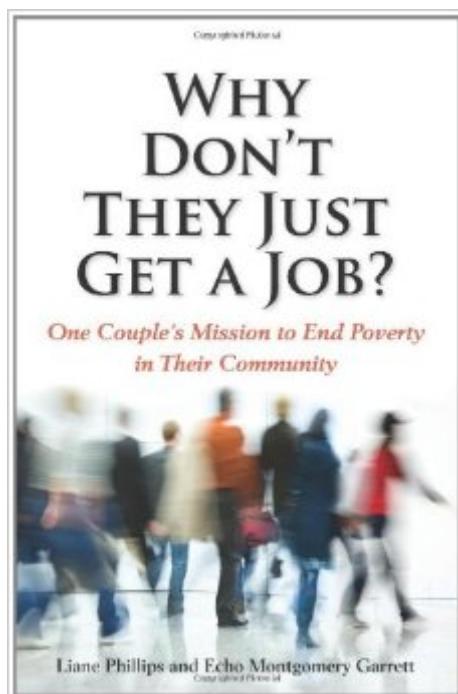


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# Why Don't They Just Get A Job? One Couple's Mission To End Poverty In Their Community



## **Synopsis**

Why Don't They Just Get a Job? describes the journey and the incredible results of Dave and Liane Phillips' efforts to help those in poverty find their way to self sufficiency. Under the premise that existing job-readiness programs only focus on job placement and not retention, Dave and Liane Phillips created a poverty to economic self-sufficiency program with an 80 percent one-year employment retention rate. In the past three years this organization, Cincinnati Works, has brought \$25 million in wages locally to over 1500 families. The not-for-profit offers a complete spectrum of free, lifetime employment services for the entry-level job-seeker to sustain and advance in today's work climate. The model is a winner of the 2009 Manhattan Institute Social Entrepreneur Award. Following its success, Dave Phillips is now volunteering as a consultant for similar programs in other cities.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Why Don't They Just Get a Job? One Couple's Mission to End Poverty in Their Community

Authors: Liane Phillips and Echo Montgomery Garrett

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No one sets out to live their life in poverty, on welfare or serially jobless. Even before the current economic crisis, there were too many Americans chronically unemployed or having no opportunity for job training. As a former Social Worker and longtime American taxpayer, I am able to see both sides of this issue. In our society, there are many people considered unemployable. There are a variety of reasons for this. Many just do not have the financial means to

continue education, and are left with no real marketable skills. Some people are truly driven into the welfare system because of circumstances beyond their control and lack the support; emotional, logistical, etc., to crawl back out. The "multiple generation" welfare share does come into play, also. It's probably the area most attacked by many as an abuse of the system. But if your mother never learned from her elders about motivation, ambition, personal skills, and the personal satisfaction they offer, she probably won't know how to teach them to you. It's a vicious circle, and a tough situation for those involved. We won't solve that issue overnight, but it can be addressed successfully. Thanks to a retired corporate couple, the people of Cincinnati now have a way out of the vicious circle that poverty often becomes. When Liane and Dave Phillips retired, they were at loose ends. With lots of energy and their shared corporate talents and experience, they started a revolutionary program. Their program is called Cincinnati Works.

I am a social worker who has spent many years working with people who experience poverty and homelessness, so the book entitled *Why Don't They Just Get A Job?* by Liane Phillips and Echo Montgomery Garrett is of particular interest to me. This book traces the development of Cincinnati Works, an agency whose central objectives are to help low income people become gainfully employed, maintain their jobs, and when possible, achieve advancement. The noble mission of Cincinnati Works and its founders is to end poverty in their community. This requires considerable skill development, a flexible support network, ample job opportunities, counseling and legal services, as well as dedicated and culturally sensitive staff that have faith in its central mission, among the many other things that the book reviews. Clearly, the couple who started Cincinnati Works brings a strong sense of Faith, which inspires them to lend a helping hand to others. While the religious aspects of this story are highly relevant, I thought it was a bit overdone during the early chapters of the book. That being said... this is an uplifting story and a highly instructive book. The authors share the nuts and bolts of running a self-sufficiency employment program from job readiness training to advancement counseling, as well as assistance with concrete needs such as securing an ID or information and legal counsel on how to expunge charges from a criminal record (40% of its clients had criminal records). Just as important, there is a culture at Cincinnati Works that promotes a sense of partnership and empowerment for its members and staff.

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