
Educator Toolkit: The Future of Work

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Why This Matters Now

Whether your students plan to head directly into the workforce after high school or they are continuing their education at a two-year or four-year college, they need to understand how the world of work is changing. For example, new digital technologies are expected to take away many jobs and they will also create several new ones. Ravi Kumar, president at Infosys, a global digital services firm, has said that 75 million old jobs will go away by 2022, and 135 million new jobs will be created because of new technologies. “Every large enterprise and every large government ecosystem is thinking about this,” he recently told [Knowledge@Wharton](#). “AI, machine learning and new age digital technologies [are] taking away jobs of the past and creating jobs for the future...Institutions and enterprises will move from a people-only workplace to a people-plus-machine workplace. If I extend that thought, they will move to people-plus-gig-plus machines. Machines will do the problem solving. The gig economy will bring variability and agility to our workforce.”

Knowledge@Wharton High School will be featuring more articles and resources on the changing nature of work, bolstered by cutting-edge research by Wharton faculty. Both educators and students need to tune into the trends so that they can make informed decisions about their jobs and careers.

Resources

Article

[How the Gig Economy Fits into the Future of Work](#)

The job market is beginning to look different – some say it may even be changing forever. This is in large part due to what is commonly known as the gig economy. If you’re not even sure what that means, well, you’re not alone. It is a catchy term for a whole lot of things. Primarily, though, it is a short or long-term job that lasts until the task or project is complete; it is not permanent employment. We turned to Wharton experts to help us better understand this new employment model and how it is redefining the future of work.

Lesson Plan

[Jobs and Money: The New Job Market](#)

This lesson introduces students to the idea of a changing job market and the attitudes that may best serve them in the coming years. They work as a class to understand the importance of thinking about the job market as changing and dynamic. They also use the rational decision-making process as a framework to think about job possibilities in the next five-to-10 years.

Explore our full library of educator toolkits [HERE!](#)

Hands-on Learning

February starts out with the groundhog seeking his shadow, so why not have your students seek shadows, as well. Turn National Job Shadow Day (February 7) into National Job Shadow Month by making connections with new-economy workers in your community. Ideally, students will be able to shadow their workers in person for a day. Another option would be to use technology – such as a videoconferencing platform – to connect your students with people who are aligned some way with the new economy, either as gig economy workers, app developers, technologists, data scientists or social media managers. Reach out to state and/or local Chambers of Commerce to identify prospective job shadow

candidates, as well as encouraging students to work their networks in school and at home. If you aren't sure where to begin, contact the [U.S. Chamber of Commerce](#) for help localizing your search. Students could shadow in small groups or individually, depending on the time you have to devote to this project and the available resources.

Picture this: 5 groups of 4 students preparing questions, Skyping for 15 minutes each with five unique workers who reflect in some way the changing workplace, and then reporting back to the class about what they have learned.

Video Glossary

Provide an extra layer of learning for your students with our video glossary. Here, Wharton professors define terms: [Job Performance](#), [Labor Market](#), [Labor Union](#), [Living Wage](#) and [Workplace Incentives](#).

KWHS Quote of the Month

“I was told that there [are] winners and losers, and if I'm not willing to work my butt off there are 70 million other Gen Zers who are going to come right up behind you and take your job. We are a very competitive and driven generation.”
–[Jonah S.](#), *student at Minnetonka High School in Minnesota and author of the book Gen Z @ Work: How the Next Generation Is Transforming the Workplace.*