



For Immediate Release

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***MORE STATUTORY HOLIDAYS BENEFICIAL FOR SOME
– BUT NOT FOR EVERYONE***

Vancouver, BC - If you had one more statutory holiday, you'd be a happier, rested, and therefore more productive employee, correct?

Maybe – but there's no evidence to suggest any direct correlation. More vacation time may make you a better worker in theory, but what happens if your occupation is not "on the clock", as is the case with many British Columbians?

The numbers

Compared to the rest of the world, Canada has fewer stats and vacation days than most other countries. But even though we collectively log more days on the job, our productivity really isn't much better than countries which give employees lots more time off - and in some cases it's even worse.

Statistics from the Conference Board of Canada show our country's productivity growth on the decline - the world's 12th worst record. Most Canadians are officially entitled to 19 paid days off work per year (in practice, though most will receive around 25).

Compare that to most European countries where the total number of days off is frequently 30 or more per year (36 in Great Britain), yet their productivity records are better. Confounding things even further, employees in The Netherlands, Japan and Ireland each have 20 days off, but their growth in productivity are second, fifth and 14th respectively. And then there is the U.S. which is tops in growth, but along with Canada, has the least number of mandated days off.

Clearly the number of days off is not the only factor at play.

“On the Clock” vs. “Off the Clock”

“The numbers don't support the notion that one more day off is going to help, or hinder, our productivity. Fact is, there's simply no evidence of any direct link,” says Ian Cook, Director of Research and Learning at the BC Human Resources Management Association (BC HRMA).

“Counting the actual number of hours or days ‘in the office’ is misleading. It has less relevance in economies like Canada's, where much of our work is in resource extraction, information, technology, entrepreneurial, and service activities. Canadians in these kinds of occupations are often required to add even more hidden ‘off the clock’ hours by doing extra work elsewhere - at home, travelling, even while away on vacation.

(more)

“We should be productivity kings if you go simply by number of days spent on the job - but there’s another factor,” Cook adds. “The kind of work, like manufacturing or other industries that “create” permanent, tangible products that often have a greater value-added component, is usually accomplished on the clock. Repetition and fatigue can be common, and for these kinds of jobs, research shows working more than 48 hours a week in these kinds of jobs can actually result in reduced productivity, or even accidents. So, in these kinds of jobs, an I extra day off might in fact be helpful. But in terms of a broad brush assertion, it doesn’t work for many of us in Canada because we’ll just compensate for that extra time out of the office by doing that work off the clock.”

About BC HRMA (www.bchrma.org)

BC Human Resources Management Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to advancing professional people practices through professional development opportunities such as conference, workshops, symposiums, mentorship and volunteer programs. The association provides leadership to more than 5,500 members and 3,000 affiliates that collectively represent CEOs, directors of HR, consultants, educators, students, HR generalists, and small-business owners. Established in 1942, BC HRMA is a founding member of the Canadian Council of Human Resources Associations (CCHRA) and the exclusive grantor of the Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) designation in British Columbia.

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