

Audience: Employers, Labor Leaders, and Community Stakeholders

General Questions

1. Did the film challenge any of your ideas about people who live in poverty, who accept welfare or other types of government assistance, or about people who work with or for you?
2. According to Jean, *"If you say you need help, people in social services tend to think, 'Well, if you would get up off your lazy butt, you wouldn't have to worry about getting help from the government.'"* She went on to say: *"I'm not lazy. I work every day of my life."* Do you agree with Jean that social service professionals need to change their attitudes toward their clients and potential clients? What can be done to improve services to people in need?
3. Barbara says, *"In order to be self-sufficient, I have to get the Bachelor's Degree."* Mary comments, *"There used to be a time that you could get by on just labor, but it's not that kind of world anymore. That doesn't pay the bills."* What are your views on both of these statements? How does education affect employment in your community? How does it affect the ability of families to become self-sufficient?
4. Jean said, *"I've worked hard my whole life and I'm still stuck. Things have changed somewhere along the line and I feel cheated out of the American dream. I just don't get ahead. There is no American dream anymore."* Jerry also talked about the American dream. *"My dreams will come true if I work hard enough for them. But it's just some people's dreams get torn down."* What would you say to Jean or Jerry who are clearly working hard, but are far from achieving their dreams? In your view, what should they do differently? Or, what should the community (employers, labor leaders, and community stakeholders) do differently to enable low-wage workers to get ahead?
5. Summarize the key employment and family support issues presented in each person's story – Jean, Jerry, Mary, and Barbara. What commonalities do you see? What changes in employment, social welfare, or health care/insurance practices and/or policies could make a difference in their lives and the lives of others in similar situations?