



## Investing in Job Quality

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A quality job is the foundation for financial stability and economic mobility. Labor markets, however, are changing. Many of the largest growing occupations, such as healthcare, retail sales, food service and laborers, require only a high school diploma or less. In addition to lower wages, these jobs often have irregular hours, limited benefits and limited advancement opportunities. The following resources explore new policies and strategies to make these jobs better for both workers and their employers.

For more information about this work, please contact [Steven Shepelwich](#).

### Job Quality Webinar Series

The Kansas City Fed hosted the following three-part webinar series on strategies to promote and improve quality jobs for lower-wage workers from the perspectives of employers, workers and the research community. The series was hosted in partnership with the National Fund for Workforce Solutions, the Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program, and the Good Companies, Good Jobs Initiative at the MIT Sloan School of Management.

#### How Employers Create Good Jobs to Maintain Their Competitive Advantage

In today's tightening labor market, companies across the country are adopting new business practices to create good jobs to attract, retain and grow their talent.

This webinar explores how the changing labor market is affecting two manufacturing companies and the strategies they use to design higher quality jobs, improve working conditions and strengthen operations. The role of technology in enhancing job quality and expanding employment is discussed along with a menu of practices used by employers across industry sectors proven to increase their competitive advantage and help them to become an 'employer of choice'.

Presenters:

- Fred Dedrick, President & CEO, [National Fund for Workforce Solutions](#)
- Kathy Jewett, Human Resources Manager, [XLT, Inc. of Wichita, Kansas](#)
- Mike Mandina, President, [Optimax Systems, Inc. of Ontario, New York](#)

Resources:

- [How Employers Create Good Jobs to Maintain Their Competitive Advantage \(PPT\)](#)
- [Optimax Systems, Inc.: The Business Logic of Continuous Learning](#)
- [CareerSTAT Guide to Investing in Frontline Healthcare Workers](#)

*Randall Wilson and Kelly Aiken (Washington, DC: National Fund for Workforce Solutions, 2016)*

### **Engaging Workers in Creating Good Jobs**

How can workers, especially in lower-wage frontline jobs, contribute to improving their jobs in ways that benefit them, their families and their employers?

This webinar presents ways that workers are making their voices heard on a range of policy and practice issues. New technologies and organizing tools are explored that address many common concerns in new ways such as improving scheduling, expanding leave policies and increasing worker rights knowledge.

Presenters:

- Maureen Conway, Vice President for Policy Programs at the Aspen Institute and Executive Director of the Institute's [Economic Opportunities Program](#)
- Jess Kutch, Founder, [Coworker.org](#)
- Adrienne Smith, President and CEO, [New Mexico Direct Caregivers Coalition](#)

Resources:

- [Engaging Workers in Creating Good Jobs \(PPT\)](#)
- [Raise the Floor and Build Ladders: Workforce Strategies Supporting Mobility and Stability](#)  
*Maureen Conway and Steven L. Dawson (Washington, DC: Aspen, 201*
- [Aspen Institute Job Quality Fellowship Program](#)
- [Jess Kutch Job Quality Fellow Profile](#)
- [Adrienne Smith, Listening to Caregivers](#)

### **In Search of the Employment "High Road": A Research Perspective on Developing Good Jobs**

Why aren't there more good jobs? What factors facilitate-or hinder- the creation of high-quality jobs?

This webinar answers these questions and includes an overview of recent research on job quality – and of debates about "high-road" vs. "low-road" employment practices. Factors that affect job quality in two industries, long-term care and retail, that each employ large numbers of low-paid workers in the U.S. are explored.

#### Presenters:

- Barbara Dyer, Senior Lecturer at the MIT Sloan School of Management and Executive Director of the **Good Companies, Good Jobs** Initiative at MIT Sloan School of Management
- Paul Osterman, Nanyang Technological University (NTU) Professor of Human Resources and Management at the **MIT Sloan School and Co-Director of the MIT Institute for Work and Employment Research**
- Françoise Carré, Research Director at the **Center for Social Policy** at the University of Massachusetts Boston

#### Resources:

- **In Search of the Employment "High Road": A Research Perspective on Developing Good Jobs (PPT)**
- **Who Will Care for Us?: Long-Term Care and the Long-Term Workforce**  
*Paul Osterman (New York: Russell Sage, 2017)*
- **"In Search of the High Road: Meaning and Evidence"**  
*Paul Osterman, ILR Review 71, issue 1 (January 2018): 3-34*
- **Where Bad Jobs Are Better: Retail Jobs Across Countries and Companies**  
*Françoise Carré, Chris Tilly (New York: Russell Sage, 2017)*

## Voices from the Field

### **Building Ladders and Raising the Floor: Improving Employment and Economic Opportunities for Frontline Workers**

Leading practitioners are highlighted in these video segments from the Kansas City Fed's forum, in partnership with the Aspen Institute's Economic Opportunities Program, on improving job quality for lower-wage workers.

### **Improving Job Quality for Lower-Wage Workers: An interview with Steven Dawson**

Steven Dawson discusses opportunities for improving job quality and economic opportunities for lower-wage workers grounded in his current work as a Visiting Fellow at The Pinkerton Foundation and consultant with workforce development practitioners and funders.

## **Improving the Quality of Jobs through the Public Workforce System**

Scott Anglemeyer, executive director of Workforce Partnership, discusses opportunities for the public workforce system to meet the changing needs of employers and workers.

## **Listening to Caregivers**

Adrienne Smith, president and CEO of the New Mexico Direct Caregivers Coalition, discusses challenges and opportunities for improving outcomes for direct caregivers, their patients and their employers.

## **Employer and Lower-Wage Employee Perspectives on Training and Advancement**

Mark Popovich and Jenny Benz discuss the value and a role for both the employee and employer in developing and enhancing the skill sets of lower-wage workers.

## **Improving Employment Outcomes for Lower-Wage Workers**

Workforce development leaders explore strategies for improving job quality and other emerging issues in the 10th District.

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### **Investing in America's Workforce: How Employers Create Good Jobs**

In today's tightening labor market, companies across the country are adopting new business practices to create good jobs to attract, retain and grow their talent. This webinar discusses how the changing labor market is affecting two manufacturing companies and the strategies they use to design higher quality jobs, improve working conditions and strengthen operations.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9asu4CYoXmU&feature;=emb\\_title](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9asu4CYoXmU&feature;=emb_title)