

IPW LECTURES

Information, Reflection, and Successful Job Search: A Nudging Experiment.

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Abstract:

When searching for a job, unemployed young people face several challenges. They need to know which jobs are suited for them, where to find them and how to apply. Furthermore, especially in times of tight labour markets, they need resilience against repeated rejections. Previous research has shown that receiving information and self-reflection on how to search for a job enhance self-efficacy and search motivation, thereby reducing the duration of unemployment spells. Following up on these results, we conducted a nudging experiment in cooperation with the Austrian Ministry for Social Affairs. Our target group comprised of about 37,000 young adults who had recently become unemployed. We designed different treatments containing an info-clip and/or a short online questionnaire. Links to the treatments were sent out by email. At the end of a six-month observation period, we used register data to compare unemployment duration within the treatment groups and the control group. For young unemployed with a low level of formal education, we find significant treatment effects. While effect sizes are small, considering the low costs of the intervention, efficiency is very high.