

Hope for beleaguered Stuttafords workers

Although the closure of retail chain Stuttafords at the end of this month will put approximately 800 of its employees on the street, a recruitment company has pledged to assist some of those affected.

Entry level recruitment company, Lulaway, has offered to place 15% of those who will be made redundant and is urging corporate South Africa to come forward with job offers for the workers. When Lulaway CEO, Jakes Willis, visited one of the Stuttafords stores recently, he was affected by what would happen to all the people who were about to lose their jobs.

"I chatted to a few well-trained, well-groomed and competent sounding employees in the store and realised that something needed to be done.

"If you consider the social multiplier effect, where 12 people are affected when one person loses his or her job, then about 9 000 people will be affected by the job losses at Stuttafords," he said. That is when the idea of finding jobs for the out-of-work people came to Willis' mind as well as to challenge other companies in South Africa to consider doing so too.

"We are aiming to place all 800 people, but can commit to 126 people for now. At Lulaway, we immediately committed

are a medium sized enterprise, this is a significant commitment.

"While we do not have the capacity to employ all 800, we do have strong relationships with clients in the retail and services sector that always need experienced employees," Willis explained.

In addition to Lulaway employing 50 people, its clients, Dischem and Bidvest Protea Coin, Mr Price Group and P&G Clothing have committed to placing 76 people in total.

Willis is in discussion with several other clients to determine whether they can place additional Stuttafords staff members.

Willis said it is a tragedy when competent and skilled people lose their jobs especially given South Africa's current high unemployment rate and economic downturn.

"I am aware the country is in a recession but there are jobs out there for people who have the necessary skills, commitment and drive. Transformation is only possible when we all come together for the greater good of the individual and the economy.

"At Lulaway, our business is all about building partnerships aimed at linking government funders, willing job seekers and private sector employers in mutually