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The Fight For Fifteen: The Right Wage For A Working America



Synopsis

The fight for a higher minimum wage has become the biggest national labor story in decades. Beginning in November 2012, strikes by fast food workers spread across the country, landing in Seattle in May 2013. Within a year, Seattle had adopted a \$15 minimum wage—the highest in the United States—without a bloody political battle. Combining history, economics, and commonsense political wisdom, *The Fight for Fifteen* makes a deeply informed case for a national \$15/hour minimum wage as the only practical solution to reversing America's decades-long slide toward becoming a low-wage nation. Drawing both on new scholarship and on his extensive practical experiences organizing workers and grappling with inequality across the United States, David Rolf, president of SEIU 775—which waged the successful Seattle campaign—offers an accessible explanation of the middle-out economics, an emerging popular economic theory that suggests that the origins of prosperity in capitalist economies lie with workers and consumers, not investors and employers. A blueprint for a different and hopeful American future, *The Fight for Fifteen* offers concrete tools, ideas, and inspiration for anyone interested in real change in our lifetimes.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

David Rolf's book does three main things: 1) Addresses the strengths and weaknesses of past and present worker organizing models. 2) Dispels persistent myths about low-wage workers and the trickle-down economy. 3) Provides information about how workers can win, as an insider in the victorious \$15 minimum wage campaigns in SeaTac and Seattle. Rolf is a leader within a traditional labor union, so (1) is especially interesting. There's a lot of material here that folks across the

political spectrum could agree with. Rolf defends entrepreneurship and innovative workplaces, but he makes a strong case that we need a new kind of safety net to take care of gig and temp workers, and in turn, our entire economy. Creative organizations like the Freelancers Union and the Coalition of Immokalee Workers are starting to address this need, but work still needs to be done. Weâ™ve heard some of the mind boggling numbers about the minimum wage before (for every \$1 added to the minimum wage, low-wage worker households put an additional \$2,800/year back into the economy), but seeing them all in one handy volume is jarring. When California and New York decided to raise the minimum wage, there were plenty of pundits on TV reciting (very false) conventional wisdom about the free market. âœThe Fight for \$15â• efficiently clears things up. Since they started raising wages, SeaTac and Seattle are also proving a lot of that âœconventional wisdom" wrong. Rolf served on the Seattle Income Inequality Advisory Committee, which developed the minimum-wage policy for the city. Because of the IIAC role, he clearly understands what the oppositionâ™s arguments are, and tells how an agreement was eventually achieved.

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