

Garment Worker -

You live in El Salvador with your family of two boys, who are 5 and 7 years old, and two girls, who are 10 and 13 years old. Your husband works as an auto mechanic in the small town you live in. As your children grew up, you went to the factory to find work to supplement the family income. Your husband's 12-hour days did not bring home enough income to stretch far enough to pay all the bills. You have to pay \$65 per child a year for school, uniforms, books, supplies and transportation for each of your children to go to school. For your housing costs (which include rent, electricity, fuel for cooking and heat, transportation to work, and telephone expenses) you pay about \$123 per month. Just like in the United States, however, you have to pay things like social security and lunch at work. Water costs an extra \$25 per month, and food, clothing, health and other non-consumables are extra. You've not been feeling well and are worried about being able to keep up with the new production demands.

Factory Owner -

You own the El Salvador Grande t-shirt factory in San Salvador. You now supply many department stores in the U.S. You know the people who come and take orders for shirts from department stores. But now some want you to send your bids through the Internet. They don't know you personally; you are known only from the prices you provide for them. Every quarter they come and ask you to lower the price of your product. Last year you lost the work for one contract as it moved its work to China for lower prices, and you are nervous this may happen to another U.S. store. You want to cut costs, but just don't know how. You must not only pay the workers, but purchase the material, buttons, packaging, etc. Your production costs include things like lights, fans, the building, etc. You must pay the national government for your portion of a tax for old-age pensions. They complain about the hours. They complain about the lack of heat in the winter and how hot the factory gets in the summer. They complain that dust is increasing. You believe they are ungrateful for how much you do for them. Meanwhile, gas prices have also gone up, so your costs to get the materials into the company are increasing. You've heard some other factories have to pay for shipping. Right now you don't charge for shipping, but to survive you may have to start.

(*Note: the actual salary that goes to workers does not need to be in your estimate.)

Brand/Importer -

You are the company who deals with shipping, advertising, training, research and buying of product. It always seems the U.S. market is changing, and to keep up means not only keeping up with all the fashion trends, but also with the technology. Major expenses have gone into developing web-based marketing, and downloadable ads for cell phones are the new trend. You keep trying to deal with turnover at your offices by raising wages. Health insurance has gone through the roof, and shareholders are on your back at every turn. They complain about lack of returns, the sweatshop conditions in your factories, and the environmental concerns with your advertising supplements. Now you have the increased cost of fuel eating away at any profit you make. Last week you announced a new line of clothing, so you are hoping this makes your next quarter returns better for your shareholders.

Retail Store -

You are the retail store in the neighborhood mall. No one seems to understand your plight. The mall developer has just raised the rent 10 percent and promises another price hike will happen in the next year. The costs of energy (heat, lights and the like) are only compounded with the increasing cost of security. You know these expenses are necessary for your survival. Student workers are disloyal. They come wanting \$8.50 per hour, you train them, and within two months they have moved to another job. Shoplifting has increased and you are worried about having to do more sales and clearance work in the next quarter to keep up with your competitors. Those fickle shoppers have been passing you by in favor of the new store down at the other end of the mall.