

What if...?



It's about a job: What if...?

What if...?

“The most successful people are those who are good at plan B.”

James Yorke, mathematician

If we thought about everything that could go wrong in life, we would end up scaring ourselves silly – and wasting a whole lot of energy! But even the best-laid plans can go wrong. So it makes good sense to write yourself a ‘What if’ plan to fall back on just in case certain things don’t go as well as you hoped. Use the sample ‘what if...?’ plan on the next page to help you start writing your ‘plan B’!

“I was worried what would happen if I felt unwell at work and had to go home. That was the biggest thing for me, that feeling of inadequacy. Would people think I was weird? But touch wood, I haven’t had to go home as yet.”

Production worker

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My 'what if...?' plan

The table below shows an example 'what if...' plan. You can use the suggestions in this plan as a starting point and fill in your own contacts, and/or you can use the blank table on the next page to write your own 'what if...?' plan. Write your 'what if...?' in the first column, your 'plan B' in the middle column and the support people who you can contact in the third column.

| WHAT IF...? | I CAN DO THIS: | I CAN CONTACT: |
|--|--|----------------|
| What if my transport doesn't work out? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I need one or two people I know who I can call on at short notice to take me to work if I'm stuck. | |
| What if I feel panicky at work? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I need someone in my support network that I can call from somewhere quiet and private at work. I can explain to my boss that I feel panicky sometimes and when that happens I need a few minutes' break in a quiet place where I can do some breathing exercises. My support network can help me put together an action plan to deal with feelings of panic. | |
| What happens if someone upsets me at work? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can find myself a work buddy who will help support me in the job (perhaps with the help of my employment consultant). I can set up weekly 'debrief' meetings with someone in my support network to talk through and brainstorm solutions to issues that upset me. | |
| What if I become unwell and can't work for a while? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiate (with help from my employment consultant if necessary) a 'leave without pay' clause in my employment contract – maybe an additional two to four weeks' leave over and above my regular sick-leave entitlement, for example. Visit my case manager at Work and Income New Zealand before I start the job to make arrangements for me to go onto an emergency benefit without a stand-down period if I do become unwell. Put away a small amount of money each week from my pay to build up some emergency savings. Ask my mental health professional to sign a 'forward agreement' to start any treatment I may need quickly so that I can get back to work as soon as possible. | |

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