

To: Dr. B
From: Amy Toole
Subject: Article Trimming
Date: 19 June 2022

Article analysis

Overall, this article has many good qualities, but several rounds of editing were needed. The topic is nuanced and complex, so it is challenging to present all sides clearly in one article. The original version was unfocused and lacked balance, making it challenging for the reader to follow the author's line of thinking. I identified the main idea and then performed comprehensive edits to reorganize the information so that the information flowed from one idea to another. This was followed by a round of copy editing, where I adjusted spelling, word choice, and punctuation. The final version presents the struggles faced by service industry worker, contrasted with concerns about a labor shortage and the effect of unemployment benefits. The featured image is of a chef preparing to-go meals in a restaurant kitchen. It is unclear how long the chef has been working or how much they are earning, but they are masked and alone. This image represents the employee working in an understaffed kitchen, taking care to maintain health precautions and perform their job duties.

Technical quality of writing

The article does not follow the AP format of the inverted pyramid. The article is unfocused and does not have a clearly stated objective. It begins with a lengthy account of a single individual and then progresses through various arguments. These arguments are supported by credible sources, but they are disconnected from one another and delivered without much context. The author does not explicitly state how each piece of information relates to the discussion. One of the most important changes was to add a lead that effectively summarized the story. I created this lead by taking existing phrases from the article and supplementing with similar language.

Many of the sentences in the article were long and cumbersome. After assessing what information was pertinent to the main idea of the article, I went through sentence and broke them apart. In the revised version, most sentences contain only one idea. The few complex sentences have been edited for clarity and parallelism. I also used this round of editing to clean up any spelling or use errors. The name of the virus, for example, varied with each mention. I edited this reference to "COVID-19," in keeping with the official name of the virus. There were some opinion-laden words, mostly in direct quotes. Words such as "minefield," "exploitative," "desperation," and "disposable" paint a dreary picture of the service industry life. The edited version has fewer opinion-laden words in the main text, but they were not edited out of direct quotes.

Completeness

The article includes ample anecdotal support for the plight of the service worker. Examples come from multiple states, businesses, and positions. Each employee has a different view on the same issue. This variety helps the reader understand the level of complexity with working conditions in the service industry: the solution is not so simple as raising wages. Other arguments, however, are not delivered so clearly. The author either states or implies that:

- Unemployment benefits deter Americans from working

- There are more unemployed people than there are jobs
- Accommodation and service industries have seen rapid employment growth

These ideas are partially supported but the connection between each claim is not explicitly stated. In some cases, the reader must read between the lines to attempt to understand the point the author is trying to make. In general, however, the author effectively supports his claim with evidence by including links to other articles.

There were several paragraphs that contained good information, but it was not directly relevant to the main idea, so I edited these sections out. Once I clarified the main point, it became easier to spot the segments that did not fit. Mentions of the nine Republican-led states, the rate of food service deaths due to COVID-19, or statistics about labor growth, would be appropriate for other articles.

After making these edits, I believe that the reader will still have unanswered questions. The two most pressing questions are:

- Is there truly a labor shortage?
- What are employers doing to address these concerns?
- How exactly do unemployment benefits play into the labor shortage?

These questions would best be answered in subsequent articles.

[Sourcing and attribution](#)

The article included many relevant and appropriate sources. Employee interviews were the most prominent source, but the article also included mention and links to reputable sources such as Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell and the Economic Policy Institute. I removed a few sources simply to reduce the word count of the article. The sources were properly identified on their first use with name, position, and location (when relevant).

Article mark-up

The Guardian

'It's a minefield': US restaurant workers leave industry during COVID-19

Workers cite exploitative practices and lack of COVID-19 safety protections as some employers and officials claim unemployment benefits deter people from returning to work.

Michael Sainato

Friday, 14 May 2021

The restaurant industry is experiencing a labor shortage. The reasons for the labor shortage are complicated. Employees cite low wages, safety concerns, understaffing and harassment as reasons for leaving the job. Employers and officials, on the other hand, claim that unemployment benefits are deterring Americans from returning to work.

Jake Galardi Marko worked at Olive Garden in Nevada for two years before quitting due to customer abuse over COVID-19 safety protections. Marko noted that many restaurants are unprepared to take on new workers: they make empty promises of higher wages, mislead new hires about their position, or refuse to enforce COVID-19 safety protections. "It's a minefield of unsafe working environments and exploitative practices permeate the hiring and training processes," he said.

Allen Strickland, a team leader at an Arby's in Missouri, is underpaid and understaffed. Of the \$11.50 an hour wage, Strickland explains, "the pay is really not worth it, but I have to make it happen for my family and me."

Cris Cardona, a shift manager at a McDonald's in Florida, plans to strike to demand the company raise its minimum wage to \$15 an hour. Cardona makes just over \$11 an hour, which has prevented him from moving out of his parents' home, getting his own car, or attending college.

Some employers and Republican-elected officials believe that unemployment benefits are the driving factor for some industries experiencing issues with hiring new or replacement workers. These claims have been dismissed by Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell and secretary of the treasury Janet Yellen. Economists with the Economic Policy Institute warn against negative economic consequences of cutting pandemic unemployment insurance benefits.

Crystal Maher, a bartender at Parkside Projects in Texas, believes that blaming the shortage on unemployment benefits is an excuse to avoid improving work conditions. "The old restaurant mentality is gone and a lot of bosses don't get that yet... Until we see that stuff change, people are probably not going to come back to the industry in droves."

Commented [AT1]: Use consistent naming for COVID-19. Update throughout.

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Commented [AT2]: Summarized article topic so that the reader sees the main points at the beginning of the piece. Laid out the different viewpoints in succinct and separate sentences.

Commented [Editor3R2]: Good editorial decision here. I think Jake's story is relevant to the article, but it does not represent the overall focus of the article, and beginning with it steers away from the inverted pyramid structure that provides the who, what, when, where, why and overall point of the article up front, followed by details, examples, and quotes.

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Commented [AT4]: Reduced Marko's section to one paragraph. Removed mention of his new job, focusing instead on the reason he left his former job and what he noticed during the job search process.

Deleted: has ...orked in the restaurant industry for the [3]

Deleted: abuse...ustomer abuse from customers...over [4]

Field Code Changed

Commented [AT5]: This list helps the reader understand [5]

Commented [AT6]: Kept this quote because it contains [6]

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Commented [AT7]: Moved paragraphs for Allen Strickland [8]

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Commented [AT9]: Changed location tagging for each [10]

Moved (insertion) [1]

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Commented [AT10]: Simplified this sentence to improve [13]

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Commented [AT11]: Parallelism

Commented [AT12]: Reorganized information from [15]

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Discontent among food service workers is widespread. According to a report published by One Fair Wage and the UC Berkeley Food Labor Research Center in May 2021, 53% of workers in the restaurant industry have considered leaving their job since the pandemic started. The primary reasons provided by workers include low wages, safety concerns, and harassment from customers.

“They call us essential, but the reality is they treat us like we’re disposable,” said Cardona. “They like to say that no one wants to work, that they’re having trouble finding workers and they blame this on unemployment benefits, but the problem is no one wants to work for a poverty wage, to risk their lives for \$7.25 an hour.”

Commented [AT14]: Added sentence to provide more context to the reader.

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Commented [AT15]: Kept the same ending quote from the original article. This is a strong sentiment that is shared across all featured employees. It drives home the argument that employees are making reasonable demands - a livable wage and satisfactory working conditions.

Moved up [4]: According to a **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.** published by One Fair Wage and the UC Berkeley Food Labor Research Center in May 2021, 53% of workers in the restaurant industry have considered leaving their job since the pandemic started, with low wages and tips, safety concerns, and harassment from customers as the primary reasons provided by workers.¶

Moved up [3]: Crystal Maher, a bartender at Parkside

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Moved up [2]: Cris Cardona, a shift manager at a

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The Guardian

'It's a minefield': US restaurant workers leave industry during COVID-19

Workers cite exploitative practices and lack of Covid safety protections as some employers and officials claim unemployment benefits deter people from returning to work.

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A chef follows strict health precautions while preparing to go meals | Barry Brecheisen

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This trimming assignment was an exercise in recognition and application of the journalistic format for a news article; cutting an article to fit length requirements; surveying the technical quality of the writing in general in terms of grammar, punctuation, etc.; analysis of sourcing and attribution; and a discussion of the completeness of the article overall in addition to following journalistic structural guidelines (inverted pyramid, etc.). Although some of these elements were attended to in your submission, some not developed sufficiently. See comments in the margins as well. Points: 55/60

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Page 3: [5] Commented [AT5] **Amy Toole** **6/19/22 8:28:00 PM**

This list helps the reader understand the ways that restaurants mistreat existing or potential employees. Reworded the sentence to add parallelism.

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Kept this quote because it contains language that is used in the heading.

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Page 3: [8] Commented [AT7] **Amy Toole** **6/19/22 8:31:00 PM**

Moved paragraphs for Allen Strickland and Cris Cardona up. The majority of the original content was employee stories, so it was important to maintain this balance. With this reorganization, the reader can see three back-to-back examples of employee exploitation before reading alternate explanations of the employee shortage. This arrangement increases the persuasiveness of the article by encouraging readers to form a negative opinion of restaurants early in the article.

Page 3: [9] Commented [Editor8R7] Editor **7/12/22 2:37:00 PM**

Hmmm... but is that the overall goal of the article and the news outlet? To help readers form a negative view of the restaurant industry? What about balance and bias is happening here?

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Changed location tagging for each employee so that their state, not city, is listed. By listing states, the reader has a clearer picture of how widespread the issue is - it affects workers across the nation.

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Simplified this sentence to improve readability.

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Reorganized information from the original article to form a more distinct picture of the different viewpoints. Reduced wording to fit the word count. The remaining information is the most pertinent and most credible.

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Page 3: [16] Commented [AT13] **Amy Toole** **6/19/22 8:38:00 PM**

Kept Maher's section toward the end of the article. She addresses officials who blame unemployment on the shortage, so her quote is an apt segue between the previous paragraph and the following paragraph, which addresses workers who want to leave their job.

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