



LESSON 4

Help Wanted

LESSON DESCRIPTION

This lesson focuses on labor as an important human resource and points out that members of the labor force often migrate. Students are encouraged to examine the reasons that people seek employment outside of their own communities and even in other countries. They are also asked to consider the reasons employers may look for workers from other places. This lesson should be taught in conjunction with Lesson Three, in this unit, which examines the importance of immigration throughout Indiana's history.

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this lesson students will be able to:

1. Describe the role of labor as a necessary factor of production;
2. Identify reasons why employers sometimes look outside their community for workers;
3. Identify reasons why migrant workers, especially those from Mexico, seek employment in Indiana.

KEY IDEAS

Please refer to Lesson Three of this unit for Key Ideas.

TIME REQUIRED

One class period.

MATERIALS

- **Handout 1: Help Wanted**
- **Handout 2: Picking up a Paycheck**
- Chapter or section in any economics or business textbook that addresses the factors of production, specifically those relating to human capital.
- **Handout 3: Did You Know? Card: Interview with a High-Tech Worker**

PROCEDURES

1. Give each student a copy of **Handout 1: Help Wanted**.
2. Allow students approximately 20 minutes to complete the worksheet.
3. Have students share their answers and discuss their reasons for applying or not applying for this job.
4. Discuss whether students would be more or less willing to apply if a job at similar pay were offered to them in Canada or Mexico. Class discussion may include many factors, such as cost of living, overall living conditions, and language barriers.
5. Explain to students that many people from the United States live and work in other countries. They might work for a few months or a few years and then return home. Often they are able to obtain jobs overseas because of their special skills; for example, many people have jobs teaching English in Japan and Eastern Europe. What are some reasons that people have for wanting to live and work in another country?
6. Give each student a copy of **Handout 2: Picking Up a Paycheck**.
7. Conduct a class discussion on students' reasons for accepting a job out of the country compared to Andres Nava's.
8. Ask students to consider how Andres Nava's situation compares with that of people who have come to Indiana from other countries in the past.

CLOSURE

It is important for students to understand why employers hire migrant workers. It is often not for the reasons students may think. With Indiana's current low unemployment rate, employers often simply cannot find enough workers to fill their needs. It is a matter of availability of labor, rather than cost.

ASSESSMENT

Use students' responses to **Handout 1: Help Wanted** to determine their understanding of the concepts covered in this lesson.

EXTENSIONS/CONNECTIONS

1. Research recent newspaper articles regarding immigration to Indiana. Identify the countries where immigrants to Indiana originate.
2. Use newspaper want ads to determine what type of jobs are being advertised locally. What types of skills and training are required for these jobs? How well do they pay? Based on advertised hourly wages, have students calculate what a worker's take-home pay would be after taxes. Are all job opportunities advertised in want ads? What other types of jobs might be available?

3. Interview a local employer regarding the type of education, skills, and work habits he or she wants in an employee.
4. Interview a person who employs workers from other countries. What are the reasons that they hire workers from outside the country?

RESOURCES

- For more information on Hispanic immigration to Indiana, go to the website of the Julian Samora Research Institute, <http://www.jsri.mus.edu> The site offers numerous free publications such as "Latinos in Indiana: In the Throes of Growth," by Roberto Aponte, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis.

HANDOUT 1

HELP WANTED

You are a 25-year-old unemployed male, married with one child. Your company, the area's largest, closed recently, and you were left without a job. You are one of 500 employees now out of work. You see the following ad in the paper:

HELP WANTED: Workers wanted. Housing and transportation to and from work provided. Fifty hours per week, 6-8 months a year, \$25.00 an hour.

The pay is much more than you were earning. You are ready to apply immediately when you read further to discover that the job is in Saudi Arabia. You do not speak the language of that country, nor do you know anyone who lives there. The culture is very different from your own. You may not be able to bring your family. Before you decide to apply, do the following:

- Make a list of questions you would like to ask your prospective employer about the job. Be sure to ask about method of payment and benefits, such as health insurance, disability, sick leave, and pensions.
- Make a list of reasons to apply for this job and a list of reasons not to apply.
- Determine why you think any foreign employer would be willing to pay so much more than most workers could earn in their own country. How does the offered salary (\$25.00 per hour) compare to typical Saudi Arabian salaries?

HANDOUT 2

PICKING UP A PAYCHECK

Each year, approximately 10,000 migrant workers spend part of the year working in Indiana. Almost all are hired to do manual labor, often on farms and in orchards.

Andres Nava is 36 years old. He is typical of many men, who come from Mexico to Indiana each year seeking employment. This spring, Andres is working as part of the "pruning crew" at Engelbrecht Orchard in Newburgh. He has worked for the Engelbrecht family before and will probably return when it is time to pick and pack the apples. In the meantime, he may work in Florida, Mississippi, or California "Wherever there is work," he says. Sometime during the year, Andres will return to his wife and seven children in the small town of Acambara, Mexico. Andres' wife does not work outside the home, and he says, "There is no work for me in Mexico. Even if there was, I would make only a small amount compared to what I make here." Andres likes working at the orchard, even though it is hard physical labor. His employer says he is a good worker. He works six or seven days a week depending on the amount of work. He earns \$6.00 an hour and is provided with furnished housing and transportation to and from work. In Mexico, he says he would be lucky to make even \$1.00 an hour. Andres sends money home to his wife and hopes that his wages may someday help pay for the education of his children. He only attended elementary school and hopes that a better education will allow his children to make a decent living in Mexico. When asked if he likes his work, Andres responds, "Yes. I like the work," but then he smiles, holds up his hands with the fingers spread wide and says, "And I LOVE the money!"

While \$6.00 per hour seems like a lot to Andres, the Engelbrecht family has a hard time finding local people who will do this type of work for this wage. Many Indiana businesses hire agricultural workers from other countries through contractors, who handle transportation and visas. The Immigration and Naturalization Service requires employers to verify that workers are legally eligible to work in the United States.

HANDOUT 3

DID YOU KNOW? CARD

DID YOU KNOW?

Interview with a High-Tech Worker

Many people who come from other countries to work in Indiana do so because they have specialized or highly technical skills that are needed in our economy. Americo Cunha is originally from Portugal but works for Dow AgroSciences in Indianapolis. For the last three years he has been the Logistics Manager, responsible for the transportation and storage of all of his company's products in North America. Before that he was the Materials Manager for Latin America.

Americo's native language is Portuguese but he is also fluent in English and Spanish. His educational background in engineering is very important in his work. The job also requires knowledge of transportation, warehousing and handling of hazardous materials, and cost accounting. Other important job requirements are computer literacy, the ability to communicate well, and good inter-personal skills. It is also necessary to respond quickly to customer requests.

Americo and his family were living in Brazil when he was offered the job in Indiana. He made the move because of the career opportunities involved and because Indiana provided increased security and well being for his family. For Americo, it is important that his wife and children can be with him. He wants his kids to have the opportunity to live in another country, learn other languages, and become familiar with other traditions and habits. "The greatest benefit of working in international settings is learning about the diversity of cultures and beliefs," Americo says. "The experience provides you with new perspectives that you can apply in a number of situations. The greatest burden is being away from relatives and friends."

Americo has the following advice for any young person considering international work: "If you have an opportunity to live outside your country, do not hesitate. Go! It will enlarge your vision and maybe you will learn another language. It will also help you learn to value the things you always took for granted. You will see these things with a new perspective. Get involved with the local people. Be open minded and accept other ways of thinking and doing things. Have fun!"