

Abstract

Why Not Ownership? Mapping the Resistance Christopher Mackin

The preponderance of evidence in support of worker or employee ownership of private sector enterprise stands in stark contrast to its popularity as a policy option. Studies of productivity and profitability demonstrate positive performance effects. Studies of wealth sharing demonstrate that workers hold three times the retirement assets of workers in firms that do not share ownership. More evidence is welcome but the “why” of this issue has been studied. It is time to consider the “why not.” This paper introduces a typology of eleven factors that help explain resistance to worker ownership, including both ideological and practical factors. The analysis presented focuses on experience in the United States but draws on factors of interpretation that have international relevance.

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Christopher Mackin
Ownership Associates, Inc.
122 Mt. Auburn Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

E-Mail: cm@ownershipassociates.com