

## Strand: **Enterprise**

### Understanding employment and unemployment

#### **Learning outcomes in focus**

##### **Students should be able to:**

**Enterprise 2.3** Differentiate between employment, work and volunteerism, identifying and describing features, benefits, rewards and careers within each

**Enterprise 2.4** Distinguish between the rights and responsibilities of employer and employee from a legal, social, environmental and ethical perspective

#### **Learning intentions\***

##### **We are learning to:**

- To understand different terminology associated with work and employment
- To evaluate and recommend options to an individual based their employment situation
- To advise an individual on their rights and responsibilities as employees
- To present the information to an audience in an appropriate format using ICT

#### **Teaching and learning context**

This task was given to first year students after five class periods on employment rights and responsibilities. They understood how to differentiate between rights and responsibilities. They had prior experience of presenting work using ICT. Students had one week to complete the task. There was some preparatory work during class-time but most of the work was undertaken outside of class-

time. Students had access to their iPads during class-time to assist with the task.

#### **Task**

John and Mary Murphy are a married couple. They have come to you for advice on their employment situations. You will need to recommend different options available to John so that he can move forward from his current situation and you will also need to advise Mary on her employment rights. You will need to display the information in an appropriate manner for the couple. The activity here is a simulation but it models real life situations of the employment situations people find themselves in.



#### **Success Criteria\*\***

- SC1:** Explain key terminology clearly
- SC2:** Evaluate different options available to John based on his employment situation
- SC3:** Advise Mary on her employment situation in a clear way that Mary would understand
- SC4:** Use ICT as a means of presenting your work

\* What the student should know, understand and be able to do at the end of the lesson or series of lessons

\*\* Summary of the key steps the student needs to fulfil in order to achieve in the task

Junior Cert Student Sample of Work

John Murphy	Mary Murphy
	
<p>John has been employed for the last 10 years as a security man in a local shopping centre. Due to a decline in the number of customers at the centre in recent years owing to the <b>recession</b>, John has been informed by the <b>Managing Director</b> that he will be made <b>redundant</b>. He has been receiving <b>job seekers allowance</b> for the past two months and has come to you seeking advice on how to move forward. He has undertaken some DIY work around the house to keep himself occupied and is now considering <b>volunteering</b> with local charity shops in the area.</p>	<p>John's wife Mary works in the supermarket. She has only recently got her job and has spent the last few weeks finding her feet. Mary is unsure of her rights and responsibilities as an employee and is therefore considering joining a <b>trade union</b>. She has spoken with the <b>shop steward</b> who has told her that some workers are undertaking industrial action in the form of a <b>work to rule</b> due to <b>discrimination</b>. She really needs advice on her current employment situation.</p>

Task; Prepare a PowerPoint presentation on advice for them. In it explain the ten keywords highlighted above which they have difficulty understanding. Outline the different options available to John moving forward and the advice you would give to Mary on her concerns.



## INTRODUCTION

My presentation is about advising Mary and John Murphy who find themselves in challenging circumstances.

John and Mary Murphy are a couple who are in need of some good business and career advice. John has recently made redundant from his job of 10 years as a security guard and Mary has just started to work at a supermarket.

My objective is to give them the best advice that I can and to help them plan for their future.

## John Murphy

### JOHN'S KEYWORDS

- Recession – a significant decline in economic activity spread across an entire economy. A recession lasts for more than two consecutive quarters and is most visible in employment figures and retail sales.
- Managing Director – a person who holds the most senior position in a business. Also know as a CEO.
- Redundant – workers are let go because a business needs to reduce their costs.
- Job seekers allowance – you must be unemployed to receive job seekers allowance you also must be
  - Aged over 18 and under 66
  - Be capable of work
  - Be seeking work

## JOHN'S KEYWORDS

➤ Volunteering- when a person offers to give up their time and take part in something without being paid for their effort. A common example of volunteering is charity work.

## MY ADVICE TO JOHN

### Option 1

My first option for John is to set up his own DIY business as a sole trader. This would mean that he would keep all of the profits that he earns and could choose the hours that he works. By doing this he could fit his schedule around his wife's and they would be able to spend more time together. Before registering his new company it would be very beneficial for John if he took part in a 'Start your own Business Course'. In this course he would learn and develop new skills and knowledge about marketing and the financial side of owning a business. Although this is a slightly risky option it could go very well and be a very successful business and a great source of income.



## MY ADVICE TO JOHN

### Option 2

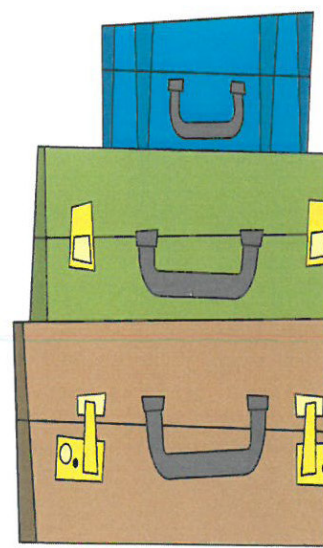
My second option for John is that he completely retrain. He could retrain as a craft or tradesman for home renovations and repairs. These types of jobs are always in demand even in a recession. He could do an apprenticeship and in his free time he could volunteer in his local charity shop. This would be an excellent opportunity for him to be more involved in his community and to help him build a network which could be a great advantage if he decided to set up his own business. I would definitely recommend this option as it is less risky than the previous option and would be a chance for him to be a more prominent figure in his community.



## MY ADVICE TO JOHN

### Option 3

My final option for John is that he could look for work abroad. If he found employment in the UK as a security guard he could commute weekly. This is only a temporary solution as while he is working abroad he could also be looking for a job in Ireland. He would only have to work abroad during the recession and could return to working at home as soon as he found employment. The benefit of this option is that John would be making more money than he would with only his Jobseekers Allowance. Also, the longer he stays unemployed the harder he will find it to find employment. This would be the most difficult of the 3 options and I would only recommend it as a last resort.



# Mary Murphy

## MARY'S KEYWORDS

- Trade Union – an organisation whose main objectives are to protect the jobs of their members and improve their pay and conditions.
- The four types of trade union are
  - Craft unions
  - Industrial unions
  - General unions (supermarket)
  - Professional unions
- Shop steward – a person elected by trade union members to represent them in the workplace. Their job is to encourage people to join a trade union and to help them with any problems they may encounter.

## MARY'S KEYWORDS

- Work to rule – a type of strike also known as go slow.
- Workers attend work as they usually do
- They refuse to work any overtime. This means that they leave work at the end of the day even if tasks were not completed.
- They refuse to perform specific tasks such as answering phones. This means that potential business could be lost. They continue doing other tasks which means that they cannot be dismissed.
- The company's management is then forced to tackle the issue
- Discrimination – unfair or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people. Common examples are race, age and gender.

## MY ADVICE TO MARY

Mary's rights and responsibilities as an employee of a supermarket

It is very important that employees and employers are aware of their rights and responsibilities. Many laws have been passed to protect employees over the last number of years such as the Adoptive Leave Act 2005. These laws are in place so that employers cannot legally take advantage of their employees or treat them unfairly.

5 of Mary's rights as an employee are

- To receive a fair wage for the work that she has done.
- To work in a safe and clean environment
- To receive a fair number of holidays and to have regular breaks.
- To be treated fairly and equally by her employer.
- To join a trade union if she decides to do so.



## MY ADVICE TO MARY

Should Mary join a Trade Union?

In my opinion I think that Mary should definitely join a Trade Union because of their many benefits.

What can a Trade Union do for Mary?

- A Trade Union can negotiate better pay
- A Trade Union can negotiate better working conditions eg. more holidays
- A Trade Union can provide training for new skills
- A Trade Union can give advice and support to its members

## MY ADVICE TO MARY

Mary's rights as a Trade Union member

Trade Union membership is an unlawful reason to

- Refuse employment
- Dismiss you
- Select you for redundancy

The only drawback of joining a Trade Union is that you have to pay union dues in order to join. Union dues are a small price to pay for all that a Trade Union could do for Mary.

## Teacher annotations using the success criteria

The annotations capture observations by the teacher, using the success criteria, with a view to establishing the level of achievement this work reflects. The annotations and judgments were confirmed by a Quality Assurance group, consisting of practising teachers and representatives of the Inspectorate, the State Exams Commission and the Junior Cycle for Teachers support service.

### The student fulfilled all success criteria as they:

**SC1:** The student explained key terminology very clearly

**SC2:** The student's evaluation of John's situation was to a very high standard, and provided lots of detail and analysis of his situation

**SC3:** The student's advice to Mary to join a trade union was excellent and in-depth providing a strong argument to join a union

**SC4:** The student's use of ICT to present the work was excellent although some of the slides were text-heavy

**Overall judgement:**  Exceptional