



A Day in the Life of a LifeWorks Counsellor

I've worked at Ceridian as a counsellor since November 2008. Prior to that I was an engineer in the micro electronic industry and, although I had a good career, I wasn't fulfilled. Following a number of stressful situations, I started to suffer with M.E. (Chronic Fatigue Syndrome). After receiving counselling myself, I developed a passion for it. I began counselling as a volunteer in 2000 and I completed professional training over the next four years. Before joining Ceridian I practiced within GP surgeries, crisis support services, schools and community centres.

What is a typical day like working within the LifeWorks team?

Most of my time is spent on the phone and processing cases. Incoming calls are diverse, for example, I could speak to someone with a straightforward enquiry that is directed to LifeWorks.com or I could provide immediate emergency support for someone in a crisis situation. The support we offer varies, too. I could provide assistance over the phone, suggest a caller receives short-term counselling or refer them to another service if that's the best option. Callers come to us facing work stress, family issues, bereavement, trauma and major health concerns and we support the emotional aspects of these issues. I also support managers dealing with difficult work situations.

What is involved with your role?

There are two aspects to my role. The first is that I take incoming calls from people across a range of work and life concerns, from financial or legal advice to more complex situations with multiple issues. A lot of my time is spent helping people manage stressors and work out a better way of coping. I am also a senior clinician and I support the other counsellors within our team. We have to keep ourselves well. Counselling is a demanding role so we talk to and take care of each other to ensure callers receive the very best quality of care.

What do you enjoy about working within the LifeWorks team?

I like that we make a positive difference to people's lives. Making that first call to LifeWorks often brings huge relief because we help individuals to realise that it's normal to struggle with difficulties. Often they just need support to be able to cope better and realise they're not on their own. These days people don't get this service through their GP's or they have to wait months for a referral; I like that we can offer immediate assistance.

What value do you bring to LifeWorks?

I make a difference! We all do, because we help the people who talk to us. I've worked as a manager, I've worked in industry and I bring a lot of experience. Managers can call in for support with their role, even just as a sounding board to help them decide the right thing to do. We're a great team and we work hard for the sake of everyone who calls in.