, the anxiety that we all faced was heightened, and the dynamic within the office changed. Suddenly, the support network we had as a team was about to be shattered, as we were all plunged into a redundancy selection process together. I was very fortunate to work with such consummate professionals (and friends) and the sense of togetherness never wavered. Yes, the team would be disbanded and some of us would lose our jobs, but everyone remained supportive and the sense of camaraderie helped.

However, it was clearly a very unsettling time. We were also asked to consider what proposals we had, that could help to save the business money. This led to countless long discussions with my wife to talk through the various options and how this would impact our finances. For example, if I dropped a day a week, would it be possible to re-jig our childcare arrangements to mitigate the financial loss? However, everyone within the team had different personal circumstances and it was a time of huge angst for us all. For some people across Aberdeen, they will be the only income earner in the house and that can bring huge stress, as you contemplate how you will meet your mortgage payments and other bills, with no salary coming in. With a significant contractor population, many people have been faced with the situation of significant incomings one week, only to be unemployed the next week. In these situations, the high salary is often matched by similarly high outgoings on a monthly basis, and when the money stops coming in, it does not take very long for serious financial issues to arise.

However, **You're Not Alone.**

- **Cash in Your Pocket** – www.ciyp.co.uk
A Referral Service for those with financial issues or those Providing Help or Support.
- **CAP Debt Help** – www.capdebthelp.org
Free debt counselling in your community.
- **Aberdeen Citizens Advice Bureau** - <http://www.aberdeencab.org.uk/>
- **Banks/Financial Advisors** – seek advice from your bank or financial advisors.
- **Childcare** – If childcare is an issue, speak to your provider and begin dialogue around flexible arrangements to support you.