

TEN AMERICAN JOBS ON THEIR LAST LEGS: MODERN TECHNOLOGY AND CHANGING TRENDS SOUND DEATH KNELL FOR US OCCUPATIONS



In the decade between 2010 and 2020, analysts had predicted that the United States would add almost 20 million new jobs. Most of these jobs would be medical and personal care jobs, as the baby boomer population becomes older and their needs grew. Just as new jobs would be born, there would be other jobs that would decline or wither away altogether. 24/7 Wall Street, basing its analysis on Bureau of Labor Statistics information of thousands of jobs, has envisaged that there are at least 10 job categories that are shrinking very fast and could even become obsolete. They have identified ten jobs that could disappear forever from the American job scene. The worst hit is the postal department. No single occupation category is likely to lose more jobs. The increasing use of digital communication has driven the death nail on delivered mail's coffin. Postal employees have faced drastic cuts in their numbers. Their numbers are predicted to dwindle by more than half, by the end of this decade. It is quite possible that jobs like postal service mail sorters and processors will have been replaced by machines and they could soon find themselves on the extinct list. Of the 10 positions that are endangered, two of them belong to the print business that is losing ground to online media and three are in the textile repair or manufacturing industry that finds moving jobs overseas financially and economically more viable. Number ten on the list are the Petroleum pump systems operators who handle the machinery and systems used in the in the processing and refining of petroleum. As new extraction methods come into vogue, the number of operators is going to decline considerably. There could be only 38,000 operators by 2020. Desktop publishing is losing out because of the floundering print industry. It has stopped becoming a specialist's job and other workers can easily learn the ropes of this trade. Analysts say that only DTP workers with the added skills in HTML will survive. Printing processes increasing reliance on computer software has rendered outmoded the system of preparing printings by taking texts and images and using them to create printing plates, which are then used by printing presses. These jobs are also slowly doing the disappearing act. Coil winders, tapers and finishers belonging to the assemblers and fabricators category are losing jobs as a result of US companies outsourcing foreign labor. Despite a mounting demand for semiconductors, the job outlook for semiconductor processors is bleak. Considering that semiconductors need hygienic surroundings and precision working, employers find that robots do a far better job than humans. Competition from digital cameras and camera phones has seen the revenues of the photofinishing industry decline alarmingly. Consumers using film and printing photos have been virtually annihilated by the digital invasion. It is predicted that the textile industry will lose more than 100,000 jobs between 2008 and 2018, for two reasons, Manufacturers continue to move jobs to cheaper labor overseas and jobs are being replaced at home. Labor department predicts that the worst hit jobs will be those of tending and operating machines that bleach and dye fabrics. The textile industry is predicted to lose almost 45 percent of its workforce. Technological advancement is the major reason for reductions in the workforce. More often than not machine and software render human physical labor obsolete. Changing trends are also contributing to the decline, fewer people use film-loaded cameras and fewer people post mail – lack of demand will kill the occupations they fuelled.