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PROGRAMME: "NICE WORK"

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Hello: Over the past six years Nice Work has looked into pretty well every corner of the workplace investigating issues from discrimination to disability, productivity to pensions, glass ceilings to graduate jobs. This is our final programme and we're going to spend it discussing the big question on the work front. What will people do for a living in the future? Imagine a world where we all shop on-line buying everything from groceries and clothes to cars and even houses from our home PCs. Thousands of brand new jobs are created by technical advances while time-poor workers rely on an army of support staff to care for their elderly relatives, maintain their homes and provide them with an array of personal services from life coaching to holiday planning. Factories have all but disappeared from Britain but companies employ thousands of new managers here in the UK to oversee work done in other countries. Well that's how some experts think British working life will look within just 20 years. Others have different ideas. But what they are all agreed on is that we are going to see some big changes on the jobs front. Michael Moynagh spends much of his time thinking about what those changes might be. He's co-director of the Tomorrow Project which researches and consults about the shape of the life to come in Britain. He's also co-author of a recently published book called, "Working in the 21st Century". Also with me is Doug McWilliams who's chief executive of the consultancy called the Centre for Economics and Business Research, and on the line from Ireland is Sir Gerry Robinson, one of our best known company chiefs, with spells at Compass, Granada and Allied Domecq. He became a household name presenting the BBC TV series, "I'll Show Them Who's Boss". Michael Moynagh, if I can start with you. I know you have a theory that the workforce will be shaped like an hour glass in the future. How exactly will that work?

MOYNAGH: It will work because we'll see more jobs being created in low-paid occupations, among cleaners, waiters, waitresses, that sort of thing. We'll also see more jobs being created in better-paid occupations, professional jobs, marketing jobs, IT specialists and so on. But we'll see in the middle, jobs being hollowed out, many of the middling jobs, back-office jobs and financial-research jobs and so on. Many of these will be automated or they'll be exported abroad as they're outsourced to India and China and so on. And so increasingly, we're seeing it already, but increasingly the workforce will look like the shape of an hour glass.

LAMB: So in loose terms, good jobs are the top of the hour glass and poor jobs in the bottom?

MOYNAGH: Well good in terms of pay, poor in terms of pay, yes.

LAMB: But are poorly paid jobs necessarily bad jobs?

MOYNAGH: Well not necessarily, some are fantastically good jobs. I mean the caring jobs, those sorts of jobs, are extraordinarily worthwhile, really important for us as a society. It happens to be, for very good reasons, which Doug can explain, that we pay them low wages which does affect the quality of the work that they do.

LAMB: And of course the trick with a poor job is it's not necessarily a poor job if you can see progression, isn't it? Will people be able to move from the bottom of your hour glass to the top?

MOYNAGH: Well that's right. I mean if you can climb the ladder, a poor job can lead to a better paid job. But when you're getting more and more jobs in the middle being hollowed out, some people think that those ladders will be harder to climb, the rungs will get longer and longer. It will be difficult to move up the ladder.

LAMB: So the workforce will polarise?

MOYNAGH: It could do yes.

LAMB: Doug McWilliams, you don't see an hour glass, do you, you see a diamond shape workforce with a lot more managers in the middle?

MCWILLIAMS: I wouldn't call them managers, but I think they're going to be professional people. I think quite a lot of the jobs that will disappear will be jobs in areas like manufacturing. There are three million people in manufacturing at the moment. I guess in 20 years time it will be more like one million. So some of the manual jobs will continue to disappear just as they have done. They will be offset by some other manual jobs. But I think in the middle there's going to be a huge mass of essentially technical jobs to do with IT of various kinds and they'll make up perhaps the bulk of the jobs that we'll see in the future.

LAMB: What about this proliferation of managers. We're seeing it at the moment. Do you think it will continue into the future? I've seen amazing statistics suggesting that almost one in seven workers is now a senior manager or a senior official. They outnumber skilled trades people already. Is that going to continue?

MCWILLIAMS: Well the word manager can hide a multitude of sins. It can mean very different things. Quite often they're fancy titles given to keep people happy rather than jobs that actually require managerial responsibility. But management is a complicated thing to do and with more technology and a more complex life, I think we probably will find that more people will be managers.

LAMB: Gerry Robinson, apparently Indian restaurants now employ more staff in the UK than ship building, coal mines and steel works put together. Do you see any future for manufacturing jobs here?

ROBINSON: I don't think there's any doubt that it's going to be a one way street and I think the numbers that Doug threw up are probably about right. You see a reduction over 20 years from about three million employed to one million employed. I think that's inevitable and we're not the only economy, in a sense, that's facing that as a reality, that the third world is taking up those kind of opportunities. I see that continuing.

LAMB: What do you make of this hour-glass versus diamond-shaped workforce theory, which do you see emerging?

ROBINSON: I'm inclined towards Doug's diamond shape because I do believe that whatever else changes, that there is always a need for management at every level and that the relationship between those who actually do whatever needs to be done at the sharp end and the next level up is always going to ensure that there are quite a large number of people in there doing the motivating, doing the looking after, doing the caring and ensuring that people are doing what's sought from them and looking after them in that way. I would tend towards that, although I do hear the argument about a certain polarisation and there is something in it.

LAMB: Okay, well that's what the workforce might look like in 20 years time. There's obviously a bit of a discussion to be had about that. But let's get down to

brass tacks before we do that. What sort of jobs will exist then in 20 years time for all of us to do? Well Chris Humphries is director-general of City and Guilds, the UK's leading vocational awarding body. They have been researching the future of work and earlier I asked him what sort of new jobs he expects to see by 2025.

HUMPHRIES: What I would say is that the vast majority of really exciting new jobs are going to continue to be at the leading edge of science and technology. Everything from the sort of big grey goo, the nano technology, discussions about building things which are extraordinary and unimaginably small, and using those devices through to everything between science and technology in terms of intelligent computing systems. Fuel cells and power will be an amazing area for development because we'll be becoming increasingly independent on the things we carry in our pockets. But the other area I'd be looking at, which I think is equally in terms of growing, is going to be about how we support people who are living longer. So longevity consultants, time consultants, travel consultants, personal consultants, people that sort of give you the time to do the things you want to do are the two areas I'd be looking at. One in the science and technology area, one in the service sector, should cover everyone's interests.

LAMB: And as you say, personal services, dieticians, that sort of area, big explosion in jobs there.

HUMPHRIES: Absolutely, and there's no sign of it not continuing. People think the internet's going to change a lot and of course it is, it's going to change many of our lives. But if you've noticed recently now, it's actually harder and harder, it takes more time to plan your future holidays, because if you want to do it yourself, actually the choices you've got are humongously exciting. Travel agents may be disappearing in their current form, but actually what's for the new personal planners? Personal services, personal home services, personal work services, personal family services, all of those things coming on big time.

LAMB: For the broader population, for most of us, do you think, or is this just high net worth individuals who can afford to pay for that sort of service?

HUMPHRIES: No, you see travel is a classic example. The cost of being able to organise travel is falling dramatically. So add another 10% to it for someone to do the

planning for you and actually it's still a lot cheaper to book a holiday tomorrow than it was yesterday. So yes, I think these services are becoming more available for the mass of people because it's just going to be a different way of getting that service to all of us.

LAMB: As we spend more time and money on entertainment, you feel that that sector too is going to spawn a lot of new jobs?

HUMPHRIES: I can't see how it can't. Entertainment's become an increasingly important part of all of our lives. Indeed more and more companies are trying to make sure that they can create an entertaining experience in the workplace because if I have to spend that part of my life in the workplace, then actually creating an environment which makes it enjoyable, just as my work outside life is meant to be enjoyable, is increasingly important. So entertainment everywhere.

LAMB: What sort of jobs are you talking about?

HUMPHRIES: Well we've already seen the first half a dozen companies that we know of advertising for their director of fun or director of staff enjoyment or director of staff satisfaction or whatever you call it, because increasingly it's going to be harder and harder for companies to keep employees unless they go to that trouble. So create that expectation in the workplace and you've actually magnified people's expectations outside the workplace. So leisure in terms of personal health, personal satisfaction, entertainment and even in doing your own thing, finding customised services in entertainment, leisure, sport and recreation are actually starting to grow already.

LAMB: That was Chris Humphries of City and Guilds. Michael Moynagh, Chris Humphries talked about a raft of new job areas. Which jobs do you expect to see disappear?

MOYNAGH: Well I think what we'll see is that many jobs that people are doing now get redefined. So, for example, in retailing your check out staff, increasingly they're not going to be needed because you'll be able to check out automatically. But we may find that they become shopping advisers instead, and there they are to help you find the goods that you're looking for quickly. It will start at the top end, people who've got the highest incomes will afford that. But as the country gets more affluent, more and more

people will be able to afford to hire these shopping advisers. So I think a lot of existing jobs won't so much disappear, but just take a new form.

LAMB: What about clerical staff, secretarial staff, there is a suggestion that they will really disappear?

MOYNAGH: Well, some will disappear, but again some will become research assistants, all sorts of assistants to managers. Some will be redesignated, as Doug said, and called managers and we'll have more managerial-type functions. Doug's absolutely right, there's going to be many many more managers in that top end of the hour glass. So I wouldn't be wanting to polarise the debate. Of course there are going to be jobs that will disappear altogether, there are going to be jobs that will go abroad, but I think it's probably more helpful to think of jobs being reshaped and taking new forms.

LAMB: And upgraded from what you're saying.

MOYNAGH: Some will be upgraded but there's a real issue there. In terms of my hour glass, what happens to all that lot in the middle. Do they go up, or do they go down? Because if they go down they're going to be in lower paid jobs and a lot less satisfied. The evidence that we have from surveys shows that in recent years there's been a slight tendency for more to go up, than to go down.

LAMB: Doug McWilliams, I know you're predicting a lot more jobs in finance and business services.

MCWILLIAMS: Yes, a lot of the business services are going to be IT. Finance will grow a bit but that will redefine itself. Of course banking will become much more electronic and so on. Business services is really the area of massive growth and that's because companies will increasingly be getting things done by external organisations. So they'll just concentrate on what they're good at, then get everything else provided for them and a very large number of these jobs are going to be IT related in various different ways. We'll have the sort of next phase of the web and all the consequences of that, all sorts of entertainment-related things as well which will get fed in through in that way.

LAMB: Gerry Robinson, what do you make of what you heard, is that how you see society and jobs going?

ROBINSON: Yea, no I think it is, I think it is the way it's going and something that I think came across very strongly in the book was that sense that we won't really notice this in the way that we're discussing it because it will happen over a period of time. In fact it is already happening. There isn't much doubt that there is going to be a huge move towards the two areas that Chris Humphries was talking about i.e. modern technological development of a scientific nature in all sorts of territories and the personal services side. I see those two soaking up a great deal of employment away from the more traditional territories.

LAMB: Well it's interesting you mentioned the growing demand for personal services because, as you say, the care sector is one area which everyone agrees is going to see massive expansion. Within 20 years Britain will already be home to almost 7 million people over the age of 75. Now you don't have to be Einstein to do the maths. Demand for carers is going to be huge. But care jobs are already hard to fill and not just here, in the rest of Europe as well. Spain is relying on immigrant labour to solve the problem and our reporter, Danny Wood, has been finding out how they're doing it.

WOOD: At the Aprosers Social Services Centre in Madrid, Linda Maria, originally from Ecuador, steps forward and accepts her care-worker certificate. This government-funded qualification will allow Linda Maria to work in companies that specialise in looking after the elderly. Dolores Tapia runs the course.

TAPIA: They learn a lot of first-aid skills and physical and occupational therapy skills as well because they have to entertain and take care of the elderly. They have to do all the maintenance of the environment of the rooms where the elderly are actually staying.

WOOD: All 15 women in this class already have work as domestic helps where their main task is caring for an older person. But without a qualification, they can be exploited. They could be expected to do everything from washing floors to caring for children and the elderly, sometimes for as little as £75 a week full-time without lodging. Now they'll get official recognition as care workers and could earn about £130 a week,

not a huge amount but with holiday pay and other benefits, their situation has changed dramatically.

WOMEN: (Clapping and talking in Spanish)

WOOD: These women are filling a growing need in Spain. Modern life it seems has turned that romantic image of the self-sufficient Mediterranean family on its head. Delores Tapia explains.

TAPIA: At least 50% of Spanish families depend on others to take care of their elderly and of those others, at least 90% who work in private homes are migrants or even more. Right now I don't know of one Spanish person who works taking care of elderly in private homes.

WOOD: A decade ago the burden of family care fell almost solely on to female relatives. But now significant numbers of women in Spain are starting to enter the workforce. Gil Enrique Calva a sociologist at Madrid's Complutense university.

CALVO: (Speaking in Spanish)

TRANSLATOR: We're going to have too many older people living alone at home and we don't have sufficient social services. Families are going to have to sort out the caring themselves, hiring immigrants. As a result, we will have to increase immigration dramatically. Italy and Spain are in the same situation. By 2030, we're going to have the oldest populations in Europe by a long way.

WOOD: Tens of thousands of Latin American women are emigrating to Spain to fulfil this demand. Many of these women are single mothers and arrive without legal working papers. 52 year-old former teacher, Fanny Harameo from Ecuador arrived nine years ago.

HARAMEO: (Speaking in Spanish)

INTERPRETER: We arrived with our hopes and just a few suitcases. I came with my two daughters who were 9 and 5. It was very difficult in the beginning. We've been hungry, cold and experienced quite a lot of discrimination but I always kept pressing on.

WOOD: The Spanish government recently granted legal status to about 800,000 illegal immigrants, in part because it said they were needed to meet labour shortages. For Carmeta being granted the right to work in Spain was the first big hurdle. Now this carer's certificate is helping her further.

CARMETA: (Speaking in Spanish)

INTERPRETER: This qualification I've been given has opened new doors for me. It's like I'm on a different planet. I feel so happy.

WOOD: So what do Spaniards think about this wave of immigrant care workers. Sociologist, Gil Enrique Calva says, "social tension isn't as great as people might think, in fact the contrary."

CALVA: (Speaking in Spanish)

INTERPRETER: Two million immigrants have come here in the last ten years and are at the bottom of the social pyramid. This has made Spaniards feel like they've risen because before Spaniards in the lower classes had no one below them, but now they have two million people. Even though they have moved, the Spaniards feel like a superior class like nouveau riche.

WOOD: So for the Latin American women at the certificate ceremony climbing the social ladder isn't a priority, just the prospective of more stable work is enough for now.

LAMB: That was Danny Wood reporting. Now listening to that with me was Fiona Street who's Chair of the UK Home Care Association. Fiona, how serious is the shortage of care workers in the UK right now?

STREET: It's very serious and it's becoming an increasing concern for all those people who are charged with providing social care to either people living in their own homes or in residential care, but particularly if we look at recruitment and retention in the social care sector, the sector that I represent, we are having a real problem and we are running well below the numbers that we need.

LAMB: You've got a major problem now and you're expecting presumably to have a much bigger problem twenty years down the line. How many more workers do you think you're going to need?

STREET: Well we have about, approximately there's supposed to be a million in the care sector at the moment, though I should say that the government themselves have no real good firm data on this. If you look at the demography, the demographics, which have already been referred to, we will be thinking around about another 50, even to 75% increase in the social care workforce.

LAMB: So at least another half-million people?

STREET: Absolutely.

LAMB: Who is going to do these jobs? Because I know that traditionally they were filled by middle aged women returning to the workforce after bringing up families. That doesn't happen now, they're already out there working. Who is going to do those jobs?

STREET: Well we first should remember there are 6 million people being informal carers in this country which is something which we shouldn't forget. But, as they said in Spain, in the report we've had, increasingly women are choosing to follow careers but they're also being called upon to look after their grandchildren and they're looking after the other end of the family as well.

LAMB: So they're not available, are they?

STREET: 95% of the workforce in social care currently is a female workforce. What we also have to think about is attracting men into the social care workforce as well as women.

LAMB: But younger people don't find it an attractive job option, do they?

STREET: It's seen as a low status job, traditionally low pay, lack of guaranteed hours and therefore very much a feminised job but also a low status job.

LAMB: Now I know you're reluctant to go down the Spanish route to fill the gap, the recruitment gap with immigrant labour, you would rather raise the status and pay attached to the job to attract indigenous workers?

STREET: Yes, but I have to say I was encouraged when there was an emphasis about the workers in Spain that they were being offered training. I think we must remember that since we've had a regulation of the care sector and the domiciliary care sector, much of that has been about raising standards and raising standards is about providing people with training. The jobs that we ask people to do now are much more complex, people are being asked to look after people with much more complex needs. So yes, we need people who want to do training.

LAMB: Fiona, thanks very much indeed. That was Fiona Street, Chair of the UK Home Care Association. Now one area of the jobs market, which many predict will grow, is the environment. These days companies have to be responsible about their impact on the planet and even as we speak, delegates from nearly 200 nations are meeting in Montreal to discuss climate change at the latest round of UN talks. Growing public awareness of green issues, combined with an avalanche of new legislation and targets, are already creating a raft of new jobs. Our reporter, Mike Johnson, has been finding out more.

JOHNSON: Well this is a metals-recycling site at Wandsworth in South West London and all the noise you can hear is both the constant flow of trucks coming in and dropping off their loads and also two giant cranes which are picking up and dropping down metals off a, must be a 40-foot pile of scrap. Well with me is a man who's hoping to profit from all this rubbish in the years to come. 36 year-old Jason Mohr used to be an

investment banker in the Square Mile but he's now swapped pin stripes for protective overalls and set up his own junk clearance business. Jason, the obvious question really, why give up a comfortable city job to become a rag and bone man?

MOHR: I think the main reason is the opportunity. I'd had enough of the city. I was working long hours, pretty unfulfilled, and I want to go and create something to be proud of and junk seemed to be an exciting place to be.

JOHNSON: Junk, exciting. Not so long ago if you believe what you read in the papers, city bankers were retraining as plumbers to make some really serious money. Now it seems the humble trade made famous by Steptoe and Son is proving similarly seductive.

MOHR: We've got everything from brand new pool tables worth over £500 to designer clothing, to hi-fi's and that stuff has value.

JOHNSON: So there's money in junk, potentially?

MOHR: Yea, there's money in junk because a lot of stuff people throw out is valuable.

JOHNSON: He aims not to dump but reuse, resell or recycle as much of his waste as possible. Old filing cabinets are sold on EBay, unwanted furniture at local auctions. But Jason Mohr didn't swap life at the venerable City Bank at NM Rothschild just to become Wandsworths David Dickinson. At the moment he has just 8 staff and operates only in certain parts of London. His ambition is to build a national environment friendly waste disposal brand. Future legal changes he reckons will help him do it. Next year a European Directive designed to encourage the recycling of old electrical goods is expected to become law here, providing a new market overnight for anyone enterprising enough to exploit it.

MOHR: There's an awful lot of change going on in the environment and what's happening with waste. There's some big drivers out there to improve recycling. The simple thing is the cost of disposing stuff is going to go up and people are going to have to recycle more and if you can solve that problem, then you should make money.

JOHNSON: So do you think there will be more jobs in the future related to the environment, like yours obviously is?

MOWER: Yea, it's a huge growth area. I think there'll be an environmental type department in pretty much every large firm and from being a sort of one-person or maybe a part of one-person's job, there'll be 3, 4 5 people in the department because they need to solve the waste problem. So there'll be employment there.

JOHNSON: But not everyone agrees there'll be a sustained boom in environment-related jobs. Evergreen Resources is a recruitment agency which specialises in the environmental field. Managing Director, Adam Witney, believes any increase will be only short-term.

WITNEY: The market generally is cyclical so things tend to come and go based on legislation. What you tend to find is that people are recruiting because they have to rather than because they want to. Unlike some markets where you know that if you recruit five people, tomorrow it's going to do great things for you in the near future as a business, the environment is not seen that way. It's seen more as something you have to do to avoid getting a slapped wrist, rather than what your business needs you to do.

JOHNSON: Others though believe attitudes like that are changing. The Centre for Sustainable Engineering advises companies how to become more environment friendly. Its chief executive is Dr. Stephen Mahon.

MAHON: There is a real appetite for investment into environmental technologies at the moment. In the next ten years, globally there'll be a shortage in centrally generated electricity. We will have to move to a model where houses and small factories act as power stations themselves using solar cells and wind turbines and waste products to generate energy. But that also means that we need people who could install these systems, maintain them and service them, plumbers, electricians, and builders retrained to understand how to install power technologies. There'll be new job categories, vocational courses. There will be a boom in jobs in the environment.

JOHNSON: If that turns out to be true, Tony Blair's review of Britain's energy policy announced today may just have fired the starting gun. The review is to find ways to keep us supplied with all the gas and electricity we need but still cut harmful emissions. It seems a safe bet that energy and its impact on the environment will remain high on the agenda for policymakers and job hunters alike in the years to come.

LAMB: Mike Johnson reporting. Gerry Robinson, Jason in Mike's report obviously sees waste management as a potential gold mine. Do you agree, do you think that's going to be the most profitable end of the environment business?

ROBINSON: I agree absolutely. I think it's a fantastic business and it says a lot about the way that we live now. Just the way that Jason was talking about some of the things that come through for recycling tells you in a way part of our problem.

LAMB: The extraordinary stuff we throw away.

ROBINSON: We consume and dispose at a level which is frightening in lots of ways and I've no doubt at all that Jason's going to have a terrific business there.

LAMB: I'm sure he'll be glad to hear you say that. Michael Moynagh, do you think most of these new jobs in the wider environment sector are going to be at the top or at the bottom of the hour glass, good jobs or bad jobs?

MOYNAGH: Well they'll probably be at both ends of the hour glass. But I think what will really happen is that many ordinary jobs that we're doing today will have a stronger and stronger environmental dimension and so people who are managing a large office block, for example, will pay more and more attention to the environmental aspect of the work that they're doing and the building industry will see the same.

LAMB: Let me ask you all to put your imaginary heads on and picture yourself 20 years down the line and imagine it's 2025 right now. What job, I wonder, Sir Gerry, would you see yourself doing?

ROBINSON: I think I'm either going to be a bus driver or a plumber.

LAMB: Why?

ROBINSON: Because they're two jobs that are definitely still going to be around. So I'm into security here.

LAMB: I'm surprised to hear you set your sights so modestly.

ROBINSON: I've also decided I'm going to be modest in 20 years time as well.

LAMB: Michael Moynagh.

MOYNAGH: Well I'm a research consultant. I'll probably still be doing that, but the job I'm doing will be very different. IT will make it much much easier for me to collect information and put it together. So I'll be spending much more time focusing on the quality of how I communicate the knowledge I'm gathering.

LAMB: Doug McWilliams, very briefly if you would.

MCWILLIAMS: Economics consultancy I think. It's an industry that didn't really exist on the scale 25 years ago. I think 25 years from now it will be a much bigger industry.

LAMB: It's good to hear you two are happy with what you're doing. Thank you very much indeed for that. I'm afraid that's all we have time for. Many thanks to all my guests. Now, as I mentioned at the beginning of the programme, this is the last edition of Nice Work and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the hundreds of you who have emailed and written to the programme over the past six years. It was really great to hear your views and ideas. Thank you very much for taking the time to share them with us and thanks for listening.