

## J. Michael Locke

### Musings

---

#### #139: Musing August 13, 2021

Preliminary census data is out and our population grew just 7.4% during the decade which is the slowest rate on record other than Great Depression. Approximately half of the growth came from the Latino population. Results show stronger growth in urban areas, but this was all pre-pandemic and does not reflect how Covid has reshaped where people live.

Last week I wrote again about the increasing issue of labor supply in our economy. Since then, the labor department reported that there were 10.1 million open jobs at end of June up from 9.2 million in May. *"The jump came as the quits rate increased while the layoffs and discharges rate was unchanged, reflecting increased bargaining power and employment options for workers."* [job-openings-surge-above-10-million-for-first-time-ever](#). One thing the shortage will drive is the use of technology. For tasks that are repetitive and require little judgment, technology will be introduced. Your French fries at White Castle in some places are now being cooked by a robot. [restaurant-robots-kitchen-labor-shortage](#).

Make sure the technology underneath your website is good. Google increasing the importance of "user experience" when it decides how to rank results in a search. From WSJ: *"A new "page experience" update from Alphabet Inc.'s Google that will be introduced to all users by the end of August aims to cut down on frustrating episodes like those. If two websites are identical in every other way, the one that launches faster, jiggles around less when loading and lets users interact with it more quickly will be placed higher in Google Search. These three metrics, which Google calls core web vitals, will let the company rate a page's user experience, alongside existing Google measurements of how mobile-friendly it is, whether its connection is secure and whether it contains intrusive elements such as pop-ups"*.

Personally, I don't think NASDAQ should be telling companies who should be on their board. The exchange's new diversity rule got blessed by the SEC. Under the rule, companies must have at least two diverse directors, including one who self-identifies as female and one who self-identifies as either an underrepresented minority or LGBTQ+. Shareholders should decide the board composition and not Nasdaq.

Decent overall leadership article in Inc. ([great-leadership-brutal-truths](#)) laid out these Top 7 actions of leaders:

1. Leaders must face conflict to solve problems
2. Leaders must grow people
3. Leaders must put employees ahead of customers
4. Leaders must make the workplace safe
5. Leaders must be willing to listen to feedback
6. Leaders must apply the strength of vulnerability
7. Leaders must act with love and care

I am not knowledgeable on the science behind climate change but clearly something is happening. Big report put out this week ([climate-change-effects-may-be-irreversible](#)). The volatility of weather is way up --- big droughts, record heat waves, devastating wildfires. It is factually proven that the average temperature is rising. The effects are not linear in that a 1-degree difference in temperature has an exponential impact on things like water vaporization as warmer air holds more moisture. This will have major economic effects. For instance, grapes are very sensitive, and vineyards are moving north. Look for Pinot from Canada to overtake Oregon in years to come. Italy is now growing Avocados ([changing agricultural production](#)). The prime areas for lobster is moving north and will eventually be in Nova Scotia rather than Maine ([lobster-population-shift-maine](#)).

Social media at its worst. Young women watch altered images on TikTok and then fly to Florida and get a Brazilian Butt Lift from a dermatologist so they can look like Jlo ([bbl-brazilian-butt-lift-miami-cost-tiktok](#)). As Randy Moss would say — C'mon man.

Seems like there are lots of curmudgeons like me. From WSJ: *"The Summer Games drew an average of 15.5 million prime-time TV viewers over their 17-day run, the lowest audience for the Summer Games since NBC started broadcasting them in 1988 and a 42% decline from the Rio de Janeiro Olympics in 2016"*.

We have to stop blaming our weight gain on declining metabolism. Big study just published which says metabolism is steady from age 20-60! *"Central to their findings was that metabolism differs for all people across four distinct stages of life"* ([metabolism-weight-aging](#)):

- There's infancy, up until age 1, when calorie burning is at its peak, accelerating until it is 50 percent above the adult rate.
- Then, from age 1 to about age 20, metabolism gradually slows by about 3 percent a year.
- From age 20 to 60, it holds steady.
- And, after age 60, it declines by about 0.7 percent a year."

jml