



# Carers' Resource Employment Advice and Training



**Advice Guidance Support**  
for  
**Carers who want to work**  
and  
**Carers who work**



## Are you a carer?

A carer is someone who, without payment, provides help and support to a friend, neighbour or relative who could not manage otherwise because of frailty, illness or disability. They may be juggling paid work with caring responsibilities at home. Carers have a tough job – it can mean unrelenting pressure, little chance to relax and a lot of worry.

## Can CReate help you work?

Funded through **the Big Lottery**, the CReate Project at **Carers' Resource** provides employment advice and support for carers who work or who want to work, and for their employers.

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## Are you returning to work after a break?

Getting back to work after time out of the job market can feel daunting. Perhaps you are hoping to get back to work at some point but you're not ready to start yet.

CReate can support you along the way, working with you one to one or in groups and there are several steps that we can help you take.

These include:

- **Free confidence building and skills workshops**
- **Help to write a professional CV and covering letters**
- **Volunteering opportunities**
- **Help with your job search and application forms**
- **Interview coaching and preparation**
- **Careers and local job market information**
- **Course information and local training providers**
- **How to talk about your caring role with your employer**



*A carer opened up a successful small shop selling crafts.*

*Why not request a free CReate one to one session to start planning your goals today?*



## Conrad's story

Conrad first came to see a CReate adviser at Carers' Resource in July 2014. He had previously been a university lecturer but he'd stopped work to care for his ageing father.

After having had a break from work for over five years Conrad felt low in confidence. With the support of his CReate adviser, Conrad began by exploring a range of professional options, identifying the skills he had and what he wanted from a job.

That November a position became available in the information team at Carers' Resource, and after discussion with his CReate advisor, Conrad decided to apply. His application was successful and he started working for Carers' Resource in January 2015.

*Conrad told the CReate team that their help and support was invaluable in helping him to get back into work following his caring role.*

## 5 top TIPS

### ABOUT CV WRITING

- 1. Be honest:** whilst it may be tempting to alter dates or jobs in order to fill in the time gaps, employers do check and it is easy to get caught out. Consider including a brief note to explain any gaps such as 'full time carer,' 'full time parent' or 'career break while attending IT courses'.
- 2. Include key information:** as well as your name and contact details, you may wish to include a short personal profile, key skills, work experience, education, voluntary work, IT skills, hobbies and interests and references.
- 3. Keep it simple:** your CV should be easy to read and navigate with clear headings, think between 1–3 pages in most cases.
- 4. Tailor the CV to a specific job:** try to tailor your personal profile and key skills sections to show the most relevant skills you have for the job you are targeting next. You may also wish to include an immediate career objective at the end of your profile.
- 5. Check and double check:** always ensure you have carefully read through your CV prior to sending it out and where possible ask for a second opinion from a trusted friend or family member.



## Margot's story

Having had a successful career as an architectural, interior and landscape designer for many years, Margot was made redundant in 2011 and in the same year became the sole carer for her mum following a diagnosis of heart failure and dementia.

With help from Carers' Resource, Margot continued with her caring role over the next couple of years and after an improvement in her mum's health, began thinking about returning to work again.

The CReate project helped Margot to regain some of the confidence she had lost since her redundancy and has supported her with promotion and development of a newly revived business venture. Margot now combines her landscaping skills with her knowledge of horticulture to offer a domestic garden design service. Please ask Carers' Resource for Margot's business details.

*Margot has since undertaken several projects involving the redesign of existing gardens and would like to thank the CReate team for helping her make the transition back to work.*

## Are you a working carer?

Some carers who have a paid job as well as their caring role can feel they are being pulled in every direction and might worry about how to cope when things go wrong, but many working carers also value the extra bit of financial support and social contact that a job can bring.

The CReate advisers help working carers by helping you plan the best working and caring pattern for your family's needs and advising you about your employment rights.

These include:

### Right to Request Flexible Working

If you have worked for your employer for 26 weeks you can request a contract change in hours, place, times of work or other adjustments. Your employer must consider this fairly.

### Time Off for Dependants

You have the right to take unpaid time off to deal with an emergency involving someone you care for.

### Parental Leave

You are entitled to 18 weeks unpaid leave for each child up to their 18th birthday, for up to 4 weeks a year per child.

### Equal Rights

Carers are protected under the Equality Act 2010. Employers are not allowed to discriminate against carers because of their caring role.

## Can 'flexible working' work for you?

**Hakim applied to work from home:** Hakim works full time as a customer service manager for a large company and he cares for his son Imran, who has learning disabilities. Hakim has a long journey to work and is finding it hard to cope. He makes a request to work two days a week from home. His company sets up the systems he needs so that he can work remotely at home and so office-based staff can contact him easily. He will attend meetings on the days he is in the office and can be flexible about moving his 'home work days' if necessary.

**Susan requested to work compressed hours:** Susan works as a support worker and also cares for her husband Malcolm, who has cystic fibrosis. She asked to work her 30 hour week over four days instead of five. Malcolm's sister helps on the days that Susan works and now Susan can look after Malcom for the rest of the week.

**Marek asked to work annualised hours:** Marek works in a call centre and cares for his wife who has bipolar disorder. Her condition can vary. Sometimes she needs very little support but at others Marek needs to be with her more. Marek has agreed with his employer that he works half his hours at set times. The remaining hours he agrees on a month by month basis. When his wife is well he works extra hours, when she is unwell, he reduces his hours, totalling a full year's hours overall.

*Why not request a free Create one to one session to find out more about making a flexible working request?*

## 5 top TIPS

### ABOUT MAKING A FLEXIBLE WORKING REQUEST

- 1. Know your rights:** from June 2014, all employees who have worked for their employer for at least 26 weeks are able to make one request for flexible working per year which must be considered and dealt with in a reasonable manner. A request can cover changing hours, times or place of work.
- 2. Consider your options:** flexible working options include flexi-time, home working, job sharing, part time or term time only hours.
- 3. Think about the longer term:** where a flexible working request is approved the change to your working pattern may mean a permanent change to your employment contract, unless otherwise agreed, e.g. a trial period or a time limited change.
- 4. Consider the impact:** it is important to consider the needs of the company or organisation when making a request, including how the proposed change will help the business as well as yourself and how any possible negative impact will be dealt with.
- 5. Make a request:** requests can be made in whatever form is most suitable to the employer, eg. a letter, email, a form provided by the employer or using an online template. An employer has the right to reject the request if the working pattern cannot be met within the needs of the business.

## CRreate workshops for carers

**CRreate runs a series of free workshops for carers who want to build their confidence and learn new skills.**

They can also be a great way to meet other carers and have an enjoyable and challenging experience. Workshops in Bradford, Harrogate and Skipton include:

### Stress Busting

*Being a carer can be a joyful experience but we know at times it can intensely stressful too. This workshop will focus on sharing coping techniques to deal with the stresses of life.*

### Caring to Work

*This workshop, for carers who want to work but don't feel sure of how to go about it, will focus on some handy tips for job searching, CV writing and interviews specifically from the carer's point of view.*

### Confidence Building

*Whether in work, with friends and family or at home, carers can find that confidence helps them to deal the challenges that life as a carer can bring.*

**For more information, dates and to sign up to a free workshop, contact your CRreate adviser at Carers' Resource.**

## Our work with employers

Since 2012 the CRreate project has established strong relationships with key employers in the region, including Skipton Building Society, HMRC and In-Communities, and in the process have reached out to over 5,000 employees to actively promote our work with employed carers.



Our work with employers includes:

- **Support to promote and develop carer friendly policies**
- **Health and wellbeing events for staff**
- **Work based lunchtime drop-in services**
- **Promotion of Carers' Champions in the workplace**
- **Development of the Carers' Charter and Carers' Health Check**

The CRreate project has influenced employment practice by working with employers to recognise carers in the workplace and in some cases to implement a Carers' Policy and Charter Mark. Awareness has been raised with employers regarding the support needs of carers in employment as well as the business benefits of retaining experienced members of staff who are carers. Practical support for employers and employees is offered, such as information on carers' rights in the workplace and respite care available in the area.

# Contact Carers' Resource today to speak to your local CReate team:

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