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Job creation

Written by BRIAN LOCKHART

So, picture this.

You're at home one afternoon enjoying your day off, drinking Bud Lite out of the can, munching on some kind of trail mix while relaxing on the sofa in the rec-room and watching an episode of Survivor or whatever inane TV show that is your secret pleasure, when the doorbell rings.

You open the door to find a local kid standing there with a big smile and rake.

?Would you like me to rake up the leaves on your lawn for $10?? he asks.

You look out at your well-manicured front lawn, carefully mowed to 2.5 inches, and weedless thanks to that special bag of illegal weed and feed you stashed away in the garage before they changed the laws.

You don't have any trees on your lot ? at all. There isn't a single leaf to be raked.

Thanking the kid for his offer, you tell him sorry, but you have no leaves to rake.

Fast forward three months. It's your day off. You've switched to a craft beer, Hockley Valley Dark, for the winter season. An episode of Real Housewives of New Jersey is on the TV and you watch the action as two housewives badmouth the other women on the show. You have a bag of peanuts in the shell for a snack.

The doorbell rings. It's the same kid, except this time he is holding a shovel.

?Would you like me to shovel your driveway for $10?? he asks.

You look at your driveway. It's covered in three feet of snow. Because of the riveting excitement of watching the Real Housewives, you didn't realize it had been snowing.

You contemplate the chore ahead and consider your aching back from all the TV watching.

?Sure kid, go ahead,? you say.

The difference those few months makes is the first time the kid arrives, there simply is no work.

You won't pay someone for not doing a job. It's unfortunate for the enterprising kid, but in order for him to make a few dollars so he can buy a new video game, he'll have to move to tree country and hopefully find a person with a lot of trees who also is willing to pay for his service.

That's the way it works ? a job provides a needed service for someone willing to pay for that service.

Whenever there is an election, there is always talk of ?job creation.' Some parties like to toss that phrase around more than others.

Somehow they make it sound like if they get elected they will magically find work for a few hundred thousand people. Except you can't create jobs where none exist.

There is proof of this in a lot of abandoned ghost towns just in Ontario. If the economy tanks, the local mine closes, or the railway decides to move south and make the stop at Hooterville rather than Pixley, no one is going to step in and put the local population on the payroll if there is no work to be done.

Russia tried to make this happen after the Revolution of 1917. A ?nation of workers' they called it. The system tried to give everyone a job, regardless if it was needed or not.

The result was gangs of babushka wearing, late middle-aged women, tarring the roads, because at the time you were given a job whether you liked it or not. That system didn't work and gave a lot of women old calloused hands before their time.

Employment is the basis of our economy. You provide a service to your employer who pays you. You take that money to pay for housing and food, you buy your food from Joe the local produce guy, who uses that money to pay for his house. Pretty simple.

You can't however just create jobs where none exist.

Government can't create jobs, but they can work to create conditions that are attractive to employers and create opportunity. According to Revenue Canada, around 70 per cent of the work force is employed in a small business ? that being a company with less than 100 employees ? although that is actually is still a fairly large number.

Every time you make conditions favourable for a company to select your town to set up shop, you will create opportunity.

Opportunity is the key to prosperity.

While some argue that job creation in itself through spending taxpayers' money will lead to valid employment, the truth is, as pointed out by people who know how the economy works, ?sooner or later you run out of other people's money.?