

ECON: Help Wanted

Using This Activity In Class

The objective of this activity is for students to demonstrate the effect of wages and perks on the job market. Job seekers will have the opportunity to pursue the employer they feel offers the best combination of wages and perks, where managers will be tasked with putting together attractive offers.

Part I: Prepare the Game

- Select how you will record results of each round (white board, paper, Google doc, etc.)
- Select 2 students to be managers and the rest will be job seekers
- Print and cut out two sets of [wages and perks cards](#), one for each manager
- Choose 2 areas on opposite sides of the room to represent the businesses, Next Gen Pizza North and Next Gen Pizza South
- Make sure there's a space for managers to place their wages and perks cards so job seekers can see them

Part II: Explain the Game

- Read the following scenario to the class:
 - *Next Gen Pizza has two locations, Next Gen Pizza North and Next Gen Pizza South. Their owner has tasked each location's manager with hiring multiple employees for the summer. To motivate the managers, the owner has offered a \$500 bonus to the manager who attracts the most job applicants.*
- Explain to students that they will be playing 4 rounds
- In each round, managers will be choosing wages and/or perks cards with the purpose of attracting job seekers
- Depending on the wages and perks selected, managers' bonuses might be affected
 - *Note: If wages/perks selected result in a negative manager bonus, the manager bonus is \$0*
- Job seekers will review the wages and/or perks being offered by the managers and choose which location they would like to apply to

Part III: Play the Game

Round 1: Wages Only

1. Managers select one wage card (this represents their job offer to job seekers)
 - a. Managers should not be able to see each other's wage cards
2. Once each manager has selected a wage card, job seekers can view each manager's offer and stand near the location at which they would like to apply
3. Record each wage that was offered and note which one received more applicants
4. Group discussion:

- a. Which location's manager had the most applicants?
- b. What was the winning manager's bonus? (\$500 +/- the amount on their wage card)
- c. Why did more job seekers choose to apply to this location?
 - Since in the first two rounds managers are only offering wages (no perks), this should simply be whoever offered more money

Round 2: Wages Only

1. Again, managers select one wage card
 - a. Managers should not see each other's wage cards
2. Once each manager has selected a wage card, job seekers can view each manager's offer and stand near the location at which they would like to apply
3. Record each wage that was offered and note which one received more applicants
4. Group discussion:
 - a. Which location's manager had the most applicants?
 - b. What was the winning manager's bonus? (\$500 +/- the amount on their wage card)
 - c. How did the wages offered change compared to round 1?

Round 3: Wages and One Perk

1. Managers can select one wage card AND select one perk card
 - a. Managers should not see each other's wage and perk cards
2. Once each manager has selected their wage and perk card, job seekers can view each manager's offer and stand near the location at which they would like to apply
3. Record each combination of wage and perks that was offered and note which one received more applicants
4. Group discussion:
 - a. Which location's manager had the most applicants?
 - b. What was the winning manager's bonus? (\$500 +/- the amount on their wage/perks cards)
 - c. How did wages compare to those offered in the first two rounds after the introduction of a perk?
 - d. Was one perk more attractive than the other? Why or why not?

Round 4: Wages and Three Perks

1. Managers can select one wage card AND they can add a combination of THREE perks
 - a. Managers should not see each other's wage and perk cards
2. Once each manager has selected their wage and perk cards, job seekers can view each manager's offer and stand near the location at which they would like to apply
3. Record each combination of wage and perks that was offered and note which one received more applicants
4. Group discussion:
 - a. Which location's manager had the most applicants?
 - b. What was the winning manager's bonus? (\$500 +/- the amount on their wage/perks cards)
 - c. How did wages change once three perks were added?
 - d. What perks seemed important/unimportant to job seekers?

Part IV: Reflection Questions

- How did the effect of wages and perks on manager bonuses affect manager decisions?

- Aside from money, what are some things that are important to you that would make you feel happy in a job?
- Would you rather have a higher wage or a lower wage with some combination of perks/benefits? Why?
- What do you think it means when it is a “job seeker’s market” vs. an “employer’s market”?
- What challenges do you think employers face when trying to remain competitive to job seekers?