

# Which career and life designing interventions to develop decent work in a fair and sustainable world economy?

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# Agenda

- Highlight the important contributions of the UNESCO Chair, Professor Jean Guichard
- Review changing landscape of work
- Some exemplars
  - Enhancing agency via attending to the context of agency
  - Enhancing critical consciousness
- We need to choose inclusivity and social advocacy.
- Next steps

# Contributions from Professor Guichard

- This conference reflects the international contributions and significance of Professor Jean Guichard
- As the UNESCO Chair of Career Guidance, Professor Guichard is now offering his leadership to our field as we face multiple crises that are reshaping the world of work.
- Professor Guichard has raised critical questions for us in this conference and in his publications/presentations.

# Framework for the Presentation

- The title of my presentation reflects the scope of Professor Guichard's agenda and highlights our challenges:
  - Career and life designing
  - Decent Work
  - Fair and sustainable economy
- Let's review these points, which will set a frame for my presentation

# Career and Life Designing

- Along with his colleagues, Professor Guichard has developed an inclusive, 21<sup>st</sup> century focus on career and life design.
- This perspective captures many core elements of the challenges we are facing.
  - Career and life are inseparable. (There is very little as personal as one's work life!)
  - We have the capacity to design our lives—we need to help our clients enhance their agency in their lives.
    - However, contextual barriers play a huge role in determining how much agency people have....

# Career and Life Designing

- As Mark Savickas shared with me recently, we need to think about how to design our lives if work no longer love us....
- The next step in career and life design will need to encompass advocacy for decent work and for a fair and sustainable world economy.
- This conference, in my view, is about our need to invigorate a social justice-infused perspective for career development and life designing.
- We need to revitalize the social justice roots of our field, which helped to generate the profession that has offered each of us with such a noble way to make our own living.

# Decent Work and Human Rights

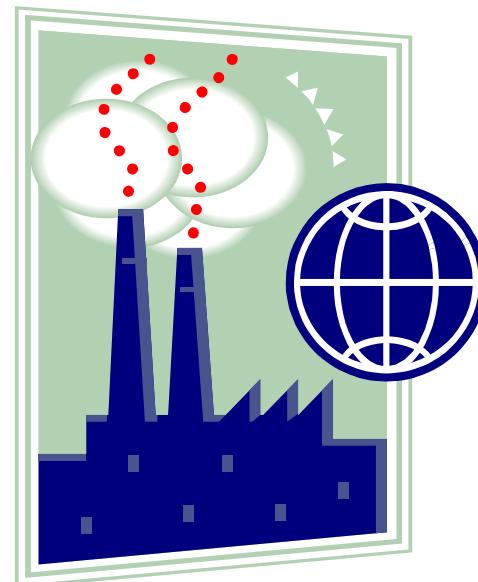
- The origins of decent work can be traced to the UN Declaration of Human Rights:
- *(1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.*
- *(2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.*

# Decent Work and Human Rights

- (3) *Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.*
- (4) *Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.*  
(UN Declaration of Human Rights, 1948)

# Fair and Sustainable World Economy

- A tension currently exists in economics and human development about job creation and sustaining a healthy environment.



# Why Should Career Guidance Care about these Issues

- We can no longer continue with our work as we had through most of the later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- The world of Donald Super and John Holland is gone.
- We need new and inclusive models for this new era.



# Why Should Career Guidance Care about these Issues

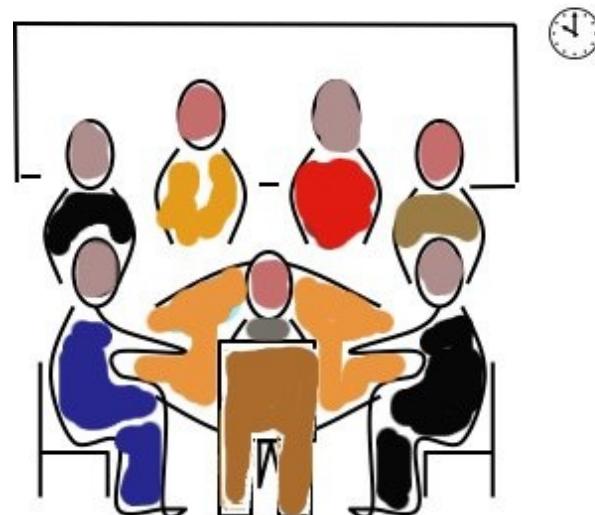
- Our tradition is one of social justice and change.
- When we consider life design, we need to think about empowering our clients to ensure that they advocate for *themselves* .
- We also want to help clients advocate for their *communities* to design just and fair lives for all who want to work.
- We need to advocate for the importance of work in people's lives.

# Changing World of Work

- Emerging Perspectives for a New Era:
  - Life and Career Design
  - The Psychology of Working Framework
  - Counseling for Work and Relationships

# Changes in the Occupational World

- Unemployment and underemployment
- The Second Machine Age



# Unemployment:

- We have witnessed the worst period of unemployment since the Great Depression.
- What is the psychological meaning of work and of not working?
- In the psychology-of-working framework, I have argued that working has the potential to fulfill...
  - Needs for survival
  - Needs for relatedness and connection
  - Needs for self-determination

# Prevalence of Unemployment

- Major conclusions of the new World Employment and Social Outlook Trends report published by the ILO are as follows:
  - Global employment outlook will deteriorate in the coming five years.
  - Over 201 million people were unemployed in 2014 around the world, over 31 million more than before the start of the global crisis.
  - And, global unemployment is expected to increase by 3 million in 2015 and by a further 8 million in the following four years.

# Prevalence of Unemployment

- Youth, especially young women, continue to be disproportionately affected by unemployment.
- The youth unemployment rate is practically three times higher than is the case for their adult counterparts.
- The heightened youth unemployment situation is common to all regions and is occurring despite the trend of improvements in educational attainment.

# Unemployment

- Guiding assumptions
  - Working is central to our psychological health
  - Working is also essential to the welfare of our communities.
  - The loss of work, particularly for a long-term duration, is traumatic...



# The Unemployment-Mental Health Connection

- The meta-analysis:  
Paul and Moser
  - Integrated results of 237 studies with nearly **half a million participants**.
  - Results included the following:
    - **People who lost their jobs experienced an increase in mental health problems**
    - **Once people became reemployed, their mental health improved**



# Paul and Moser's Meta-Analysis

- Mental health problems exist in 16% of the general population and 34% of the unemployed.



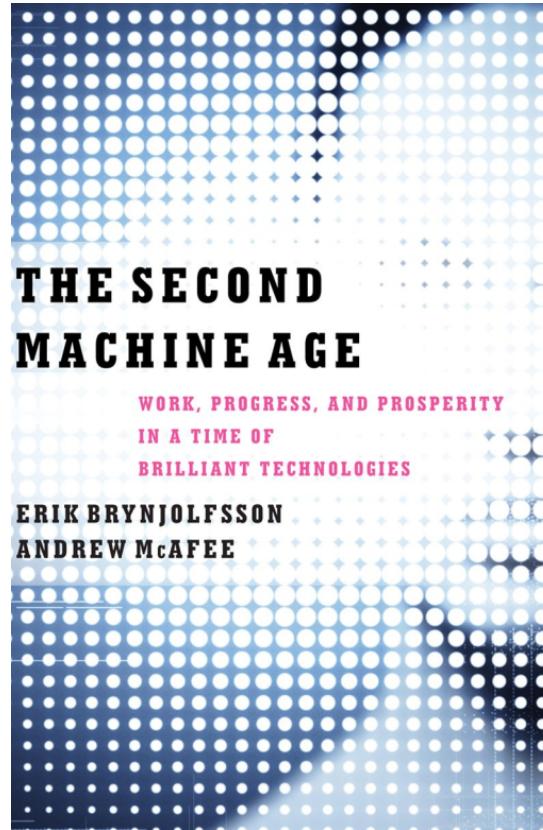
# Take-Away on Unemployment

- People need to work for survival.
- For many people, working is way to contribute, collaborate, and connect.
- Other concerns about diminished employment opportunities are becoming increasingly clear due to the advent of the Second Machine Age.

# The Advent of the Second Machine Age

- In a thoughtful new book, Erik Brynjolfsson and Andrew McAfee have argued that we are now entering the Second Machine Age.
- The First Machine Age, which took place in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, completely transformed life and work.
- The Second Machine Age has the potential to further transform our lives...and, in particular, our working lives!

# The Second Machine Age



"The Second Machine Age: Work, Progress, and Prosperity in a Time of Brilliant Technologies" recounts changes that are radical, somewhat unexpected, and transformative:

# The Second Machine Age

- In the early 2000s, many scholars and policy analysts felt that technology could not tackle the following issues:
  - Driverless cars did not seem viable.
  - Voice recognition on computers
  - 3-D printers
  - Computers that can write prose

# The Second Machine Age

- Smart phones:
  - In 2000, there were 700 million mobile phone subscriptions in the world, with less than 30% in the developing world.
  - Currently, there are 6 billion subscriptions, with 75% in the developing world.
    - Of these phones, 70% are considered “feature phones”, providing access to the internet and a camera.
  - By 2017, smart phones will comprise 75% of all mobile phone sales

# The Second Machine Age

- The What's App Story:
  - The What's App feature on smart phones provides access to free texting within a WIFI context.
  - What's App was purchased by Facebook for \$19 billion
  - What's App has 55 employees!!!!
  - What are the implications of this for our workforce??

# The Second Machine Age and Work

- The future will be awe-inspiring:
  - In the next 24 months, the planet will add more computing power than it did in all of previous history.
  - In the next 24 years, the increase in technology will be over thousand-fold.
- What about work?



# Implications of the Second Machine Age for Work and Careers

- Some economists believe that technological innovations will not reduce employment opportunities.
- However, the evidence seems to support the concerns that Brynjolfsson and McAfee have articulated:
  - Lower skilled jobs are being replaced by technology.
  - And, as computers increasingly are able to engage in pattern recognition and in other forms of artificial intelligence, more skilled jobs will be replaced.

# Alternatives to the Second Machine Age Vision

- The OECD has just published a report on working in light of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.
- The authors developed five different scenarios about the future with respect to work.
  - Of the five possible futures described in the OECD report, three are dire, involving massive population movements, inequality, poverty and citizen unrest.
  - However, two involve vibrant societies that possess the skills, creativity and flexibility to thrive and stave off global crises.

# OECD report

- Prior to summarizing these possible futures, the OECD report did highlight some good news.
  - More than two billion people emerged from extreme poverty over the last four decades.
  - Unskilled workers have seen real increases in their wages
  - Life expectancy has improved
  - Literacy is more widespread than ever.

# General findings from the OECD report

- The positive outlook about poverty reduction is tempered by two disturbing trends:
  - Growing inequality
  - Notable reductions in job creation.



# General findings from the OECD report

- Job creation drives livelihood improvements.
- Yet growth in GDP is not being matched by a rise in employment, leading to the phenomenon of “jobless growth” in almost all countries.
- Global growth remains slow and financial fragilities continue.
- The world is seeing some massive demographic transitions.
  - Younger populations are growing.
  - People are living longer, extending the need for pension and health care.

# General findings from the OECD report

- Environmental degradation will affect us all.
- Climate change is creating massive problems around the globe.
- Technology is a game-changer—the OECD experts identified many of the concerns that are described in the Second Machine Age.
- Security and peace are essential for livelihoods, yet, 1.5 billion people across the world (about one-fifth of the world's population) live in countries affected by conflict.

# The Five Scenarios

- The first scenario is called “**Automated North**”.
  - Automation proceeds faster than expected.
  - The rapid automation in advanced and some emerging economies means that jobs in most sectors are increasingly taken over by robots and artificial intelligence systems.
  - The process is so fast that most people whose jobs are replaced by technology cannot adapt and find it difficult to secure their livelihoods.
  - Inequality increases faster than expected.
  - Social tensions and disruptions increase.
  - In many developing countries, the automation process is much slower, meaning that these countries are no longer competitive, even in low-cost, low-value added sectors.

# The Five Scenarios

- In the second scenario, “**Droughts and joblessness in the South**”, droughts become widespread in large parts of the developing world, challenging livelihoods in regions with large youthful populations (sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa, Middle East and South Asia).
  - Subsistence farming becomes almost impossible and even larger scale farming is seriously challenged.
  - Famines become normal, not only for small-scale farmers but also for poor people in urban areas as food prices sky-rocket.
  - The pace of change – in the youth population explosion as well as in the severity of droughts – is very fast.
  - Countries, communities and individuals are unlikely to be able to adapt livelihoods or support mechanisms fast enough.
  - The result is hunger, increasing inequality and social disruption.

# The Five Scenarios

- In the third scenario “**Global financial crash**,” a major financial crisis triggers a collapse of the global trading system and a shift to protectionism.
  - A housing bubble bursts in China and some other emerging countries.
  - The European Union unravels, prompting another financial crisis. Commodity prices continue to fall rapidly, creating significant challenges for currency stability in countries relying on commodity exports.
  - These financial disruptions trigger a major global economic crisis, affecting trade, investment and consumption.
  - In developed and developing countries alike, many people’s livelihoods come under pressure.
  - At least one billion people fall back into extreme poverty.

# The Five Scenarios

- The “**Regenerative economies**” scenario posits a more positive vision of the future.
  - Technological innovations create enough new jobs for most people and economic activity becomes more sustainable.
  - Many new fields flourish, including cybersecurity, environmentally resilient engineering, robot-enhanced service jobs, and jobs requiring high skills in nanotechnology and biotechnology.
  - Countries reshape their education systems so that people can perform in the knowledge economy.
  - While impacts on livelihoods are positive overall, certain people will still need social security, but such systems will be more affordable for many nation states under this scenario.
  - This scenario could touch all regions of the world, but would come about faster in advanced and emerging countries.

# The Five Scenarios

- In the final scenario, “**Creative societies**”, diverse experiments at the local level focus on individual resilience and social well-being.
  - Technology-induced joblessness increases in developed and developing economies alike.
- Societies evolve towards new ways of living and working, in which individuals and communities are the key actors of change.
  - In the absence of secure full-time employment, individuals must put together a portfolio of work – part-time jobs, shared work with colleagues, trading skills and services.

# The Five Scenarios

- **Creative societies**
- This portfolio lifestyle is made possible by three important factors:
  - Technology, which allows people to work anywhere at any time
  - The adoption of guaranteed minimum incomes in most developed countries, paid for by higher taxes on capital, rather than labor;
  - New social attitudes in which young people are not so interested in consumer culture, but contribute to what might be called “the experience economy.”
- Cities pursue a green agenda, retrofitting buildings and prioritizing water conservation. A robust urban food movement develops, involving urban community gardens.
- Public-private livelihood incubators flourish in most cities, *providing job counselling, the matching of skills and opportunities, start-up financing, and individually tailored aid packages for young and old.*

# Precarious Work

- One of the themes of the OECD report as well as other contributions to our thinking about work is the rise in precarious work.
- Guy Standing has written extensively about precarious work:
  - Precarious work does not offer an explicit or implicit long-term trajectory, often does not provide benefits or opportunities for skill development, and tends to be short-term in nature.

# Precarious work and Portfolio Careers

- A common refrain during this post Great Fiscal Crisis era is that counselors help clients develop portfolio careers, which end up looking a lot like precarious work.
  - The OECD report indicates that in the future, young people may not have the opportunity to pursue volitional careers.

# Enhancing Career and Life Design for the Second Machine Age

- Build on what is working....
  - Helping clients to develop 21<sup>st</sup> century academic and occupational skills
  - Helping clients to develop 21<sup>st</sup> century career and life design skills
  - But, how do we prepare people for the Second Machine Age?
  - We need to enhance clients' capacities to be 21<sup>st</sup> century advocates for themselves and their communities.

# Psychosocial Attributes of Adaptability

- I propose that we need to enhance the adaptability of our clients.
- Adaptability has a richly complex and relativistic meaning within our field....
  - Savickas and Super both wrote eloquently about it.
  - I propose an expanded view of adaptability...
- Three new initiatives are reviewed that connect adaptability to the goal of decent work for all:
  - An enriched view of agency
  - Critical consciousness
  - Social and systemic change—critical consciousness for our profession!

# Developing Agency

- **Agency** reflects the ability to define one's goals in an autonomous fashion and act on them.
- We already enhance agency via our work on improving self-efficacy, enhancing students' knowledge of themselves and the world around them.
- We can enhance agency via interventions that promote...
  - Optimism
  - Self-confidence
  - Autonomy
  - Relatedness
  - Support

# How Do We Foster Agency?

- Provide clients with resources to set goals.
- Teach clients the skills needed to achieve their goals.



- However, the situation is becoming more complex.
  - This linear stairway is increasingly less available.

# Looking toward Human Development Economics

- The Human Development movement
- Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum, among others, have advocated for human development as a means of lifting people out of poverty.
- They pair the human development approach with human rights, advocating that “Development and Freedom” are recursive.
- Key principles of this position:
  - Individuals need to have the resources to exercise their agency.
  - Political freedom is essential for people to create capabilities that will foster development and well-being

# Assumptions of Human Development Economics

- The human development approach (which is also known as the human development and capability approach) reflects both a political position as well as a theoretical statement.
- Martha Nussbaum has expanded on Sen's views by emphasizing the importance of capabilities, which are defined as the answer to the question: “What is each person able to do and to be?”
- In Nussbaum’s perspective, societies need to provide the conditions that foster the maximal development of individuals’ capabilities.

# Human Development and Career Development

- Sen argues that freedoms need to encompass the following domains:
  - Political freedoms
  - Economic facilities
  - Social opportunities
  - Transparency guarantee
  - Protective security
- Sen also proposes that governments need to provide leadership in creating the conditions for these freedoms.

# Human Development and Career Practice

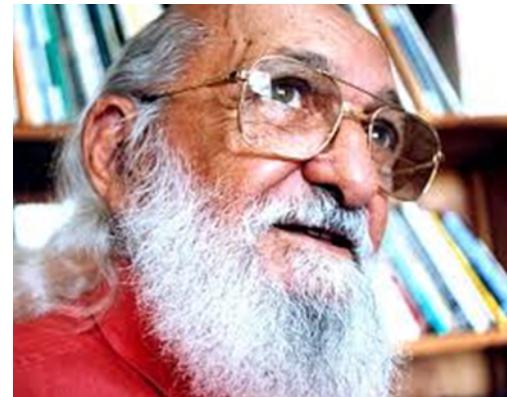
- Does it make sense to integrate human development economics and career development?
  - I argue yes—in fact, human development economics is increasingly using psychological constructs and perspectives.
  - Human development economics offers us a conceptual framework that resonates with many aspects of life and career design as well as the psychology of working perspective.

# Critical Consciousness

- Based on Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy and liberation psychology, critical consciousness development refers to helping members of marginalized groups critically analyze and act to change their social conditions.
- As Freire advocated for the peasants in Brazil, we need to help our clients “read the world”....
  - Reduces “blaming the victim”
  - Enhances agency and collective action

# Critical Consciousness

- Critical consciousness is characterized by an in-depth understanding of the world.
- In effect, critical consciousness helps people to engage in a critical analysis of their world and to take action to advocate for themselves and their community.



# Critical Consciousness

- Critical consciousness is comprised of...
  - *Critical reflection*-a critical analysis of social and structural contributions to societal inequities
  - *Political efficacy*--the perceived capacity to effect social and political change
  - *Critical action*--individual or collective action to change perceived inequalities.

# Critical Consciousness

- Why is critical consciousness (CC) important?
  - As we enter the Second Machine Age, work may become less stable and more oppressive.
  - People need to know that they can advocate for themselves and their communities.
  - We know from longitudinal research that critical consciousness makes a difference...
    - Greater levels of CC in adolescence have been associated with greater vocational expectations and attaining higher-paying and higher-status occupations in adulthood (while controlling for achievement) among marginalized youth followed from age 15 to 25.

# Critical Consciousness

- Fostering critical consciousness does involve engaging in more contextual discussions with clients.
- One needs to move into this work with delicacy and empathy.

# An Exemplar of Critical Consciousness

- College Bound—a multidisciplinary program at Boston College—reflects an example of infusing critical consciousness education.
- We have high school students coming to campus 1-2 Saturdays per month where we provide them with a coherent out-of-school program that blends:
  - STEM Education (relevant to their lives)
  - Career and College planning
  - Social justice education—fostering critical consciousness

# College-Bound

- Focus on Urban Ecology, Robotics, and Urban Agriculture
  - Interdisciplinary
  - Technology-enhanced
- Career development and exploration
- We engage students in solving environmental/urban planning problems in their own communities
- We provide a focus on critical consciousness throughout the program.
- This program also connects to the theme of a sustainable economy.
  - We are educating students on the interface of environmental justice and social justice.

# Systemic Interventions

- A theme running through this presentation is that we are at the crossroads as a profession.
- We are faced with a working world that is changing so fast and so dramatically.
- Our old approaches and tools as individual practitioners and as a professional society may no longer be viable.

# Systemic Interventions

- We are witnessing a revolution in working.
- We have an obligation to report what we are seeing and to advocate for just and fair policies with respect to work and to all of the antecedents of fair and dignified work.

# Systemic Interventions

- We need to engage in individual and collective advocacy to enhance opportunities for people.
- We are a unique group of professionals—
  - In a sense, we really “get” the importance of work in people’s lives.
  - We have a responsibility to give voice to what we hear in our offices and to the research that we are conducting.

# Systemic Interventions

- What can we do?
  - We need to have some difficult conversations about how we should engage in the public discourse about work, poverty, inequality, and technology.
  - We may not all agree about the strategies to enhancing opportunity, but we probably concur with the following assumptions:

# Tenets for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Career Development

- Access to dignified and meaningful work is essential for the mental health of individuals and for the well-being of our communities.
- People want to work—they want to create, contribute, and collaborate!
- We, as a community, have a responsibility to our fellow citizens to provide opportunities for working.

# Tenets for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Career Development

- We can identify the antecedents of adaptive transitions into the world of work from research:
  - Good schools
  - Safe communities
  - Affordable housing
  - Access to good health care
  - A functioning and fair economy!

# Implications for Public Policy

- As citizens of our communities and nations, we need to use our knowledge, both intellectual and emotional, to advocate for full employment.
- We need to advocate for the implementation of the UN's Sustainable Development goals and the UN Human Rights charter here in the US and around the world....
- *Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment. (UN Declaration of Human Rights, Article 23)*

# My Recommendations

- We can choose our usual approach and continue to do great work for our clients and students
- Or, we can enhance this work by engaging in the broad debates about work, technology, social justice, unemployment and underemployment, education and training, and the future of work.

# My Recommendations

- What can we do?
  - A pragmatic social justice....
    - Correspond with your local and national representatives.
    - Write op-ed pieces
    - Conduct research that matters
    - We need to make a case for full employment and for a reduction in inequality.

# My Recommendations

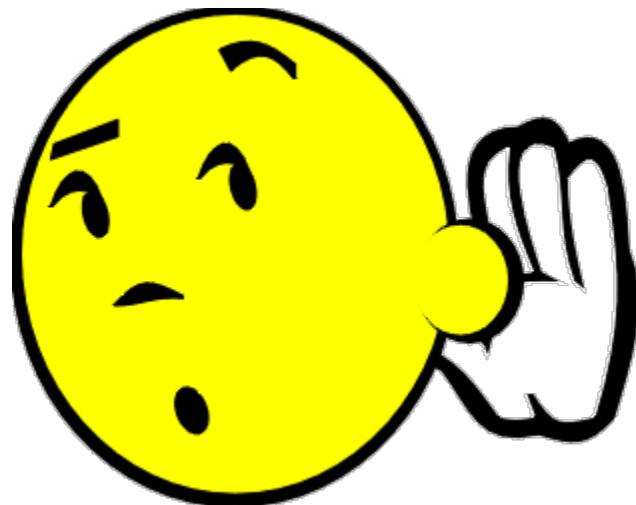
- Exploring the world of dreams and disappointments:
  - In my view, we need to dig deep into the passion that drew us into this field to invigorate our agenda for the coming years.
  - We are indeed witnessing many events that seem to be out of our control.
  - However, if we choose to advocate for dignified work for all and if we document our arguments with research and with human stories, people will listen.

# Stop, Look, and Listen

- We need to hold up a cautionary sign, asking people to pay attention to the impact of the Second Machine Age, unemployment, underemployment, and diminishing work opportunities.
- We need to help our communities look at the consequences of lack of work...We cannot let the unemployed and the underemployed become voiceless:
  - We can help them to articulate their voices by empowering them and collaborating with them.

# Listen

- We need to listen to our own hearts about these changes.
- And, we need to convey these heartfelt stories to our political leaders and community leaders.



# Next Steps

1. In my view, the changes taking place are exacting a huge toll on our society.
2. We can no longer afford to continue with practice as usual. The stakes are too high.
3. I feel that we cannot turn back at this point—we must move forward with a transformative agenda that places the importance of work in people's lives as a priority for a decent and dignified life.
4. Thank you very much!!!

# Questions and Comments

- For further information and input:
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