

ALAN BENSON

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POSITIONS

2013 - Assistant Professor
current University of Minnesota- Twin Cities
Carlson School of Management
Work & Organizations Group

Applied Economics Graduate Faculty
Minnesota Population Center Graduate Faculty
Social Media and Business Analytics Collaborative (SOBACO) Faculty

EDUCATION

2013 Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Sloan School of Management
Ph.D., Management, Institute for Work & Employment Research

Dissertation: “Sustained Rents and Imperfect Labor Markets: Essays on Recruitment, Training, Job Mobility, and Incentives” (Advisors: David Autor and Paul Osterman)

2007 Cornell University, School of Industrial and Labor Relations
B.S. in Industrial and Labor Relations (Honors)

2006 Oxford University, Pembroke College
Exchange student (one year) in Economics and Management

FELLOWSHIPS AND HONORS

2018 Best paper award at Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR) workshop on Incentives, Management, and Organization in Milan, for “Promotions and the Peter Principle.”

2018 Giarrantini Rising Star Award, from Industry Studies Association (ISA)

2018 Outstanding Young Scholar Award (John Dunlop Award), from LERA

2018 Herbie Award for Excellence in Teaching, from Carlson’s MA HRIR students

2017 Second prize in research paper competition, from Wharton School of Business, People Analytics Conference, for "Hemming and Hawing over Hawthorne"

2017 Best paper award, LERA/ ILR Review Best Paper Competition, for "Are Bonus Pools Driven by their Incentive Effects?"

2017 Best paper award, Financial Institutions, Regulation, and Corporate Governance conference in Sydney, Australia, for “Promotions and the Peter Principle.”

2016 Teaching Innovation Grant, Timothy J. Nantell Fund for Excellence in Teaching

2014	Outstanding Research Award and Grant, from MPC
2014	SOBACO Small Grant
2013	Best Dissertation Award (Kochan-Sleigh Award), from LERA
2012	Research grant (PI), Russell Sage Foundation, “Is College Still Worth It?”
2012	Best Doctoral Student Paper, 64 th LERA Meetings of the ASSA
2008-2013	Alfred P. Sloan Fellowship
2007-2008	MIT Presidential Graduate Fellowship
2007	Best undergraduate thesis (Joel Seidman Memorial Prize), from ILR School, for “A Game Theoretic Approach to Social Dialogue”
2007	Service award (Irving M. Ives Award), from ILR School
2007	Golden Key Outstanding Membership Award for Community Service
2005-2007	Hunter R. Rawlings III Cornell Presidential Research Scholarship
2004-2006	Undergraduate Academic Research Fellowship

PUBLICATIONS

- Benson, Alan, Aaron Sojourner, and Akhmed Umyarov. Forthcoming “Can Reputation Discipline the Gig Economy? Evidence from a Randomized Experiment.” *Management Science*. (accepted 12/28/18)
- Benson, Alan, and Sima Sajjadiani. 2017. “Are Bonus Pools Driven by their Incentive Effects? Evidence from Fluctuations in Gainsharing Incentives.” *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 71(3): 567-99.
- Benson, Alan. 2015. “Do Agents Game their Agents’ Behavior? Evidence from Sales Managers.” *Journal of Labor Economics*, 33(4): 863-90.
- Benson, Alan. 2015. “A Theory of Dual Job Search and Sex-Based Occupational Clustering.” *Industrial Relations*, 54(3): 367-400.
- Benson, Alan. 2014. “Re-Thinking the Two-Body Problem: The Segregation of Women into Geographically-Flexible Occupations.” *Demography* 51(5): 1619-39.
- Benson, Alan. 2013. “Firm-Sponsored General Education and Mobility Frictions: Evidence from Hospital Sponsorship of Nursing Schools and Faculty.” *Journal of Health Economics*, 32(1): 149-59.
- Benson, Alan. 2012. “Labor Market Trends Among Registered Nurses: 2008-2011.” *Policy, Politics, and Nursing Practice*, 13(4): 205-13. [Formerly: “The (New) Economics of Staffing Registered Nurses.”]
- Kochan, Thomas A., David B. Lipsky, and Mary Newhart, and Alan Benson. 2010. “The Long-Haul Effects of Interest Arbitration: The Case of New York State’s Taylor Law.” *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 64(4): 565-84.

WORKING PAPERS

- Benson, Alan, and Ben A. Rissing. “Strength From Within: Individual and Store-Level Evidence Transfers Outperform Hires.” Under second revision at *Organization Science*.
- Ranganathan, Aruna, and Alan Benson. “A Numbers Game: Quantification of Work, Accidental Gamification, and Worker Productivity.” Under revision at *Administrative Science Quarterly*.
- Benson, Alan, Danielle Li, and Kelly Shue. “Promotions and the Peter Principle.” Under revision at

Quarterly Journal of Economics.

Benson, Alan, Simon Board, and Moritz Meyer-ter-vehn. "Discrimination in Hiring: Evidence from Retail." Working paper.

Benson, Alan. "Managerial Short-Termism and Human Capital Development." Working paper.

Benson, Alan, Danielle Li, and Kelly Shue. "Incentives in Recessions." Working paper.

INVITED ACADEMIC TALKS

2019 American Economics Association (AEA) annual meeting in Atlanta, GA (organizer, presenter); Wharton School of Business Management department seminar in Philadelphia, PA

2018 INFORMS Organization Science Winter Conference (OSWC) in Park City, UT; University of Toronto Center for Industrial Relations and Human Resources seminar; MIT Sloan School of Management Organizational Economics seminar, Cambridge, MA; Burning Glass Technologies, Boston, MA; Industry Studies Association (ISA) Meetings in Seattle, WA (Giarrantini Rising Star Award); Society of Institutional and Organizational Economics (SIOE) in Montreal, Quebec; Labor and Employment Relations (LERA) meetings in Baltimore, MD (Dunlop Young Scholar award); NBER Summer Institute, Personnel Economics section, in Cambridge, MA; Academy of Management meetings (AOM) panel "The Analytics of Careers" in Chicago, IL; Advances in Field Experiments (AFE) conference at Boston University

2017 INFORMS Organization Science Winter Conference (OSWC) in Park City, UT; MIT Sloan School of Management Institute for Work and Employment Research seminar, Cambridge, MA; Utah Winter Business Economics Conference (WBEC) in Snowbird, UT; Strategy department seminar of the Olin School of Business at Washington University in St Louis, MO; Midwest Economics Association (MEA) Conference in Cincinnati, OH; Wharton School of Business 3rd Annual People Analytics Conference (two papers presented as finalists in research paper competition) in Philadelphia, PA; Northwestern Law School Searle Center Conference on Internet Commerce and Innovation in Chicago, IL; Western Economics Association (WEA) meetings in San Diego, CA; Labor and Employment Relations Association (LERA) meetings in Anaheim, CA (competitive papers presenter; PhD consortium panelist; Jr Faculty Consortium organizer); Academy of Management (AOM) Meetings (OMT/ OB/ HR/ CAR divisions) in Atlanta, GA; University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, School of Labor and Employment Relations; HEC Montreal Department of Economics

2016 Wharton School of Business Conference on People and Organizations (plenary and roundtable); Industry Studies Association meetings in Minneapolis, MN; Labor and Employment Relations Association meetings in Minneapolis, MN; Society of Labor Economists meetings in Seattle, WA; National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) conference on Corporate Finance, Cambridge, MA; NBER conference on Organizational Economics, Cambridge, MA

2015 Allied Social Sciences Association (ASSA) meetings in Boston, MA; Society of Labor Economists (SOLE) meetings in Minneapolis, MN; Midwest Economics Association Meetings in Minneapolis, MN; People Analytics Conference at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, in Philadelphia, PA (Third Prize in Research Paper Competition); joint meeting of Society of Labor Economists and European Association of Labour Economists (SOLE/EALE) in

Montreal, Canada; National Bureau of Economics Research (NBER) Summer Institute personnel economics section in Cambridge, MA; Wharton School of Business Conference on People and Organizations (plenary and roundtable)

- 2014 Allied Social Sciences Association (ASSA) Meetings in Philadelphia, PA (three sessions: "Dissecting Job Search," "What Impact do Managers Really Have?" and "Employment Structure and Inequality"); MIT Organizational Economics Lunch in Boston, MA; MIT Conference on Digital Experimentation (CODE@MIT) in Boston, MA; Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM) meetings in Segovia, Spain
- 2013 65th LERA Meetings in St. Louis (Winner- Best Dissertation), Summer 2013; University of Chicago Booth School of Business Organizations and Markets Seminar; University of Minnesota, Carlson School of Management; Case Western Reserve University, Department of Economics; Duke University, Fuqua School of Business; Johns Hopkins University, Carey Business School; University of Illinois, School of Labor and Employment Relations; London Business School, Trans-Atlantic Doctoral Conference; Cornell University, Institute for Compensation Research
- 2012 Wharton School of Business Conference on People and Organizations (Plenary); MIT Economics Applied Microeconomics Lunch; Rutgers University, School of Management and Labor Relations; University of Maryland, Smith School of Business; Best Student Paper Competition Finalist Talk (Winner) at the 64th LERA Meetings
- 2011 Wharton School of Business Conference on People and Organizations (Plenary); Cornell University, School of Industrial and Labor Relations; MIT IWER Seminar; MIT Economics Labor Lunch; American Sociological Association Annual Meeting in Las Vegas; Academy of Management Annual Meeting in San Antonio; Mondragone-La Pietra-Moncalieri (MOOD) Doctoral Workshop in Economic Theory & Econometrics at the Einaudi Institute for Economics and Finance (EIEF) in Rome, Italy; IWAAE Conference in Catanzaro, Italy; London Business School Transatlantic Doctoral Conference; American Rights at Work (ARAW) Conference at Georgetown University, Washington D.C.
- 2010 MIT Sloan Economic Sociology Working Group Seminar; MIT Sloan IWER Seminar; MIT Economics Labor Lunch
- 2009 Wharton School of Business Conference on People and Organizations; MIT Economics Labor Lunch

NON-ACADEMIC PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS

On sales and sales compensation: Minneanalytics Finance and Retail Conference (FARCON) 2016; WorldatWork 2014 Spotlight on Sales presentation, "From Salesman to Sales Manager- Using Big Data to Debunk Common Sales Manager Myths and Improve Productivity;" WorldatWork 2013 Spotlight on Sales Compensation presentation, "Panning the Big Sales Data Goldmine"

On negotiations: "Preparing for Pay Negotiations" Workshop for Twin Cities Compensation Network; "Lean In" Workshop on Negotiations for Hennepin County (Minneapolis and surrounding suburbs); Negotiation workshop for EpiCH; University of Minnesota P&A Professional Development Workshop,

“The Principles of Interest Based Bargaining” and “The Practice of Interest Based Bargaining;” Minnesota Business Partnership EA Conference, “Negotiations and Our Career;” Carlson MBA Women’s Initiative seminars on pay negotiations, 2015 and 2016

NEWS MEDIA

- [Baltimore Sun](#) - Dan Rodrick's "Questioning wage law built on kindness of strangers: Wondering how we got a separate base for tipped workers," 4/18/14
- [Bloomberg](#) - "Good employee vs good boss," 02/20/18
- [Boca Raton Tribune](#) - Rick Boxx's "Pitfalls of the Peter Principle," 12/3/18
- [Boston Herald](#) - Jack Encarnaco's "Tuition spikes send higher education enrollment tumbling," 08/31/17
- [Business Insider](#) - Ian Salisbury's "Economists have uncovered a counterintuitive truth about why so many bosses are terrible," 3/1/18
- [Business Radio \(Wharton\)](#) - Interview with Prof. Peter Cappelli for radio show "In the Workplace," 6/7/18
- [BuzzFeed](#) - Caroline O'Donovan's "American Labor Unions are Falling Down on Digital Workers," 7/24/15
- CBS News Radio San Francisco - Interview with Chris Filippi, 11/30/14
- [CBS/ WCCO News](#) - "Why has pay for U.S. workers stayed relatively flat?," 7/10/17
- [CBS/WCCO News](#) - "Should you discuss salaries with co-workers?" 11/29/18
- CBS/WCCO News - Paul and Jordana Show, "Why hasn't pay kept up with productivity?" 9/6/18
- [CFO](#) - David McCann's "Be wary of promoting top sales reps," 2/26/18
- [Chicago Booth Review](#) - Alex Verkhivker's "The best salespeople don't make the best managers," 7/12/17
- [Chronicle of Higher Education](#) - Scott Carlson's "Is college worth it? Two reports say yes (mostly)," 11/4/13
- [Deseret News](#) - Eric Schultz's "College is 'Worth It,' but Majors Matter," 3/4/15
- [Die Welt](#) ("German: The World") - von Inga Michler's "Warum viele Firmen systematisch die Falschen befördern." ("Why many companies systematically promote the wrong people"), 3/28/18
- [Discovery News](#) - Emily Sohn's "Is College 'Worth It?'" 10/16/15
- [Financial Times](#) - Tim Harford's "We should not let bad managers stick around," 7/19/18
- [Financial Times](#) - Sir Cary Cooper's "Don't Let Ambition Cloud our Talent Judgment," 8/3/18
- [Forbes](#) - Rodd Wagner's "New Evidence the Peter Principle is Real, and What to Do About It," 4/10/18
- [Forbes](#) - Bill Conerly's "Promoting Wrong People Hurts Retention and Productivity," 6/19/18
- [Grand Forks Herald](#) - Ethan Nelson's "In ND, New Overtime Rule Will Have Bigger Effect Than in Minnesota," 6/11/16
- [Here We Are](#) - Podcast interview with Shane Moss, "Episode 180: Robots and Employment," 8/24/18
- [HR Executive](#) - Peter Cappelli's "Promoting the Wrong Talent," 6/11/18
- [IZA Newsroom](#) - "New forms of work and shady employers: How reputation can discipline the gig economy," 2/18/16
- [KARE 11 News](#) (NBC-affiliated TV station serving Twin Cities) - Kent Erdahl's "Retailers Announce trips, bonuses to find holiday workers," 10/8/18
- [Knowledge@Wharton](#) - "Are Good Managers Born or Made?" 3/15/16
- [Knowledge@Wharton](#) - "Holiday Hiring: Can Retailers Attract Talent in a Tight Labor Market?" 11/15/18

- [LA Times](#) - Op Ed, "How to manage the financial risks of investing in college," 12/25/13
- [Le Nouvele Economiste](#) (France) - Tim Hartford's, "Principe de Peter : nous ne devrions pas laisser les mauvais managers s'éterniser dans leur poste," 10/8/18
- [LinkedIn Pulse](#) - Sue Barrett's "The alarming findings of the Peter Principle and Sales Managers," 5/28/18
- [Grand Forks Herald](#) – Ethan Nelson's "In ND, New Overtime Rule Will Have Bigger Effect Than in Minnesota," 6/11/16
- [Harvard Business Review](#) - Alan Benson, Kelly Shue, and Danielle Li's "Do people really get promoted to their level of incompetence?" 3/8/18
- [HR Executive](#) - Mark McGraw's "Gender and the Global Mobility Gap," 4/20/15
- [Knowledge@Wharton](#) - "Are Good Managers Born or Made?," 3/15/16
- [Minneapolis-St Paul Business Journal](#) - Patrick Rehkamp's "Minneapolis Park Board's Ill-Timed Goodbye Gifts," 1/15/16
- [National Bureau of Economic Research](#) (NBER) - Jay Fitzgerald's "The Peter Principle Isn't Just Real, It's Costly," 5/18
- [NBC News](#) - "College Costs Soar, but Can You Afford Not to Go?" 4/15/15
- [NY Times](#) - Sendhil Mullainathan's "You've become rich. That doesn't mean you're great at everything." 10/26/18.
- [NPR Morning Edition/ The Hidden Brain](#) - Shankur Vindantam's "Why Is Your Boss Bad At His Job? It May Be The Peter Principle At Work" 4/3/18
- [PBS Newshour](#) - Article and TV mention, "6 Rules to Help You Make the Best College Decision", 1/14/15
- [Quartz](#) - Corinne Purtill's "Your hotshot coworker would be a terrible boss, and research proves it," 2/26/18
- [Quartz](#) - Quartz Obsession "The Peter Principle," 3/2/18
- [Quotable](#) (Salesforce.com article) - Kevin Micalizzi's "Why you might not want to promote your top sales rep," 8/14/18
- [Quotable](#) (Salesforce.com podcast) - Kevin Micalizzi's "The best sellers do not make the best managers," 11/1/18
- [Smart Company](#) - Sue Barrett's "The alarming findings of the Peter Principle and sales managers," 5/28/18
- [Sydney Morning Herald](#) - Sendhil Mullainathan's "You've become rich. That doesn't mean you're great at everything." 11/1/18
- [The Globe and Mail](#) (Canada) - Harvey Schachter's "Why promotions go awry," 4/14/18
- [The Times](#) (of London/ the Sunday Times) - Grainne Rothery's "Why top dogs might balk at the lead," 3/11/18
- [Thrive Global](#) (Arianna Huffington's media company) - Nora Battelle's "How to handle the stress of a bad boss," 10/17/18
- [Time](#) - Ian Salisbury's "Why Bosses Are Bad, According to Management Experts," 2/22/18
- [Twin Cities Business Journal](#) - Kate Lerette's, "Degree Inflation" 9/1/17
- [Wall Street Journal](#) - David Wessel's "How college has become a risky investment," 1/28/15
- [Wall Street Journal](#) - Lauren Weber's "Why it's so hard to fill sales jobs: 'Salesman' baggage means well-paying tech industry positions go begging," 2/3/15
- [Wall Street Journal](#) - Sam Walker's "Why Superstars Make Lousy Bosses," 11/6/18
- [Washington Post](#), Dina ElBoghdady's "Why couples move for a man's job, but not a woman's," 11/28/14
- [Washington Post](#), Danielle Paquette's "Why college isn't always worth it: A new study suggests the economic return on a college degree may be a lot more modest than you might think," 1/30/15

TEACHING

2014-2018	Compensation and Benefits (Full-Time and Part-Time MA in HRIR)
2014-2018	Negotiation Strategies (Full-time and Part-time MBA)
2013-2018	Economic Analysis for HRIR (PhD)
2016	Managing Employee Compensation (Coursera)

Other teaching (MIT Sloan): Instructor for Sloan Fellows Math Review, TA for Power and Negotiations, Doctoral Seminar in Work & Employment, Managing and Leading People and Organizations, Communicating with Data, Managerial Psychology, (*Cornell*) TA for Introduction to Policy Analysis, tutor for economics and statistics

SERVICE

- Refereeing: American Economic Review, Demography, Economic Inquiry, ILR Review, Industrial Relations, Journal of Economic Growth, Journal of Labor Economics, Journal of Marriage and the Family, Management Science, Manufacturing Service and Operations Management, Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, Organization Science, Quarterly Journal of Economics
- PhD advising: Sima Sajjadiani, 2018 (assistant professor at UBC)
- Service Teaching: [Managing Employee Compensation](#) on Coursera
- Conferences: Organizer for 2016 and 2017 LERA Jr Faculty Consortiums
- Negotiation Workshops: Hennepin County, MN; University of Minnesota (libraries, professional & administrative employees, various departments and student groups); HR Tomorrow conference; Twin Cities Compensation Network; various professional conferences
- Committees: PhD Program Committee 2013-2016, People Analytics Committee 2015-2016, WORG Executive Committee 2017-18