

GRAB



**The Secretary's
21st Century Workforce Initiative**

The mission of the 21st Century Workforce Initiative is to ensure that all American workers have as fulfilling and financially rewarding a career as they aspire to have and to make sure that no worker gets left behind in the limitless potential of the dynamic, global economy of this new millennium.

- Office of the 21st Century Workforce
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New offices at Department of Labor

The U.S. Department of Labor has two new offices to help workers, employers, and career counselors: the Office of the 21st Century Workforce and the Office of Disability Employment Policy.

The Office of the 21st Century Workforce will study skills gaps in the economy, ways to help workers get the training they need, and the effect of the changing workplace on workers. Learn more about the Office—including details about the summit it hosted in June—and the information available there, such as a list of career resources, by calling 1 (877) 872-5627 or visiting online at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/21cw>.

The Office of Disability Employment Policy offers several programs related to workers who are disabled.

- ◆ One program matches employers with agencies that serve disabled jobseekers. Contact the Employment Assistance Referral Network by calling tollfree 1 (866) EARN NOW (327-6669) or visiting <http://www.earnworks.com>.
- ◆ Another program the Office oversees is the Job Accommodation Network information hotline, which provides callers with information about special equipment, job modifications, and more. For additional information, call 1 (800) 526-7234 or visit <http://www.jan.wvu.edu>.
- ◆ The Office also publishes factsheets about jobseeking and hiring strategies, legal issues, and career counseling resources. Factsheets are available from its homepage at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/odep> or by calling (202) 376-6200.



U.S. DOL **ODEP** Office of Disability Employment Policy

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Career education for special populations

The U.S. Department of Education is offering two new research digests for vocational teachers who work with special populations.

The first, "Welfare to Work: Considerations for Adult and Vocational Educational Programs," summarizes current welfare policy and its effect on career education. It also offers guidelines for developing a successful program. Based on recent studies, the suggestions include tailoring training to the local labor market, combining basic education with job search skills, and preparing students for further education.

The second digest, "Preparing Limited English Proficient Persons for the Workplace," describes various teaching approaches, addresses cultural considerations, and shows how recent workforce training laws affect workers with limited English skills. Also available is a related digest, "ESL Instruction and Adults with Learning Disabilities." All digests include a list of references.

For a copy of these or any other U.S. Department of Education digests, call 1 (800) 443-ERIC (3742) or visit http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests.

Suggestions welcome

Do you have an item for the Grab Bag? Send it to Olivia Crosby, PSB 2135, 2 Massachusetts Ave. NE., Washington, DC 20212. Fax: (202) 691-5745. E-mail: ooqinfo@bls.gov.

BAG

E-commerce: How will it affect employment?

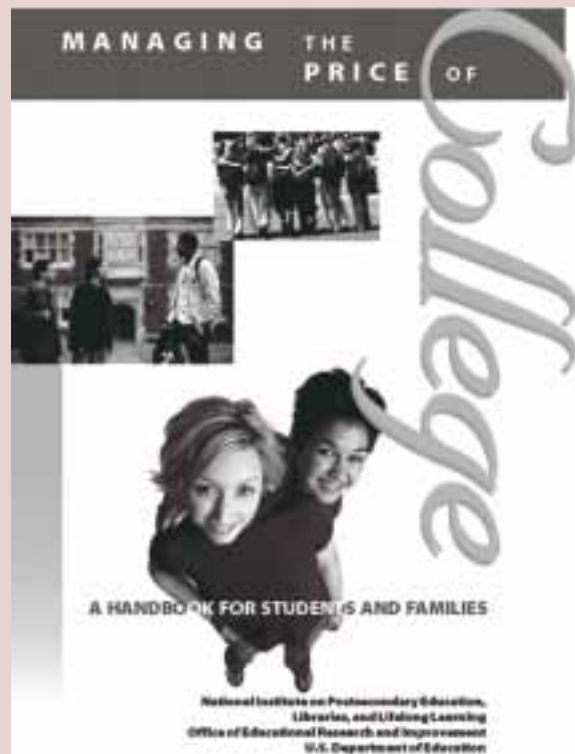
It's no secret that e-business is big business. What's less clear is how it will affect job opportunities. An article by Daniel Hecker in a recent issue of the *Monthly Labor Review* tries to answer that question.

Not surprisingly, jobs in computer occupations are expected to increase with e-business, according to the article. But content-related occupations, such as artist, designer, and writer, also are slated to share in the boon. And customer service workers will experience job growth, as more people contact them with e-shopping questions. This increase in employment might be dampened, however, by new systems that give customers computer-generated responses.

E-business will curtail growth in some occupations. Jobs in many clerical occupations will be automated. And fewer salesworkers, purchasing agents, and wholesale and retail buyers will be needed as people find product information and buy and sell online.

Employment effects will vary by industry, too. Jobs in the communications and powerline industries will grow to meet the demand for Internet infrastructure. Management consulting services will expand as companies struggle to cope with changing business conditions. And more people will be needed to work in public warehouses that store products sold over the Internet. But other industries, including insurance carriers, printing companies, and securities and commodity brokers, will need fewer workers as a result of e-business.

To learn more, read "Employment impact of electronic business" in the May 2001 issue of the *Monthly Labor Review*. The issue is available for \$13 by calling (202) 512-1800 or writing Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. Or download the article from the BLS website by visiting <http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/mlrhome.htm>.



Paying for college: Just the facts

The price of higher education is going up, but so is the level of financial aid, according to the U.S. Department of Education. A new resource from the Department helps families assess how much college might cost and how much aid they might be able to expect. Its message: many people in every income bracket receive financial assistance.

"Managing the Price of College: A Handbook for Students and Families" describes factors affecting the cost of a bachelor's or associate degree and lists average tuition and expenses at various types of institutions. It also discusses ways families meet those costs. Tables show students' chances of receiving aid, the average amount of aid, and the likely aid type.

The handbook defines different kinds of financial aid, including grants, merit scholarships, work-study programs, loans, and tax credits. And it offers suggestions on other ways to trim expenses, such as accelerated programs, school transfers, and prepayment programs. For students considering loans, tables list the average monthly payment required for various levels of debt.

To order a free copy of the "Managing the Price of College" handbook, call 1 (877) 4ED-PUBS (433-7827) or write Education Publications Center, PO Box 1398, Jessup, MD 20794-1398. You can also preview the handbook online at <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/collegecosts/cover.html>.