

## Brother, can you spare a hundred?

*Technical progress is the real hope for the future of the country; political reform cannot do anything for us. The engineer is engaged in a war of human liberation; his technique is different. The political reformer fights against ambition and initiative; the engineer is fighting against slavery. It is better for all to live well with a few rich than for all to live in slavery on a lower level.* Glenn Frank 1887-1940

**920.683.9901**  
toll free  
888.426.8426  
fax  
920.332.0004

Leave it to your kids to get your gray matter churning. Last evening, my oldest daughter, Kate, was sharing some oxymorons she had written for a school assignment. They were very clever, and got me to thinking about the latest – the “jobless recovery”.

Let’s take a look at this. If this recovery is devoid of jobs being performed, how exactly is our economy recovering? Who’s doing the work? The fact is that jobs are still there, but are being performed by different workers (both people and machines). Remember hearing about all the jobs that are leaving the U.S. to go to the Far East? How about people being replaced by technological advances? Tasks migrate to the most efficient, least cost purveyor.

Not long ago a client was in my office lamenting the fact that manufacturing jobs were leaving our town and our nation, and that his children would never have the opportunity to work in manufacturing as he had. I shared with him the following. A century ago, according to The Department of Labor, 40% of the American work force labored on farms. Today we produce more food with 95% fewer workers.

Jobs have migrated to different countries and to technology because we have demanded it. I watched a recent news story as a woman was being interviewed about her lack of job prospects. She said, “What am I supposed to do, work at McDonald’s?” (it was good enough for Ray Kroc, the founder of the chain). The fact is that we Americans are unwilling to perform routine work for the same amount of money that those in other countries will accept, or for the price it can be performed by machine.

It is precisely this dissatisfaction with routine work that drives us forward. In looking for better, cheaper ways to accomplish a task, the spark of innovation is lit. There is a price, though, for moving forward. The price is that workers must be willing to adapt and move with the change. Those that can’t or won’t get left behind.

Like it or not, our economy is based on innovation. We all demand faster, cheaper, and easier to use products and services and want to work less delivering them to others. Sounds to me like a formula for success.

*Providing independent financial stewardship to individuals, their families and their enterprises.*