



The Market Research Benevolent Association

Case Study

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“You’ve helped me, now I want to join the MRBA to help others.”

This is Steve’s story

Steve, (not his real name), joined the research industry as an interviewer in 2004 and worked quite regularly. In December, 2007, he came down with a virus and spent 10 days very ill in hospital. After being discharged, Steve was still not well enough to go back to work. He really struggled both physically and financially because, like most interviewers, if he didn’t work, he didn’t get paid. Fortunately Steve had some savings, but they started to run out and he wasn’t able to get any financial support from either of the agencies he was working for at the time.

Coming up to Christmas, things got quite desperate. Steve knew he needed to get back to work as soon as possible, but he had problems with his car – the car he relied on to get to and from work. The car’s MOT and tax disc had come due and he also needed to renew his insurance, all at the same time.

Steve explains, “I didn’t have the money to pay for any of this. ‘But I knew if I didn’t get my car back on the road, I couldn’t earn any money either. I just didn’t know where the money was going to come from.”

What a difference a phone call makes

Then Steve remembered something about the MRBA – it had been mentioned at his staff induction and also in a newsletter. “I wasn’t a member, so I didn’t hold out much hope that they could help me”, Steve says. “But, I swallowed my pride, dug out the number and gave them a call. Everyone was brilliant. Marian Stringer and a colleague come out to see me at home. I wondered what they must have thought. The flat was in a total mess because the landlord decided to replace the boiler and central heating system and it didn’t go to plan, so I hadn’t had any heating for ten days! But they were very nice and sympathetic. We sat down and they helped me fill in the application form.



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Membership in the MRS or the MRBA is not a requirement

“They assured me that I didn’t have to be a member of the MRBA or the Market Research Society to be eligible for help. I asked for a loan of £600 to get my car roadworthy. Within a week the loan was approved, and I got the cheque around Christmas time. What a relief!

Without the MRBA, I would have left the industry

“Since then I have been working regularly for one agency. I paid off the loan within a year in my own time, and at my own pace. No one from the MRBA hassled me about paying it back, but I wanted to. I’m really busy at the moment, despite the economic situation. If it hadn’t been for the MRBA I would definitely have left the industry. Now I want to join the association, so my regular contribution can help others like me.

Don’t delay, just get in touch

‘I’m quite a proud person, so asking for help was really hard. But in retrospect I’m really glad I did. I’d like to encourage others who might be in dire circumstances to give the MRBA a call, especially if they have no where else to turn. Don’t bury your head in the sand. Ask for help. The worst they can say is ‘no’.”