# Managerial Labor Market Competition and Incentive Contracts

Job Market Talk at HEC Paris

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- Labor market competition gives total pay increases with firm size.

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   Incentive premium is higher in industries where the managerial labor market is more active.

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- Firm Size Incentive Premium and Managerial Labor Market:
   Incentive premium is higher in industries where the managerial labor market is more active.

## What I provide:

• An explanation based on the executive job ladder.

1

# **Introduction** — motivating facts

**Data:** U.S. S&P 1500 companies, 1992 - 2016

## Key variables:

- firm size by market capitalization
- performance-based incentives by PPS, pay-for-performance sensitivity

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## Size incentive premium:

• Controlling for total compensation, year × industry dummies, etc.

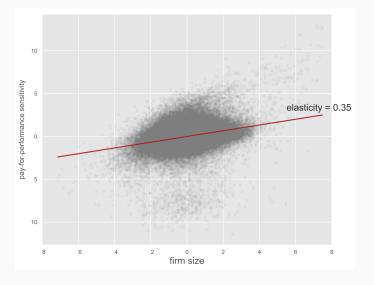


Figure 1: PPS increases in firm size (size incentive premium)

Scatter and linear fit of log(PPS) on log(Mktcap), based on S&P 1500 firms from 1992 to 2016.

# Introduction — size incentive premium and labor market

	log(PPS)				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
log(firm size)	0.585*** (0.0141)	0.347*** (0.0247)	0.316*** (0.0029)	0.325*** (0.0036)	0.316*** (0.0029)
log(firm size) × J-J rate			0.716** (0.1054)		
log(firm size) × GAI				0.055*** (0.0112)	
log(firm size) × inside-CEO-%					-0.087*** (0.0196)
log(total pay)		0.609*** (0.0350)	0.692*** (0.0046)	0.0687*** (0.0056)	0.684*** (0.0046)
tenure, age, year	X	X	X	X	X
other controls	X	X	X	X	X
industry	X	X			
$year \times industry$	X	Χ			
Obs. adj. $R^2$	146,747 0.442	128,006 0.482	128,006 0.487	79,476 0.482	128,006 0.485

- 1. GAI, general ability index is provided by Custódio et al. (2013)
- 2. Fraction of inside CEO is provided by Martijn Cremers and Grinstein (2013).

## Model:

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on-the-job executives can be poached by outside firms

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- labor market incentives decrease with firm size
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#### What are labor market incentives?

- on-the-job executives can be poached by outside firms
- labor market incentives: effort ← productivity ← poaching offer

# Introduction — model intuition, cont'd

Key assumption (Gabaix and Landier, 2008):

- cash flow = firm size × executive productivity
- larger firms can always outbid smaller ones
- the job ladder towards larger firms

# Introduction — model intuition, cont'd

Key assumption (Gabaix and Landier, 2008):

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- the job ladder towards larger firms

Labor market incentives decrease in firm size

- job ladder effect position on the ladder
- wealth effect wealthier executives are harder to incentivize

# Introduction — contributions

## This paper

- 1. documents the firm size incentive premium
- 2. develops a dynamic equilibrium framework to explain the premium
- 3. explains the significant increase in executive compensation since the mid 1970s (Frydman and Saks 2010)

#### Related Literature

- Assignment models:
  - Tervio (2008), Gabaix and Landier (2008), Edmans et al. (2009), etc.
  - My paper adds dynamics and search frictions.
- Moral hazard models
  - Gayle and Miller (2009), Gayle et al. (2015)
  - My paper features a job ladder towards larger firms.

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- Dynamic contract literature
  - moral hazard: Spear and Srivastava (1987), etc.
  - limited commitment: Thomas Worrall (1988, 1990), etc.
- Labor search literature
  - sequential auction: Postel-Vinay and Robin (2002), etc.

# **Road Map**

- 1. Model
- 2. Data & evidence
- 3. Structural estimation
- 4. Explain the pattern since the mid 1970s

# The Model

# Set Up: Moral Hazard

Discrete time and infinite periods

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Discrete time and infinite periods

#### Executives:

• risk averse, u(w) - c(e),  $e \in \{0,1\}$ , c(1) = c, c(0) = 0,

$$u(w) = \frac{w^{1-\sigma}}{1-\sigma}$$

- effort e stochastically increases executive productivity  $z \in \mathcal{Z}$
- z is persistent, follows a discrete Markov Chain process

$$z_t = \rho_0(e) + \rho_z z_{t-1} + \epsilon_t$$

ullet die with  $\eta \in (0,1)$ , the match breaks up, the job disappears

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#### Firms:

- ullet firm size  $s\in\mathcal{S}$ , exogenous and permanent
- production (cash flow)  $y(s,z) = \alpha_0 s^{\alpha_1} z$ ,  $\alpha_0, \alpha_1 \in (0,1]$ .

# Set Up: Managerial Labor Market

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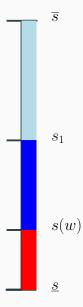
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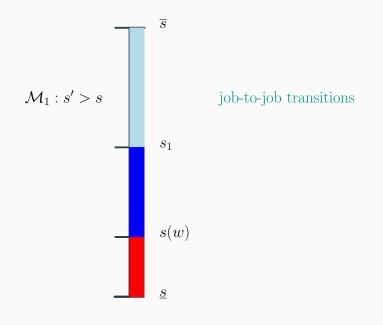
### Bertrand Competition:

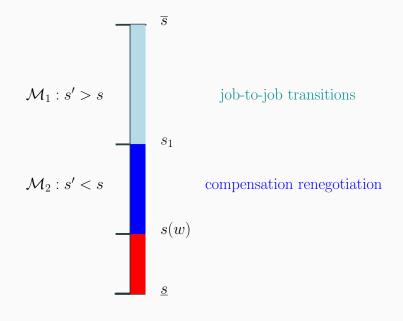
- current firm s versus outside firm s'
- each has a bidding frontier,  $\overline{W}(z,s)$ , defined by

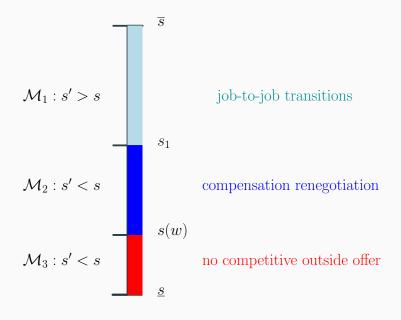
$$\Pi\Big(z,s,\overline{W}(z,s)\Big)=0$$

•  $\overline{W}(z,s)$  increases in z and s









# **Contracting Problem**

# Firms maximize profits by choosing

- current period compensation w
- state-contingent continuation value W(z', s')

# subject to

Promise-keeping Constraint,	(PKC)
Incentive Compatibility Constraint,	(IC)
Participation Constraint of executive,	(PC-Executive)
Participation Constraint of firm,	(PC-Firm)

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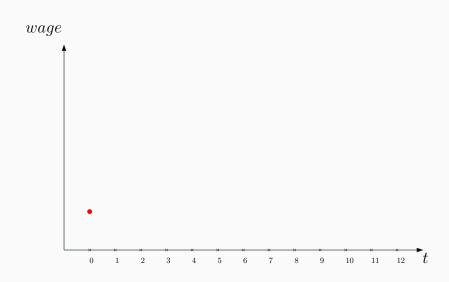
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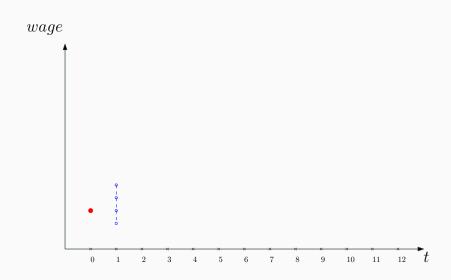
Details

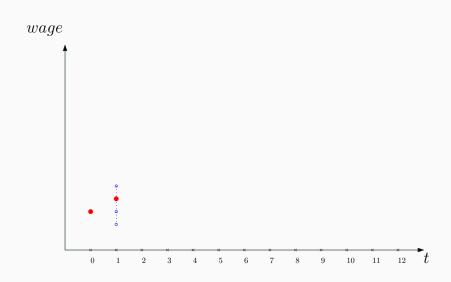
#### The Equilibrium

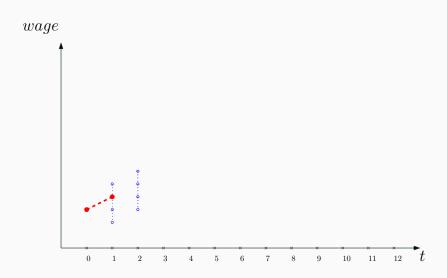
A stationary equilibrium is defined by

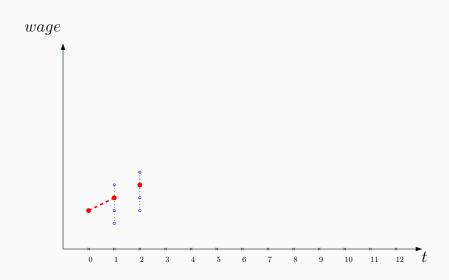
- value functions  $\{W^0, W, \Pi\}$ ;
- optimal contracts  $\sigma = \{w, W(z', s')\}$  for  $z' \in \mathbb{Z}$  and  $s' \in \mathbb{S}$ ;
- $\Gamma(z'|z)$  follows the optimal effort choice;
- a distribution of executives across employment states evolving according to flow equations.

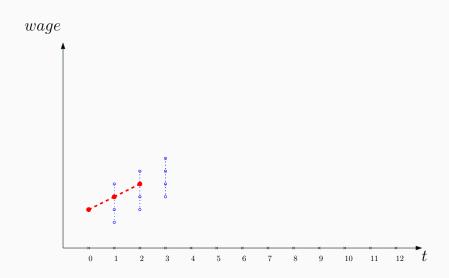


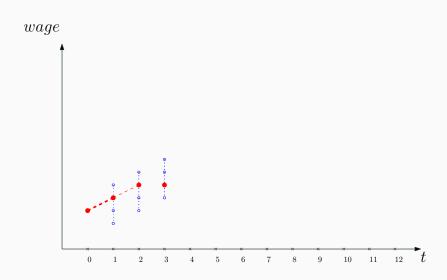


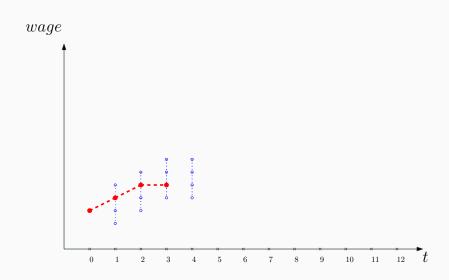


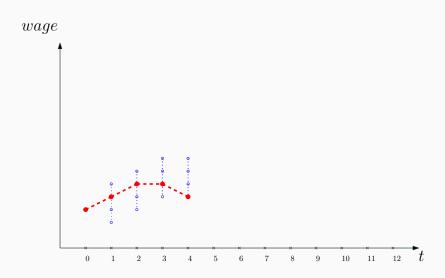


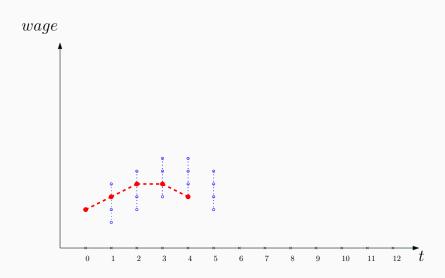


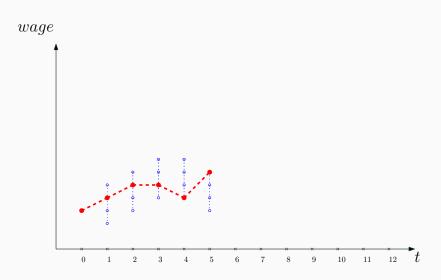


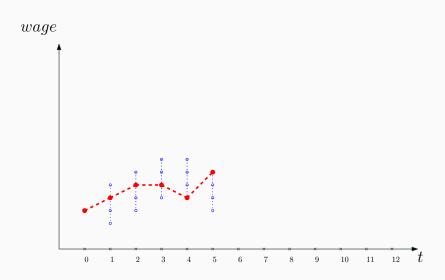


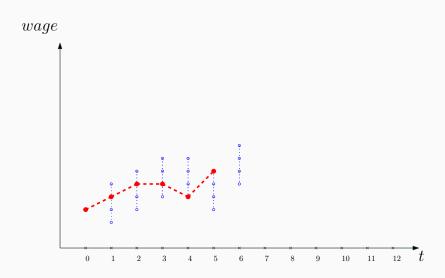


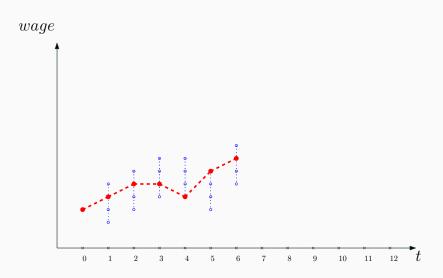


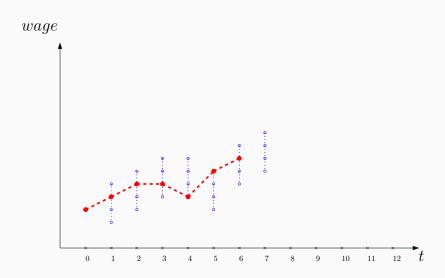


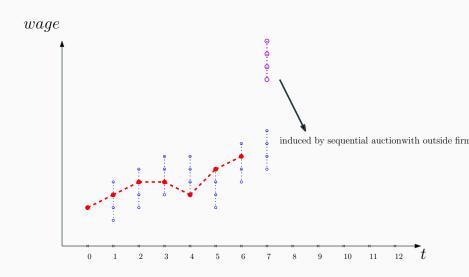


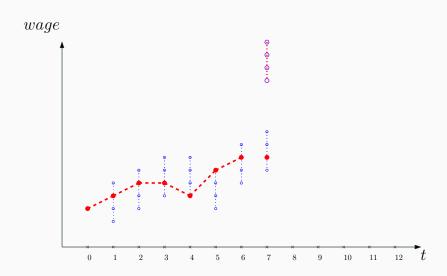


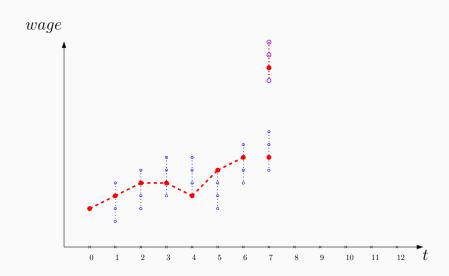


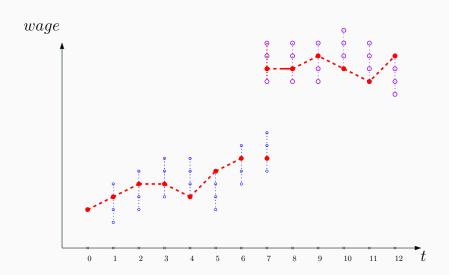


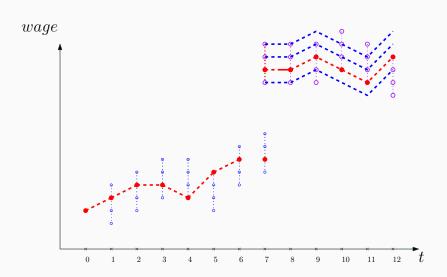












#### Labor market incentives

What is the incentive out of W(z')?

$$\mathcal{I}[W(z')] \equiv \mathbb{E}_{z'}\Big[W(z')|e=1\Big] - \mathbb{E}_{z'}\Big[W(z')|e=0\Big].$$

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The incentive compatibility constraint is

$$\underbrace{\sum_{s' \in \mathcal{M}_1} F(s') \mathcal{I}[\overline{W}(z',s)] + \sum_{s' \in \mathcal{M}_2} \mathcal{I}[\overline{W}(z',s')] F(s')}_{s' \in \mathcal{M}_1} + \underbrace{\sum_{s' \in \mathcal{M}_3} F(s') \mathcal{I}[W(z')]}_{s' \in \mathcal{M}_2} \ge \tilde{c},$$

Labor Market Incentives

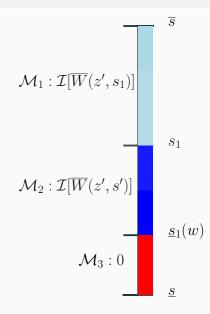
Performance-based Incentives

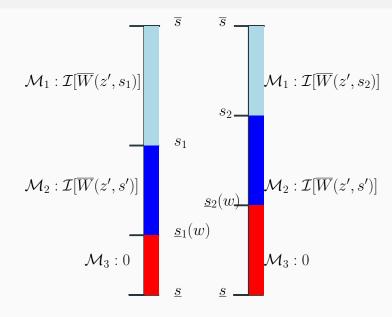
where

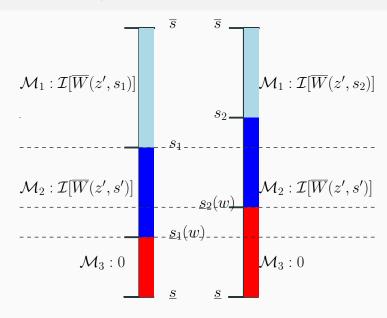
 $\mathcal{M}_1: s' \geq s, \text{ lead to job turnovers}$ 

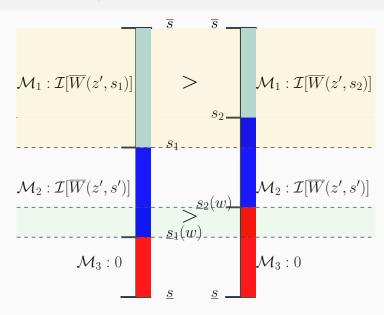
 $\mathcal{M}_2: s' < s, \text{ improve compensation, no job turnovers}$ 

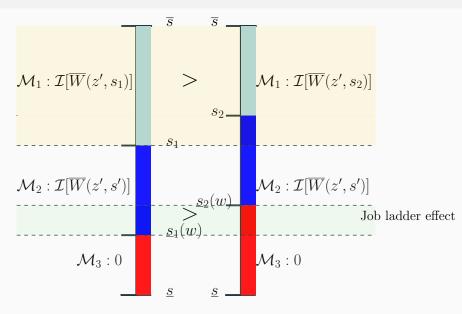
 $\mathcal{M}_3$ : other or no outside firms



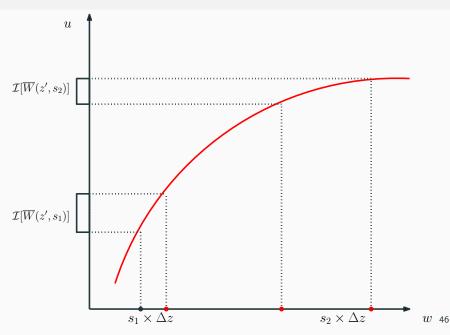


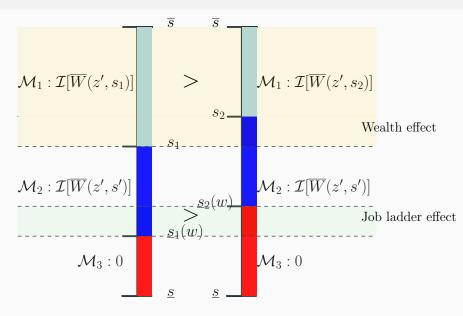






# Incentives from $\overline{W}(z',s)$ decrease in s





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#### **Proposition**

Suppose the executives' utility is of the CRRA form and the cost of effort  $c=\overline{c}(s)$ , then  $\mathcal{I}\Big(\overline{W}(z',s)\Big)$  decreases in s if

$$\sigma > 1 + \frac{s^{1-\alpha_1}}{\alpha_1} \psi'(s), \tag{1}$$

where  $\psi(s)$  is a function of s that is positive and increasing in s.

#### **Summary**

- Firms compete to retain/attract executives.
- Firm size matters.
- Labor market incentives decrease in firm size due to a job ladder effect and a wealth effect.

# Data and Evidence

#### Data

#### Assemble a new dataset

- ExecuComp & BoardEX + hand-collected from LinkedIn/Bloomberg
- ExecuComp: annual records on top executives' compensation
- BoardEX: detailed executive employment history
- Final sample: 35,088 executives, 218,168 executive-year obs., spanning the period 1992 to 2016.

#### Define job turnovers

- Job-to-job transition: leaves the current firm, and starts to work in another firm within n? days.
- Exit: otherwise.

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#### Define job turnovers

- Job-to-job transition: leaves the current firm, and starts to work in another firm within 180 days.
- Exit: otherwise.

#### Reduced-form evidence

- 1. Managerial labor market is active. Details
  - annual job-to-job transition rate 5%
  - relatively stable over years and across industries
- 2. Executives climb job ladders towards larger firms. Details
  - about 66% of job-to-job transitions are towards larger firms
  - for the rest, 20% of them are promotions from non-CEO to CEO

#### Reduced-form evidence

- 3. Executives in larger firms have less job-to-job transitions. Details
  - Cox model, 1% increase in firm size leads 8.3% lower hazard of job-to-job transitions.
- 4. Starting from the same level of compensation, the pay-growth is higher in larger firms. Details
  - 1% increase in firm size leads to 10% increase in pay-growth rate

# **Estimation**

# **Model Specifications**

• utility function of CRRA form

$$u(w) = \frac{w^{1-\sigma}}{1-\sigma}$$

production function of multiplicative form

$$y(s,z)=e^{\alpha_0}s^{\alpha_1}z$$

• productivity process by AR(1), discretized by Tauchen (1989)

$$z_t = \rho_0(e) + \rho_z z_{t-1} + \epsilon_t$$

• poaching firm distribution by truncated log-normal F(s)

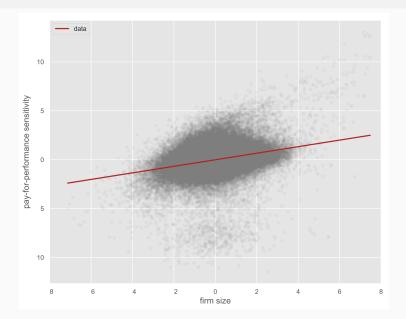
### **Parameters**

Parameters	Description
$\overline{\eta}$	the death probability
$\lambda_1$	the offer arrival probability
$ ho_{z}$	the $AR(1)$ coefficient of productivity shocks
$\mu_{z}$	the mean of productivity shocks for $\emph{e}=1$
$\sigma_{z}$	the standard deviation of productivity shocks
$\mu_s$	the mean of $F(s)$
$\sigma_{s}$	the standard deviation of $F(s)$
C	cost of efforts
$\sigma$	relative risk aversion
$\alpha_0, \alpha_1$	production function parameters

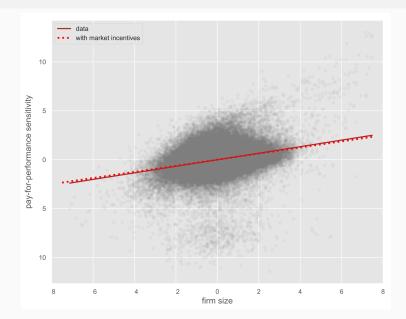
### **Moments and Estimates**

Moments	Data	Model	Estimates	Standard Error
Exit Rate	0.0691	0.0691	$\eta = 0.0695$	0.0127
J-J Transition Rate	0.0498	0.0473	$\lambda_1 = 0.3164$	0.0325
$\hat{ ho}_{profit}$	0.7683	0.6299	$ ho_z=0.8004$	0.0366
Mean(profit)	0.1260	0.1144	$\mu_z=0.0279$	0.0014
Var(profit)	0.0144	0.0160	$\sigma_z^2 = 0.1198$	0.0044
Mean(log(size))	7.4515	7.4806	$\mu_s = 1.2356$	0.0365
Var(log(size))	2.3060	2.1610	$\sigma_s = 2.5795$	0.1211
Mean(log(total pay))	7.2408	7.2665	$\alpha_0 = -1.5534$	0.0147
$Var(\log(\text{total pay}))$	1.1846	0.8960	$\alpha_1 = 0.5270$	0.0217
$eta_{total}$ pay - size	0.3830	0.2822		
etaPPS - total pay	1.1063	1.1997	$\sigma = 1.1038$	0.0030
Mean(log(PPS))	8.4994	8.478	c = 0.0814	0.0259
Var(log(PPS))	3.4438	3.35872		

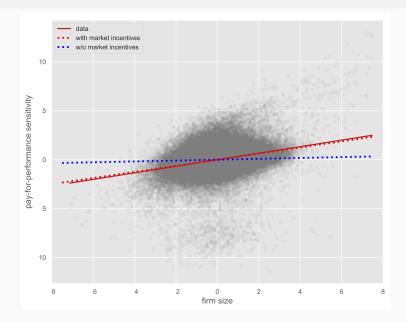
### Data



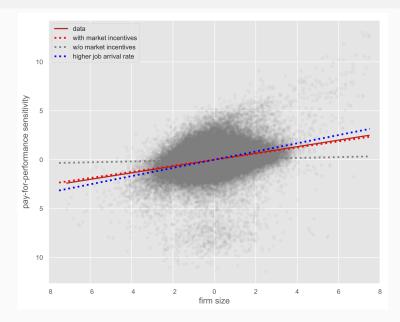
### Predictions — model



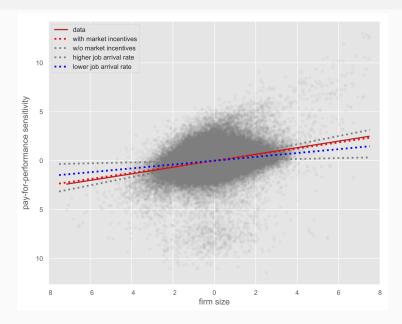
### Predictions — without labor market incentives



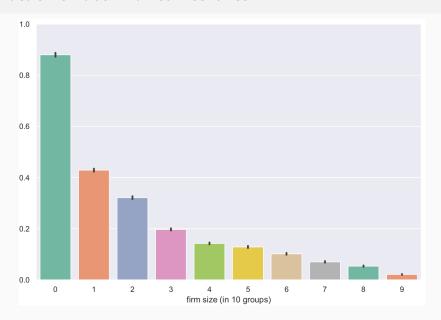
# Predictions — with higher job arrival rate



## Predictions — with lower job arrival rate



### Fraction of labor market incentives



# The pre-1970 puzzle

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Frydman and Saks (2010) document that since the mid-1970s:

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- 2. more inequality among executives
- 3. higher correlation between compensation and firm size

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These facts can be quantitatively explained by an exogenous increase in higher job arrival rate  $\lambda_1$ .

- Huson et al. (2001), Murphy and Zabojnik (2007): An increasing number of CEO openings have been filled through external hires.
- Frydman (2005): Executive jobs have increasingly placed greater emphasis on general rather than firm-specific skills.

### Calibration for moments in the 1970s and 1990s

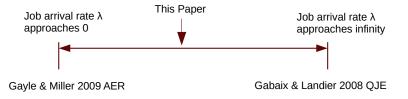
Moments	D	ata	Model	
(dollar value in year 2000)	1970s	1990s	$\lambda_1 = 0.05$	$\lambda_1 = 0.4$
Mean total pay (thousand)	1090	4350	985	4296
Mean size (million)	-	-	2426	5710
Mean PPS (thousand)	21.743	120.342	24.972	125.310
$eta_{ ext{totalpay}- ext{size}}$	0.199	0.264	0.175	0.240
Percentiles of total pay (thousand)				
25th percentile	640	1350	109	1217
50th percentile	930	2360	478	2957
75th percentile	1310	4430	1596	5860

# A conjecture by Gabaix and Landier (2008)

Another possibility is that the U.S. CEO market before 1970 was more like the contemporary Japanese CEO market. Companies would groom their CEOs in-house and not poach them from other firms. Hence, this labor market would just not be described well by our model. We conclude that our frictionless benchmark model does not apply unamended to the pre-1970 sample and leave the search for a fuller model to future research.

— Gabaix and Landier (2008)

#### A model links GM and GL



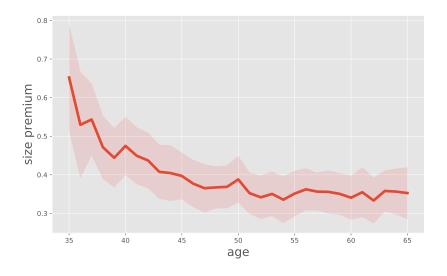
- In terms of compensation level, a "weighted sum" of GM and GL
- In terms of incentives, the interaction gives labor market incentives

# Takeaways

### **Takeaways**

- Moral hazard problem is not necessarily more severe in larger firms.
- Small and medium firms take advantage of the labor market incentives.
- Managerial labor market competition explains firm size incentive premium.

# Firm size incentive premium over age



# Thanks you for your attention.

http://bohuecon.github.io



# **Contracting Problem**

Firms choose  $\{w, W(z', s')\}$  to maximize profits

$$\Pi(z,s,V) = \max_{w,W(z',s')} \sum_{z' \in \mathbb{Z}} \sum_{s' \in \mathbb{S}} \left[ y(s,z') - w + \tilde{\beta} \Pi(z',s,W(z',s')) \right] \tilde{F}(s') \Gamma(z'|z)$$

subject to

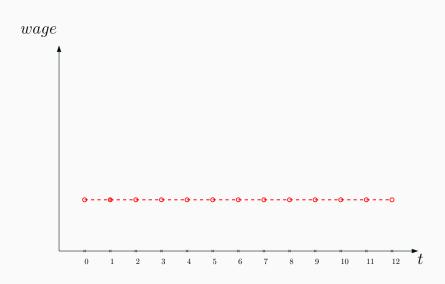
$$V = u(w) - c + \tilde{\beta} \sum_{z' \in \mathbb{Z}} \sum_{s' \in \mathbb{S}} W(z', s') \tilde{F}(s') \Gamma(z'|z), \tag{PKC}$$

$$\tilde{\beta} \sum_{z' \in \mathbb{Z}} \sum_{s' \in \mathbb{S}} W(z', s') \tilde{F}(s') \left( \Gamma(z'|z) - \Gamma^{s}(z'|z) \right) \ge c, \tag{IC}$$

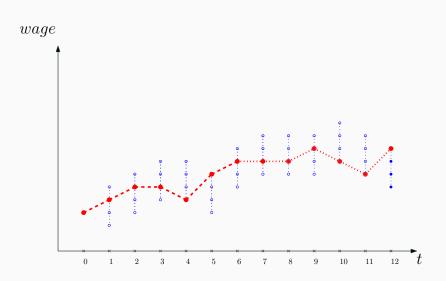
$$W(z',s') \ge \min\{\overline{W}(z',s'), \overline{W}(z',s)\},$$
 (PC-Executive)

$$W(z',s') \leq \overline{W}(z',s).$$
 (PC-Firm)

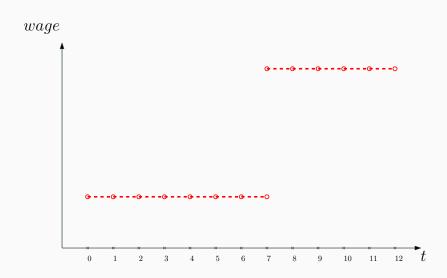
# No Moral Hazard, Full Commitment



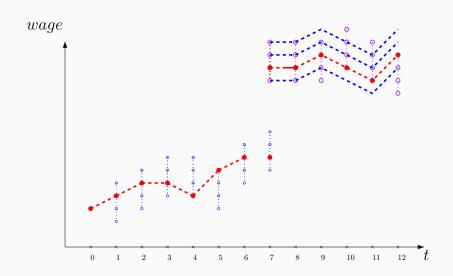
# **Only Moral Hazard**



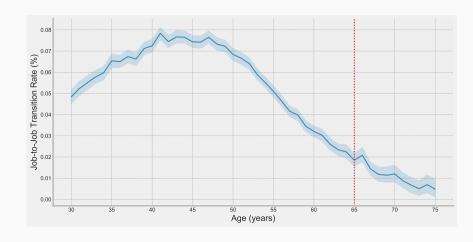
# **Only Limited Commitment**



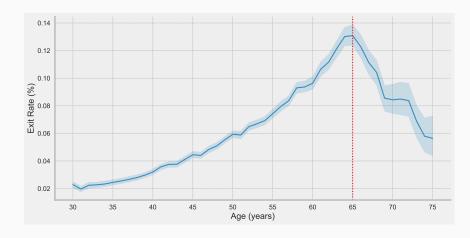
# **Optimal Contract**



# Job-to-job transition rate over age



### Exit rate over age



#### Climb the Job Ladder

Table 3: Change of firm size upon job-to-job transitions

Panel A: All executives					
Firm size proxy	Total obs.	Firm size decrease obs. (%)	Firm size increase obs. (%)		
Market Cap	2567	985 (39%)	1582 (61%)		
Sales	2617	1051 (40%)	1566 (60%)		
Book Assets	2616	1038 (40%)	1578 (60%)		

Panel B: Across age groups

Age groups	Total obs.	Firm size decrease obs. (%)	Firm size increase obs. (%)
≤ 40	100	34 (34%)	66 (66%)
[40, 45)	381	135 (35%)	246 (65%)
[45, 50)	701	262 (37%)	439 (63%)
[50, 55)	766	304 (40%)	462 (60%)
[55, 60)	261	179 (43%)	82 (67%)
[60, 65)	73	52 (39%)	21 (61%)
[65, 70)	30	7 (25%)	23 (75%)
$\geq 70$	6	1 (16%)	5 (84%)

Table 4: Job-to-Job Transitions and Firm Size

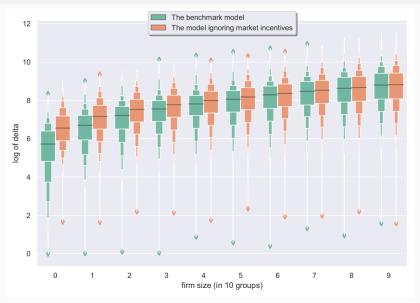
Job	-to-Job Transition	
•	(1)	(2)
log(Firm Size)	0.917**** (0.0109)	0.972* (0.0139)
Age	0.985**** (0.00273)	0.967*** (0.0112)
log(tdc1)		0.830**** (0.0150)
Market-Book Ratio	0.942**** (0.0150)	0.939**** (0.0157)
Market Value Leverage	1.033** (0.0139)	1.035** (0.0142)
Profitability	0.913**** (0.0197)	0.905**** (0.0199)
Year FE	Yes	Yes
Industry FE	Yes	Yes
N chi2	154635 496.1	118119 491.4

Table 1: Compensation growth increases with firm size

	$\Delta \log(tdc1)$					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
log(firm size)_1	0.112*** (0.00903)	0.154*** (0.0129)	0.108*** (0.00183)	0.107*** (0.00189)	0.141*** (0.00177)	0.127*** (0.00489)
$\begin{array}{l} log(firm\ size)_{-1} \\ \times\ EE90 \end{array}$			0.0711* (0.0403)			
$\begin{array}{l} log(firm\ size)_{-1} \\ \times\ EE190 \end{array}$				0.0759** (0.0353)		
$\begin{array}{l} log(firm\ size)_{-1} \\ \times\ gai \end{array}$					0.0233*** (0.00546)	
$log(firm\ size)_{-1} \times inside\ CEO$						-0.000232*** (0.0000696)
$log(tdc1)_{-1}$	-0.290*** (0.0200)	-0.390*** (0.0262)	-0.251*** (0.00173)	-0.251*** (0.00173)	-0.304*** (0.00267)	-0.253*** (0.00173)
Dummies	X	X	X	X	X	X
Other contorls		X	X	X	X	X
Observations adj. R <sup>2</sup>	129068 0.157	106819 0.216	106820 0.260	106820 0.260	58188 0.233	106820 0.262

Table 2: Performance-based incentives increases with firm size						
	log(delta)					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
log(firm size)	0.604*** (0.0141)	0.347*** (0.0247)	0.525*** (0.00512)	0.529*** (0.00499)	0.561*** (0.00310)	0.571*** (0.0139)
log(firm size) × EE90			0.359* (0.118)			
log(firm size) × EE190				0.415** (0.101)		
log(firm size) × gai					0.0648*** (0.00156)	
log(firm size) × inside CEO						-0.000458* (0.000202)
log(tdc1)		0.609*** (0.0350)	-0.251*** (0.00173)	-0.251*** (0.00173)	-0.304*** (0.00267)	-0.253*** (0.00173)
Dummies	X	X	X	X	X	X
Other contorls		X	X	X	X	X
Observations adj. $R^2$	146747 0.442	128006 0.514	125858 0.521	125858 0.521	75747 0.531	125858 0.521

# If labor market incentives are ignored ...





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CEO's of "Small Firms" in S&P 500
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\_\_\_\_\_ tdc1: total compensation delta: dollar-percentage incentive Company Market Cap tdc1 delta | millions 000's 000's/%| 60.939838 I

1113.547

1130.155

1194.977

1328.171

1368.129

1474.909

1276.448

1775.531

2602.093

3094.134

2638.243

4584.605

2709.708

1102.528

3738.803

8945.338

950.098

165.73476 I

473.70974 I

566.14187

128.10688 |

344.02299 I

99.525198 I

428.10996

133.42285 |

431.01562 |

158.65569

INCYTE CORP 446.408 2432.9734 WESTROCK CD 547.828 2800.668 130.96215 | ENVISION HEALTHCARE CORP 678.6906 1777.991 217.729 | PRICELINE GROUP INC 886.0817

SKYWORKS SOLUTIONS INC

ALASKA AIR GROUP INC

ACUITTY BRANDS INC.

CENTENE CORP

HOLOGIC INC

ANSYS INC

GARTNER INC

LKQ CORP 889.9763 REGENERON PHARMACEUTICALS 897.3801

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CEO's of "Large Firms" in S&P 500
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+----
 tdc1: total compensation
 delta: dollar-percentage incentives
               Company Market Cap tdc1 delta |
                        millions 000's 000's/%|
           TIME WARNER INC 79965.89 18545.215 1212.9513 |
            CONOCOPHILLIPS 80163.26 35442.729 4520.5571 |
   UNITED PARCEL SERVICE INC.
                       82439.55 3120.042
                                         340.01132 |
  VERIZON COMMUNICATIONS INC
                       83233.88
                                    19425 861.09722
            HOME DEPOT INC
```

95494.39

97836.48

121238.6

126749.6

129381.2

AT&T INC

COCA-COLA CO

PEPSICO INC

CHEVRON CORP

INTEL CORP

CISCO SYSTEMS INC

WAL-MART STORES INC

EXXON MOBIL CORP

INTL BUSINESS MACHINES CORP

86128.2 35750.103

94944.89 17283.529

147738.2 6101.835

192048.2 16652.894

12781.61

15268.415

16269.85

21693.615

13125.882

344490.6 48922.808 3843.027

2014.3633

1666.3201 I

425.62199 |

2919.7995 I

5981.3853 I

1106.8351 I

1298.8777 I

1874.5755 I

1465.7708 I

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