



Changes in the Workplace and Careers

Shaping the Future
April 2006

Professor Sue Richardson

Does the labour market support careers?

“Career” meaning progress over time to higher skilled/paid work

- Labour markets are very diverse, in the countries represented
- In Australia, 27% of workers (16% of men) work part-time
- In OECD, 15% and 7%
- In US, 23% of private sector have no paid annual leave

The big labour market changes

- Shifts in structure of economy
 - Farming, manufacture, service
 - Service is high end and low end--disappearing middle
- Women in and men out of paid work
 - Last 25 years, Australia's participation rate
 - Rose from 44% to 57% for women
 - Fell from 78% to 72% for men
 - Much higher for more educated
- Labour market moving against less educated

A variety of career paths

- Prime aged men's withdrawal from the labour force
- Tradesmen start to leave trades jobs soon after qualifying
- More people beginning post-secondary education after their 20s
- Older women staying in workforce, but little upward mobility
- Male service and professional workers mostly move up

Who gets skill upgrades?

Firms provide a lot of skill development

- Formally
- Informally on the job
- Especially the public sector

To:

- The more educated
- Those expected to have long tenure
- Men

Note that workforce becoming more female and contingent (casual, contract, labour hire, self-employed sub-contractors)

When employers do not train

- One in 10 full-time Australian workers are now also studying
- Vocational education widely used by marginal groups--men not employed FT, sole mothers, women returning
- Depends crucially on whether full-employment