

# **How You Can Improve Management Results Starting Right Now**



**A White Paper on Productivity by Terry Fearon**

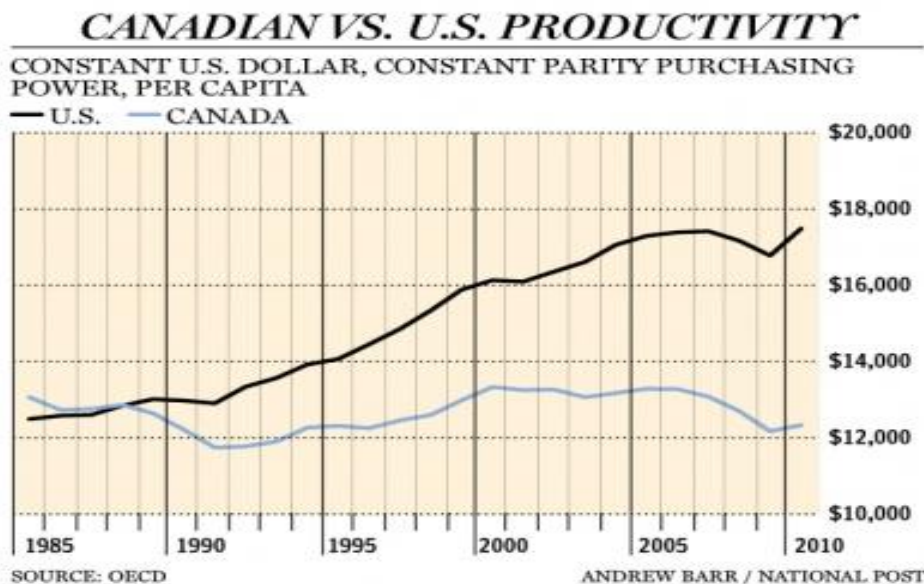
July 20, 2019

## HOW YOU CAN IMPROVE MANAGEMENT RESULTS STARTING RIGHT NOW

If you are in business, you constantly hear the bad news. “Productivity is down in Atlantic Canada.” “We need better productivity.” “Canada is a productivity tortoise.” “Canadian productivity is lagging behind the U.S. and the rest of the world.” You become numb and immune to the endless stream of negative rhetoric. You simply don’t know what to do.

### Canada vs. U. S. Productivity

Meantime, the global Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) points to the disappointingly slow pace of growth in Canadian productivity. “Along with a weakening manufacturing sector, the OECD report says Canada’s productivity has been declining since 2002. In the United States, meanwhile, productivity has increased by about 30% in the past 20 years.” [1]



If Canada is to continue to improve as a productive nation, we, as leaders, must focus. We must encourage efficiency and innovation in small to medium sized enterprises; improve institutional efficiency in government (e.g. the New Brunswick government’s current efforts); reduce the burden of regulatory requirements; and invest in human capital at the secondary, post-secondary and organizational levels. Leaders of business must invest in building better, more productive leaders, managers and supervisors.

## HOW YOU CAN IMPROVE MANAGEMENT PRODUCTIVITY STARTING RIGHT NOW

### Labour Productivity Growth in the Total Economy [2]

Variable		Labour productivity annual compounded growth rate								
Time		1970-1980	1970-2009	1980-1985	1985-1990	1990-1995	1995-2000	2001-2007	2007-2009	2009-2011
<b>Country</b>										
Canada		2	1.5	1.8	0.3	1.6	2	1	0.2	0.8
France		4	2.5	3.5	2.2	2	2	1.5	-0.8	1.4
Germany		3.8	2.4	2.2	2.5	2.5	1.8	1.6	-1.3	1.4
Italy		4.1	1.8	1.4	2.2	2.1	0.9	0.2	-1.4	1.2
Japan		4.3	3	3.7	4.5	2.1	2	1.6	-0.3	1.7
United Kingdom		2.7	2.3	2.7	1.4	2.9	3.3	2.3	-1.5	1.9
United States		1.6	1.7	1.7	1.2	1.2	2.4	2	1.4	1.6
<b>G7 countries</b>		2.9	2.2	2.3	2.2	1.9	2.3	1.7	0.2	1.6

data extracted on 18 Jul 2012 from OECD.Stat

The above chart provides extensive evidence of Canada's below average productivity growth since 1995. Note that of the G7 countries; only Italy's performance was worse than Canada's. In the last five years, Canada's productivity growth is at its lowest according to The *Global Competitiveness Report* of the World Economic Forum. A very revealing economic indicator is labour productivity as it illustrates a vital measure of economic growth, competitiveness, and living standards within an economy. "It is the measure of labour productivity (and all that this measure takes into account) which helps explain the principal economic foundations that are necessary for both economic growth and social development." [3]

### Canada vs. Atlantic Canada Productivity

Here in Atlantic Canada, the gap is even more profound. "In 2002, output per worker in Atlantic Canada was 82.8 percent of the national average. But in the manufacturing sector, the gap was much larger, with Atlantic Canada's output per worker level at only 77.0 percent of the Canadian level. The gaps in manufacturing capital and total factor productivity were even larger at 64.7 and 58.9 percent respectively." [4]

### What is Productivity? : Are You a Productive leader?

In general, productivity is the measure of how efficiently goods or services are delivered; given a set of inputs, such as capital, raw materials and labour. Productivity is most basically defined as efficiency per unit of labour. If we scrutinize capital, total factor productivity and labour productivity we are soon awash in a sea of charts and statistics. As leaders, managers and supervisors, we are continually focused on the complexities of these interrelated issues but there is one thing missing.....you. Are you a productive leader?

## **HOW YOU CAN IMPROVE MANAGEMENT PRODUCTIVITY STARTING RIGHT NOW**

### **Do Good Leaders Neglect Their Own Productivity?**

Leaders, managers and supervisors are so concerned with trying to optimize labour productivity that they often neglect their own personal productivity. The harsh reality is that some leaders are far more effective and productive than others. Leadership coaching pioneer, Paul J. Meyer once personally shared that the essence of leadership is that you have a vision. It must be one that you can articulate clearly and firmly on every occasion. That means that you know where you are now, know where you want to go and are specifically working on a way to get there.

Many leaders, managers and supervisors don't realize how deeply they impact the success (or failure) of their organizations. According to a sweeping study of more than 25,000 employees by Michael Leimbach, "Managers and leaders have the major impact on the Fulfillment Satisfaction of employees and, consequently, on how well they perform."

Effective leaders, managers and supervisors must be personally productive before they can expect their team, their department or their organization to be productive. Good leaders feed their vision by setting realistic goals every year, every month, every week and every day.

So, are you personally productive? Are you one of those leaders who are spending too much time in too many meetings? Are you stressed-out, frustrated and tired of dealing with people problems? Are you playing catch-up because of interruptions? Do you feel overwhelmed because your to-do list stretches over your desk and around the corner? Do you feel guilty because your family finally gave up and made vacation plans without you?

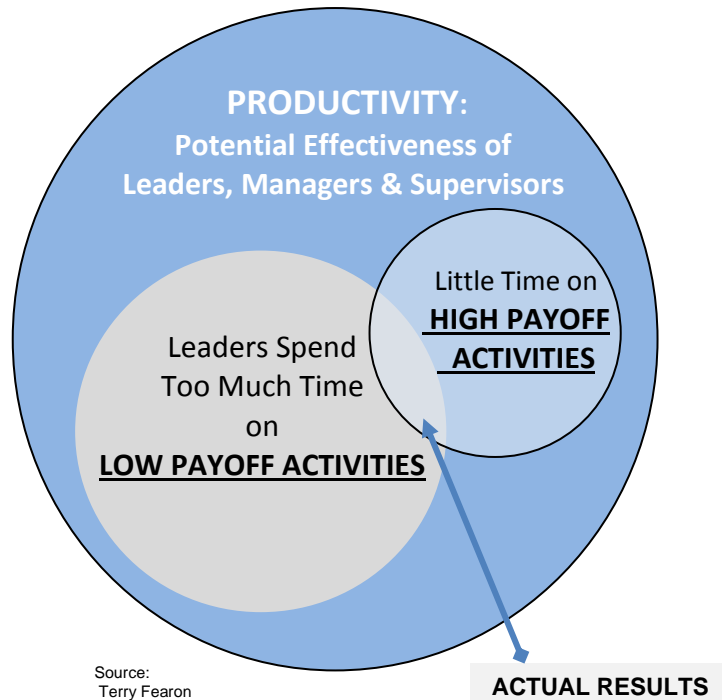
These are all symptoms of leaders, managers and supervisors who have forsaken their own personal productivity to everyone's detriment--yourself, your team, your department and your organization.

### **The Tyranny of the Urgent**

If workplace crisis is common for you; you are a slave to the tyranny of the urgent. You are spending too much time in reactive mode. You are firefighting because you waited too long to perform the important tasks. Now they are urgent and you have no choice. You must act now! No question!

You would not be in crisis if you truly knew and focused on your HIGH PAYOFF ACTIVITIES (HPA's). For leaders, managers, and supervisors; HPA's are preparation, planning, prevention, delegation and relationships. By spending as much time as possible focusing on the important tasks BEFORE they became urgent, you would be proactive and much more effective. You would become a productive leader, manager or supervisor.

## HOW YOU CAN IMPROVE MANAGEMENT PRODUCTIVITY STARTING RIGHT NOW



### Why Leaders, Managers and Supervisors Are Not Productive

You might be surprised by this revelation. For leaders, managers and supervisors, about twenty percent of our tasks give us about eighty percent of our results. This twenty percent are the aforementioned HPA's. The corollary, quite clearly, is that eighty percent of our tasks give us twenty percent of our results. The eighty percent represents LOW PAYOFF ACTIVITIES (LPA's). The shocking news is that most people in your organization spend too much time on LPA's. It gets worse when people spend time on No Payoff Activities. Results —poor personal productivity.

### The Productivity Paradox

You cannot expect technology to solve all your personal productivity issues as a leader, manager and supervisor. Despite the proliferation of computers, productivity growth was relatively slow from the 1970s through the early 1990s. Although several possible causes for the slowdown have been proposed there is no consensus. The debate continues beyond the question of whether just computers can significantly increase productivity to whether the potential to increase productivity is becoming exhausted.

## **HOW YOU CAN IMPROVE MANAGEMENT PRODUCTIVITY STARTING RIGHT NOW**

### **Be Productive and Win**

Despite all the conflicting and confusing formulas that promote success, one thing will always be true: If you have a vision of where you want to go, can identify the specific goals and actions that will take you there and understand what the real High Payoff Activities are; you will get results and become a productive leader.

If you accept that truth, you need to think of your own personal productivity and what it will mean to you, your family and the success of your organization and livelihood. You might already know what to change, but you need a process to help you achieve that change.

I would really like to sit down with you to explore how we might serve your needs. Together, we can guarantee measurable results with positive, lasting change.

Terry Fearon  
Senior Leadership Coach  
Atlantic Canada

“Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Willing is not enough; we must do.”  
Goethe



“Canada’s Premier Leadership Development Resource”



LMI Canada Inc. (Leadership Lantica Ltd.)  
3 Laura Lane  
Fredericton, NB CANADA E6L 1P8  
C 506.470.5673  
[www.lmicanada.ca](http://www.lmicanada.ca) [tfearon@lmicanada.ca](mailto:tfearon@lmicanada.ca)

## HOW YOU CAN IMPROVE MANAGEMENT PRODUCTIVITY STARTING RIGHT NOW

### References

1. FinancialPost.com "Productive Conversations" Gordon Isfield, June 18, 2012
2. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), [www.OECD.Stat](http://www.OECD.Stat), data extracted, July 18, 2012
3. Rebecca Freeman. OECD Statistics Directorate. Division of Structural Economic Statistics. ""Labour Productivity Indicators", July 2008.
4. Centre for the Study of Living Standards, Ottawa, "The Canada-Atlantic Manufacturing Productivity Gap: A Detailed Analysis, Andrew Sharpe, Executive Director, Prepared for ACOA, December, 2003
5. Michael Leimbach from "Business Performance(, Employee Satisfaction and Leadership Practices") Performance Improvement, Volume 36, Issue 5, pages 29-33, 1997
6. Paul J. Meyers, Effective Personal Productivity, Leadership Management International, Waco, 1998
7. Brynjolfsson, Erik (1993). "The productivity paradox of information technology". *Communications of the ACM* **36** (12): 66–77.