

Citizens Advice Forest of Dean Your local advice column



Citizens Advice Forest of Dean shares tips for people to land a new job this January

Citizens Advice Forest of Dean is sharing tips with people who want to change jobs this January, from how to find a role that's a good fit, to the best way to tell your boss you are moving on.

Past research has found 1 in 5 people consider changing jobs in January, making it the most popular time of year for job hunting.

National Citizens Advice helped with 2,300 problems around applying for jobs last year, with nearly half these issues (1,100) concerning references. Often people can either struggle to get hold of a reference that is suitable, or can't get hold of one at all.

Other problems workers sought help from Citizens Advice Forest of Dean on include when to disclose an illness to a potential employer, or how much notice they're required to give their boss when nothing is specified in their contract.

In total, Citizens Advice Forest of Dean helped 216 people with an employment problem last year.

Forest of Dean, Chief Executive of Citizens Advice Forest of Dean, said:

"Changing jobs is often top of people's to-do list in January, but some can trip up because they don't have the right paperwork.

"It's really important to get your references lined up and to pass any other checks that are required before handing in your notice. Otherwise, you could run the risk of having your job offer withdrawn and your current employer may not be in a position to rehire you.

"For further advice on moving jobs, or any other employment problem, people should visit our website or contact us."

Top tips for finding the right role and handing in your notice

Do your homework

Do a bit digging on what the employer offers to see if matches your priorities. Most employers publish their staff benefits on their website, so you can see how much holiday and parental leave you can get, and how much they pay into your pension. If they don't have a website, contact the person who's posted the job ad directly.

Disclosing an illness or disability

You shouldn't be asked about having an illness or disability during the application process, and you don't need to disclose this unless you want to. However, if you need reasonable

adjustments to be made at an interview let the employer know - the law says they have to be accommodating.

Make sure the job fits your circumstances

All employers need to consider requests for flexible working, but they don't have to accept it. It's your call when to make a request about changes to working hours - you could bring it up at interview or when you're offered the job.

Get your references lined up

An employer usually only gives a firm job offer once they've received one or more references.

It's best to tell your employer you've been offered another job and ask them if they'd be happy to provide a reference. Keep the conversation or email professional and friendly so as to avoid any problems down the line if the job offer falls through.

If your current employer refuses, ask your new manager if they will accept a previous employer. Or you could try a school, college or university tutor if you've recently left education, or supervisor from any voluntary work you've done.

Handing in your resignation

You should only resign from your current job when you have a definite job offer, preferably in writing, rather than a conditional one. This is when you've passed any checks set by your new employer, and they're happy with your references.

Check your notice period

Normally you have to work the notice period that's written in your contract. If you don't have a contract or no notice period is specified, by law you only need to give one week's notice. If your new employer wants you to start the job before your notice period ends, see if you can negotiate with your current boss. However, they have the final say.

Use up any holiday you've got left

There are usually rules around your remaining leave. Check your contract - if it says you should take your leave during your notice period, you can either take the leave or see if your employer will consider paying you holiday pay instead. If it's not specified, they may still ask you to take time off - but they need to give you notice to do so.

Getting a bad reaction from your employer

Most employers will handle your resignation sensibly, but Citizens Advice has heard reports where rogue bosses sack someone soon after they resign. This is against the law and you may be able to take them to court for unfair dismissal. If this happens, contact your local Citizens Advice who can help you navigate this process.

Please note there are drop-in services at: our Cinderford office on Monday and Wednesday mornings from 10am to 12.30pm; at our Coleford office on Monday afternoons 1.30pm to 4pm; in Newent Library Thursday mornings 10am – 12.30pm; and in Lydney Library every Thursday afternoon from 2pm to 4pm. Note that the Coleford office is now located in the Main Place (Coleford Library building).

Citizens Advice is a charity which offers free, confidential and independent advice. Each area has its own Citizens Advice charity, and is dependent on volunteers and local funding. We are always looking for new volunteers, trustees and financial support.
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