

## **Training and Employment in an Economic Downturn: Lessons from Desistance Studies**

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**Summary:** This paper examines the possibilities for offender training and employment in an economic downturn. It begins with the recognition that labour markets have collapsed and training programme design has been complicated by uncertainty around future opportunity. The examination is based on the findings from desistance studies, which highlight a process contributing to offender reform that has to do with acts of giving. If these insights are incorporated into training programme design and other criminal justice initiatives, then a whole new field of possibility opens up. The paper examines the desistance paths of offenders and in particular the role of employment as part of the desistance process. It concludes with an outline of possible training and employment activities that would utilise desistance study insights.

**Keywords:** Desistance, economic downturn, employment, reform, generativity, opportunity.