

Career Pathways and the Emerging Economy

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prepared for presentation at

**Moving On Up: Building Career Paths in
High-Wage and Low-Wage Sectors**

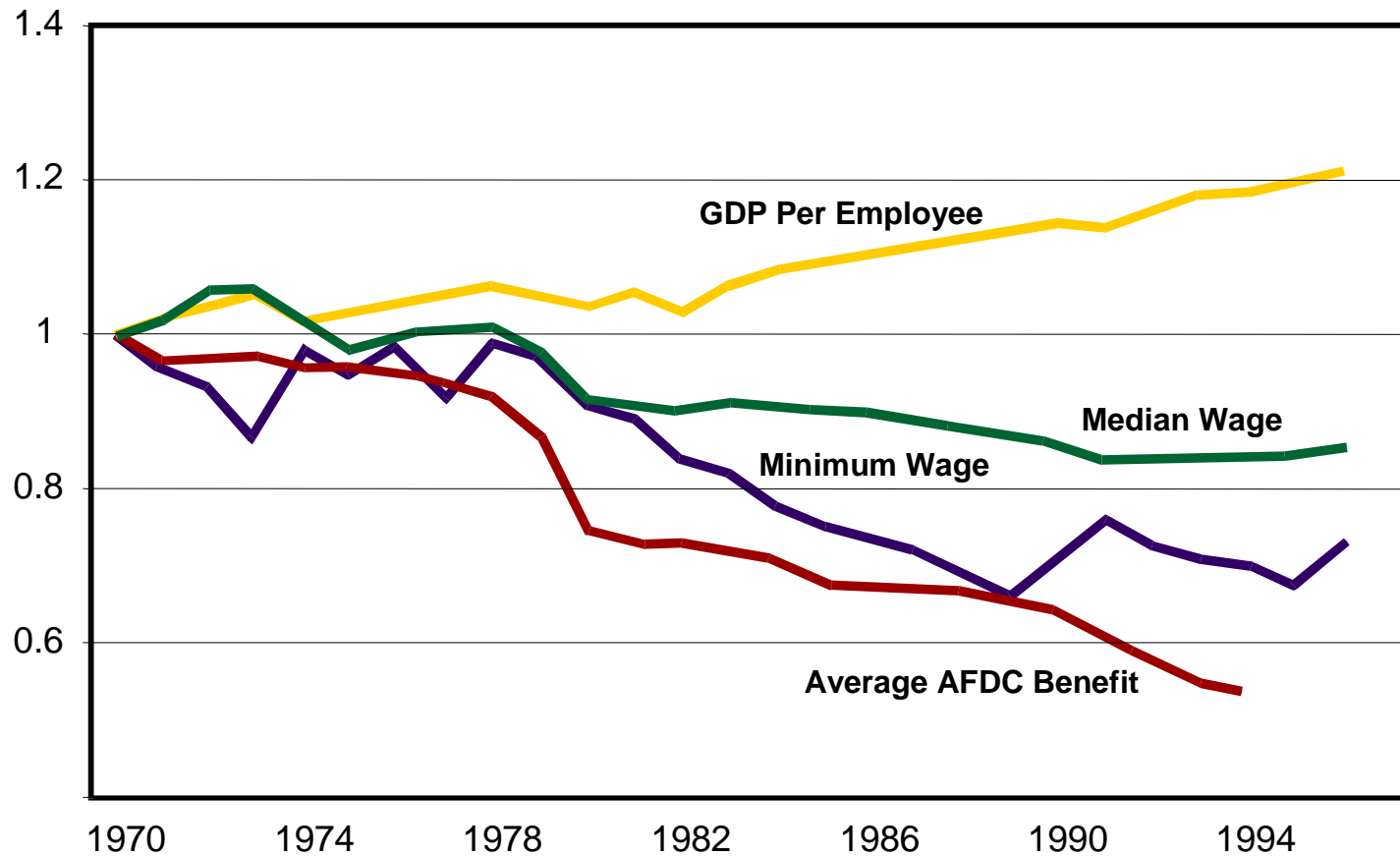
National Network of Sector Practitioners Conference

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National Trends in Production, Wages, & Welfare 1970 - 96



Getting to Living Wage Jobs

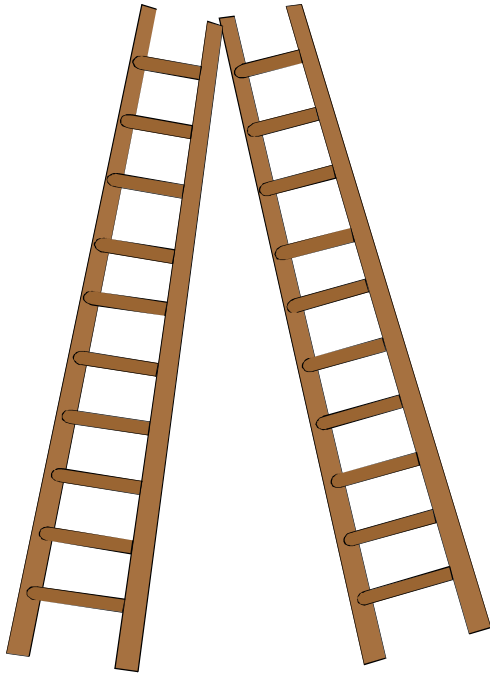
- Entry-level employment that prepares workers for and connects them to future opportunities
- Reliable and understood methods of access to decent paying sectors
- Routine career advancement through incremental moves

Why is that so Hard these Days?

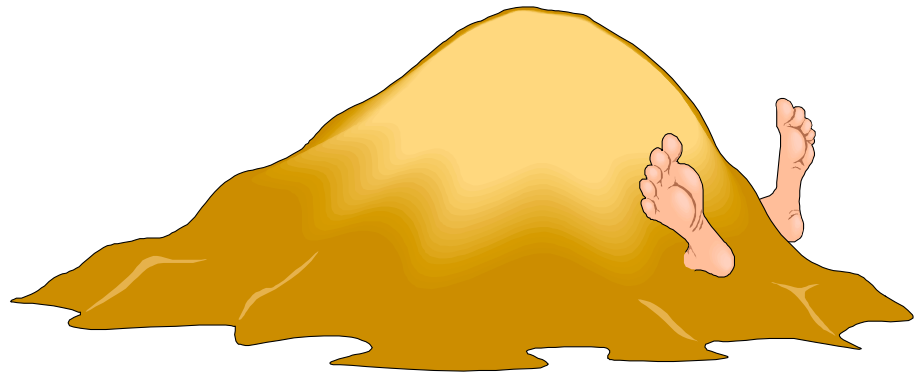
- Changes in work organization — outsourcing, contingent/temporary work, cellular production, etc.
- Shift to smaller firm size and more service sector work
- Deregulation, privatization, de-unionization

In Other Words...

Old World



New World



High Performance Partnerships Provide the Foundation

“High performance partnerships” bring management and labor together to support advanced work organization and industry-wide solutions to common modernization needs and human resource problems.

High Performance Partnerships

- Help overcome free rider problems in training
- Produce economies of scale and scope in development of training, curricula, and benchmarks
- Provide improved information and coordination in the industry
- Send the public sector clearer and more representative industry signals, while providing leverage for public efforts

Advantages to the Partnership Approach

- Collaborative work on shared problems opens new opportunities for cross site learning
- Firms begin to speak more clearly as an industry as they work together.
- Creation of systems that single firms can't build alone
- Better labor market information

Building Systems to Overcome the Problems

- Look for sectors with family supporting wages. Consider age of workforce, not only growth.
- Work to get employers, unions and the public sector coordinating on incumbent worker training issues.
- Develop clear information about demand, entry level skills and training needs in that sector.
- Use that information as a basis for programs which can connect disadvantaged workers to family supporting jobs.

Milwaukee Jobs Initiative

- One of six cities selected by the Annie E. Casey Foundation to implement their Jobs Initiative
- A seven year initiative to connect low-income, central city residents to family-supporting employment
- Governed by a nine member board of directors, composed equally of business, labor and community representatives

The Milwaukee Jobs Initiative

Sectorally-based

We concentrate on specific industries that need trained workers and will pay good wages to get them.

Employment-linked

Rather than wasting participants' time with irrelevant training, we train workers for specific, guaranteed jobs.

Client-focused

We identify and provide the precise combination of soft- and hard-skills training and services that will enable workers to obtain and keep family-supporting jobs.

Career-directed

We establish systems to keep workers employed, including peer mentoring and career ladders.

MJI Combines the Strengths.... to Tackle the Weakness

- Make training institutions more responsive to rapidly changing needs of employers and specific obstacles faced by inner-city residents.
- Create systems that link high-wage employers to community sources of qualified workers.
- Establish incentives to recognize and reward high-performing CBOs.
- Coordinate services such as child care and transportation to support inner-city residents during their preparation and entry into the work force.

What are the Outcomes?

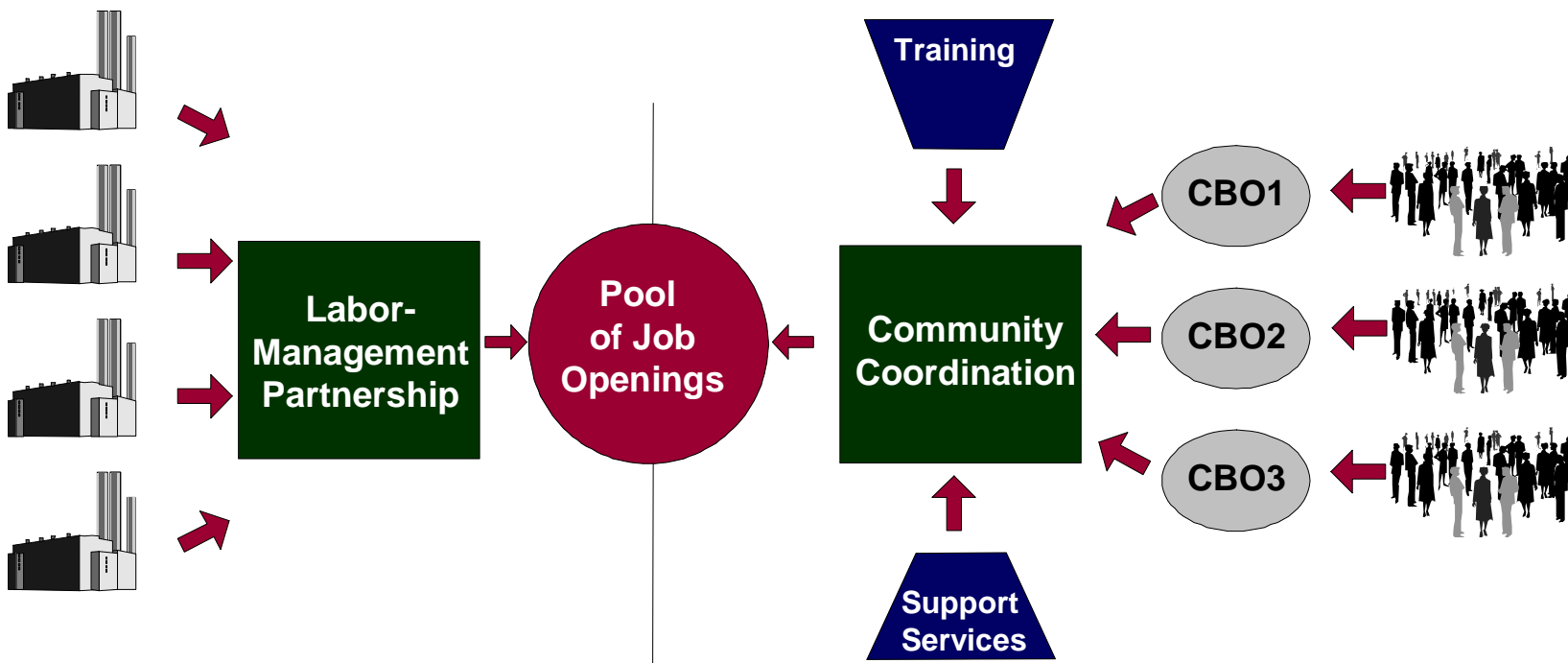
- In the first seven quarters, MJI has successfully placed 368 participants in union jobs that pay family-supporting wages
- The average starting wage at placement has been \$11.12 per hour, representing a \$2.25 gain over the participant's prior jobs.
- All MJI jobs offer health benefits, whereas only 35% of participants received health benefits at their previous jobs.
- The wage and benefit gains have improved the well-being of at least 540 children who live in the households of MJI participants

Community-Employer Linked Training

MJI's main employment initiative targets strong sectors of the Milwaukee economy with the following strategy:

- Develop a network of community organizations that recruits and prepares reliable and employable individuals for good jobs.
- Organize employers with similar workforce needs into “consortia” that spell out those needs so the CBO network and training institutions can fill them.

Community-Employer Linked Training



Industry Side

- Specify quantity of entry level positions
- Describe performance and training requirements for these jobs
- Establish job-retention supports

Community Side

- Identify potential workers in target community
- Assess these individuals for work readiness
- Supply soft skills and training necessary to perform target jobs
- Place individuals in pool of jobs supplied by industry side consortium
- Arrange for support services such as transportation and child care
- Track progress of clients: placement, wages, retention, and progress through industry careers

Get the Right People Together

- Identify lead industries: quantitative and qualitative analysis
- Develop insider knowledge and contacts: surveys can be used as an organizing tool
- Secure participation: get reaction to industry study so all are nodding with conclusions
- Overcome barriers by noting differences rather than hiding them (e.g. tension between union and non-union firms.)
- Build relationships and trust through meetings and project development

Lessons Learned in Wisconsin

- Get the right people together, and keep them at the table
- Build the infrastructure for industry problem solving, not just stand-alone projects around hot topics
- Develop projects that solve industry problems by improving worker skills or community access to jobs
- Keep the process going by balancing private sector drive and your own leadership