How to Lose Your Job to a Robot

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A recently posted video entitled *Are Droids Taking Our Jobs?* [1]explores the job market and how the recession is affecting workers, as well as robot welfare. As our society progresses, robotics and algorithms are becoming more advanced at an exponential rate. This has been apparent for quite some time. So, are droids really taking our jobs?

In a word, yes. Though, this brings about a much more political issue – job creation. As stated in the video, profits are up, but the job market is not. Both sides of our political system have been preaching about off-shoring jobs. Who is being honest and accurate? I leave to you for debate. The question to ask is: What jobs are we sending overseas? I agree that it is important to have jobs for all, but the wages are lower for two reasons:

1. Corporations are tightening their belts, even with recovering profits.
2. Factory floor jobs are no longer money-making positions, like they used to be.

I come from a blue-collar family. My dad worked at the GM plant in Janesville, WI that closed in 2009. He retired before the fiascos of 2008. The difference is from then to now is how today's businesses utilize the workforce. When my dad started working at GM in the 70s, loyalty was a prized attribute of employees, and it was rewarded by an ever-increasing hourly pay rate. Now, employers want more for less, and if you can't (or won't) do it, they'll likely find somebody else. To break it down as basically as possible, we value quantity over quality, whereas in the past it was the opposite.

This is exactly why robots are taking over our jobs, except the robots are producing some pretty high-quality product, and in some cases, superior to what humans are capable of producing. Their sophistication has developed to a point that breathing

assembly line workers are fading out or their jobs are being shipped overseas.

Enter the politics. The jobs that we currently need to have filled require a nation of intellectuals and learned individuals. Unfortunately, like any quality product, our workforce needs to catch up with demand.

Unfortunately, I'm drawing a blank on who said it, but somebody once said that a successful society is full of artists, designers, and poets, because that society has moved beyond remedial and tiresome tasks – essentially, the things robots can do. To me, this means there should be an immense push for education in our country, not just a job. The 'you're lucky to have a job' mentality is a damning one that will eventually drive our nation into the ground. Some people are indeed 'lucky' to just have a job, but when smart, creative, and intuitive people are stuck on a factory floor (even in a managerial position) we will see an end to any quality.

Maybe it is good that robots are taking our jobs. In the Tim Burton movie, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, Charlie's father loses his job of screwing on the tops of toothpaste tubes to a machine. When the movie reaches its happy ending, his new position entails repairing the very machine that took his job. The moral of the story is that we will always be better than the machines we create (unless, of course, we reach judgment day), but since there are enough smart people in the world creating these machines, we need to stay ahead of the curve. It's not impossible, just sometimes hard. The days of putting a blue peg in a blue hole on the assembly line are over, as one day, writing editorials for design engineers might be as well, so we must all continue to progress, innovate and think.

What's your take? Please feel free to comment below or email chris.fox@advantagemedia.com *[2].*

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