MAKING DATA WORK

FOR LOW-INCOME, LOWER-SKILLED, UNEMPLOYED, AND UNDEREMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS

D4AD

WHAT WE KNOW

- The transformational promise of big data has yet to provide meaningful guidance for low-income, lower-skilled, unemployed, and underemployed individuals navigating education and career choices.

- Smartphone use by low-income adults is relatively high, and for some it is the primary or only means of accessing the internet. But there is still a segment of this population without access to such devices, and connectivity can be a particular challenge for those living in rural communities.

- How information is presented matters a great deal when trying to elicit behavioral changes. Humans generally respond better to more positive information — even when positive or negative messages are equivalent.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Utilize market research and continuous improvement processes to adjust and revise data and information tools.** Questions about technology ownership and use as well as geographically relevant contexts should be answered as a starting point for any new resource.

2. **Improve data and information on currently used resources.** Utilizing existing platforms or data sources can be more effective than developing new tools and websites, particularly if there are already information sources relied on by the population of interest.

3. **Pair information with assistance.** Assistance, whether from live humans or cleverly designed AI, can be crucial in converting the data provided through new tools into information that low-income, lower-skilled, unemployed, and underemployed individuals can use to improve their lives.

4. **Develop resources that work on multiple platforms.** The most effective tools will push information through web-based and application-based means. Efforts should identify the target population's access to technology and the internet prior to developing new resources.

5. **Consider intermediaries as a key target audience of new data and information.** Government agencies, community-based organizations, and others (including employers) can be key stakeholders and partners in enabling this population of interest to find good opportunities.