

History of Work

Let's boil the 3000 year history of work down to three minutes. First, there were 1. _____ and 2. _____. Everyone contributed and their 3. _____ was basically to survive. Eventually, people began to tame plants and animals, allowing for larger and larger settlements. This opened up new kinds of work. And if you were lucky, leisure. In these agricultural civilizations, powerful ruling classes emerged for the first time in some cultures, hard work was seen as undignified. So it was 4. _____ to slaves, servants and serfs, even though hard work made those rich 5. _____ possible. In other places, hard work was seen as a virtue, one that signified a person's contribution to society, promoted group harmony or pleased the gods. For some, working hard became synonymous with doing good and repenting for one since. Where land was 6. _____, families could establish their own farms, working the land to create a sense of community. All family members pitched in, depended on each other, and their work was never done. In many parts of the world, agricultural 7. _____ enabled surplus crops to feed more and more artisans living in cities and towns. And so came the craft state of work like 8. _____, all very skilled and specialized. Then industrial and 9. _____ revolutions changed everything and brought with them mass production, new kinds of factories demanded new kinds of workers, all eager to earn a living however they could in a rapidly changing world.

Some workers banded together and took historic stands for humane work conditions and demanded all kinds of fundamental rights, including the 40 hour workweek, the development of computers, the World Wide Web and widespread education ushered us into the knowledge based economy. While new opportunities are available for some, globalization and other forces are leaving other workers behind feeling like they can't get ahead no matter how hard they try. As fewer people and fewer hours are needed to do the work of yesterday, people are 10. _____ again. So here we are, is this the end of work's evolution? I know how you live and work will invent the future. You will work in order to eat. You'll eat by outsourcing food production to other workers. You'll tap into a deep human drive to work on something and to make a genuine difference. Doing it, you'll rely on your 11. _____ and connections to help you out, and you'll help others to. Maybe you'll specialize in something no one has thought of before using technology no one's seen before. Maybe you'll make your voice heard among those who find themselves excluded from today's economy. So keep on working, creating and inventing the future of work.