

## The Challenge

The Portsmouth City Council has always been known for its career development opportunities and nurturing work environment. When impending public sector budget cuts necessitated a restructuring that projected a high number of job cuts by April 2011, the Council was very keen on providing the most supportive redundancy programme possible. In particular - Liz Wylie, Leadership and Management Coordinator at the Council, looked for ways to facilitate dynamic and constructive workshops for manager training and transitioning individuals. Her solution? Insala's Real Life Outplacement Film Series.

## The Solution

Wylie took initiative to incorporate the Real Life Films as a critical element of workshops for transitioning individuals and managers at the Council. The 3 films feature real individuals who have experienced redundancy from a variety of perspectives – employees in transition, managers of transitioning individuals, as well as “survivors” – a critical population that needed to be engaged throughout the redundancy process. So far, the Council has implemented the redundancy programme targeting an initial 50 exiting individuals.

## The Result

The following were testimonies from individuals made redundant who took part in the workshops:

- “I can see that there is something to look forward to.”
- “I now understand why I feel great one day and rubbish the next.”
- “I think this film will make managers stop in their tracks and think about the person at the end of the process.”

Most notably, the films have been invaluable for managers at the Council, who were responsible for re-engaging their new teams after the shift. Their workshops included all 3 films – to provide them with a 360 view of redundancy so that they were best prepared to manage existing changes as well as future teams.

To request your free film viewing, call **0207 297 5940**, or email **info@insala.com**.

To learn more about the **Real Life Outplacement Film Series**, visit **www.employmenttalk.com/outplacement-films**

Managers found particular value in the film that depicted survivors' emotions in dealing with redundancy, which enabled them to better understand their own teams which remained. Managers also came to terms with their own challenges with redundancy after seeing that they “weren't alone” in their emotions.

“I didn't know it was OK to be upset”, one manager exclaimed – a statement which resonated with Wylie.

“I love the honesty and simplicity of the films”, says Wylie. “It's incredibly valuable to include real people talking about real experiences in a workshop for those coping with change. They are truly the ‘heart’ of the workshops.”

Are these films truly a critical part of the redundancy programme? “Yes – they are a powerful tool”, Wylie remarks. “If we didn't have the films, our workshops would have been very different. We would have held static training in a “high-tell” structure; the films make our workshops dynamic and interactive. The films draw out emotion, promote discussion, and help generate constructive ideas on best steps for managing the future - both as transitioning individuals and as managers. By engaging the audience, they also heighten the effectiveness of all of our other services and resources.”

As for next steps with the films, Wylie is considering a number of possibilities. “We would like to use the films for workshops that not only address issues specific to redundancy, but also to redeployment – as we work in creative ways to ensure our people are dealing with transition effectively regardless of what and where their new positions might be,” she says. Wylie is also considering ways to engage the “survivors” directly with the films – perhaps in a separate workshop aimed at retention and maintaining employee productivity within the team that remains.

