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High earners' job advice

HIGH-FLIERS who have lost their jobs because of the recession are attending a free workshop today.

The event was set up because experts believe lawyers, accountants, managers and specialists have been hit hard by the economic downturn.

And they say mainstream agencies like Jobcentre Plus struggle to offer relevant advice.

The help session, at Staffordshire University, has been organised by professional services network finest and management consultancy MPCG Business Solutions.

It has been funded by Advantage West Midlands and if successful could be duplicated across the region.

In Stoke-on-Trent, there were 8,981 people claiming Jobseekers' Allowance (JSA) in May, up 82 per cent from 4,930 in May 2008.

Newcastle has seen its claimant count increase by 107 per cent, from 1,456 to 3,007, while in the Staffordshire Moorlands it has soared by 142 per cent.

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RECTICEL
insulation

Workforce on the up as firm bucks a trend

AN insulation factory has almost doubled its workforce thanks to rising demand.

Recticel Insulation, at Meir Park, has taken on 16 new employees, taking staff numbers to 38.

The £14 million factory, which manufactures, warehouses and distributes foam insulation products for the construction industry, opened last year on the former Staffordshire Tableware site on Whittle Road.

Recticel, which worked with Stoke-based recruitment consultants MPCG to fill the new positions, said all the staff taken on are from Stoke-on-Trent.

New jobs created include shift supervisors, production operatives and a receptionist, as well as two sales representatives.

The firm said that despite the downturn in the construction market, it is still experiencing increasing demand for its products.

Plant manager Andrew Brown said: "At a time when many construction companies are facing tough trading conditions, it is positive to report that we are nearly doubling our staff head count.

"Expanding our factory production reinforces our commitment to Stoke-on-Trent, especially as all the new employees were recruited locally.

"Stoke-on-Trent serves as a central location for reaching our growing nationwide customer base and we look forward to further strengthening links with the local business community in the coming years."