

For Whom Men Compete

-Correlation among unemployment, financial crisis, productivity, working hours and excessive competition-

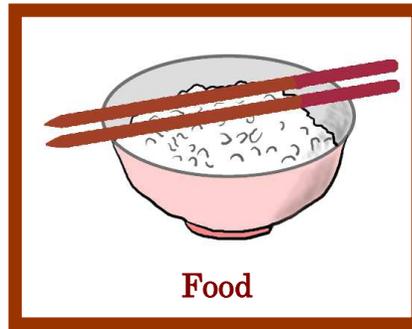
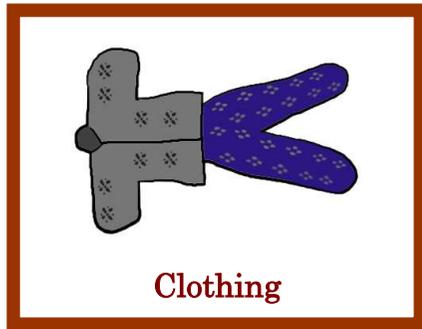


Jun Togo

Once upon a time, there was a village that has a self-sufficient economy. The number of villagers was 50.



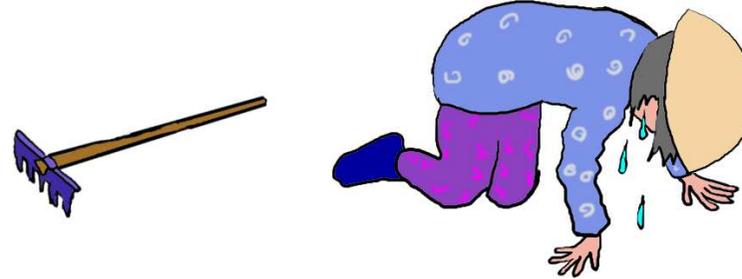
For people to survive, food, clothing and shelter is needed.



To produce food, clothing and shelter for 50 villagers, it was necessary for all 50 people to work for 20 hours from morning to evening every day. The total working hours were 1,000 hours (50 people × 20 hours) per day.



They had little time to sleep and were very tired.



We do not want to make our children suffer like us. The villagers thought and they desperately tried to make improvements of the productivity whenever they could find any spare time.



As the result of their efforts, the productivity of the village has doubled after 100 years.



Now it becomes possible to produce food, clothing and shelter for all the 50 people with a half of 1,000 working hours, that is, 500 hours per day.

Now I have a question¹. (Please compare each case)

#If you were one of the villagers, would you reduce the working hours per person?



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#Or, would you keep the same working hours per person?



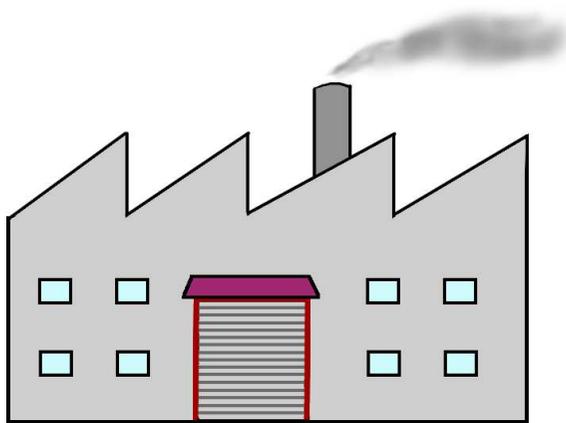
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¹ In the real world the number of options probably exists more than two. It is appreciated if you think what kind of options you may have other than the two above.

From P.5

The same working hours;

Though the productivity has doubled, all 50 villagers kept working for 20 hours per day from morning to night without much sleep.



Eh? A newly constructed house is empty. Excessive foods become rotten. Many clothes are just left over.



Oh my, there is no work to do.²

² I did not refer to a demand newly created. If people become richer, their demand will increase and diversify. If you get rid of the assumption of self-sufficiency, there is a market/demand outside of the village. However the demand does not increase infinitely without a condition. If the productivity is improved and the supply exceeds the demand in the economic zone concerned, then there will be no work to do as the supply becomes too much (no matter what kind of economic system you may have).

As the result, the half of the villagers, namely, 25 people have lost their jobs. That means, they have lost the completion to secure their jobs and has become unemployed.



The remaining 25 people who won the competition maintain the production by the same 20 working hours per day (25 people \times 20 hours = 500hours). On the other hand, unemployed people also need food, clothing and shelter. When minimum necessities were not guaranteed to these people, they would be in danger of starvation, and in addition, they could turn into riotous crowd. ³

³ If you replace “unemployment people” to “poor countries”, then the word of “mob” could be replaced to the word like “piracy, terrorism, war”.

For that reason, the village has set a higher tax rates on the people who are still employed and provide food, clothing and shelter to the people who are unemployed. ⁴



⁴ If you think this matter globally, you may regard it as a help provided by an international community to poor countries where many people are unemployed. If the help is not sufficient, it may cause social unrest, terrorism, and wars. A large quantity of refugees and starvers may follow.

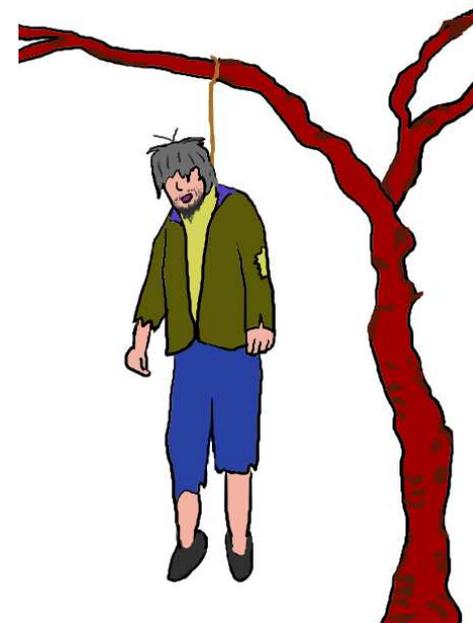
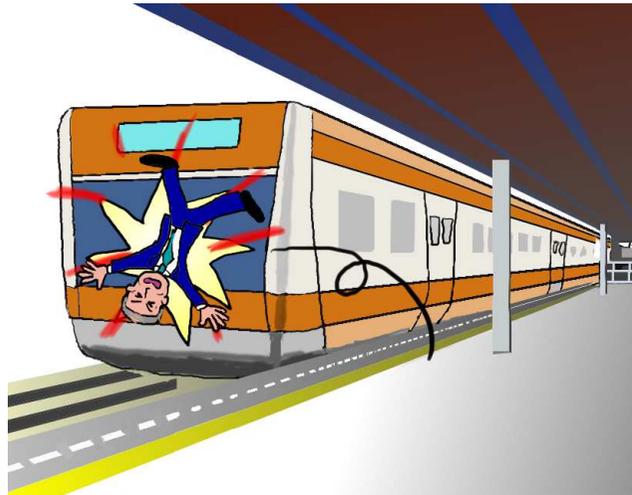
Furthermore, to reduce unemployment, the village has borrowed money and constructed public works to create more jobs. While this project was in operation, the unemployment had decreased, but increased again as the project ceased. As a result, the amount of debts and unnecessary public developments has increased rapidly.



The more debts increase, the higher tax rates to pay them off.

Those who have jobs kept working for 20 hours a day suffer the high tax rates and are very exhausted.

It seems that some of them had committed suicide due to the pain caused by the long working hours and the heavy taxes. On the other hand, the unemployed people can maintain only a minimum standard of living. It seems that some of them lost confidence in their future and had committed suicide.

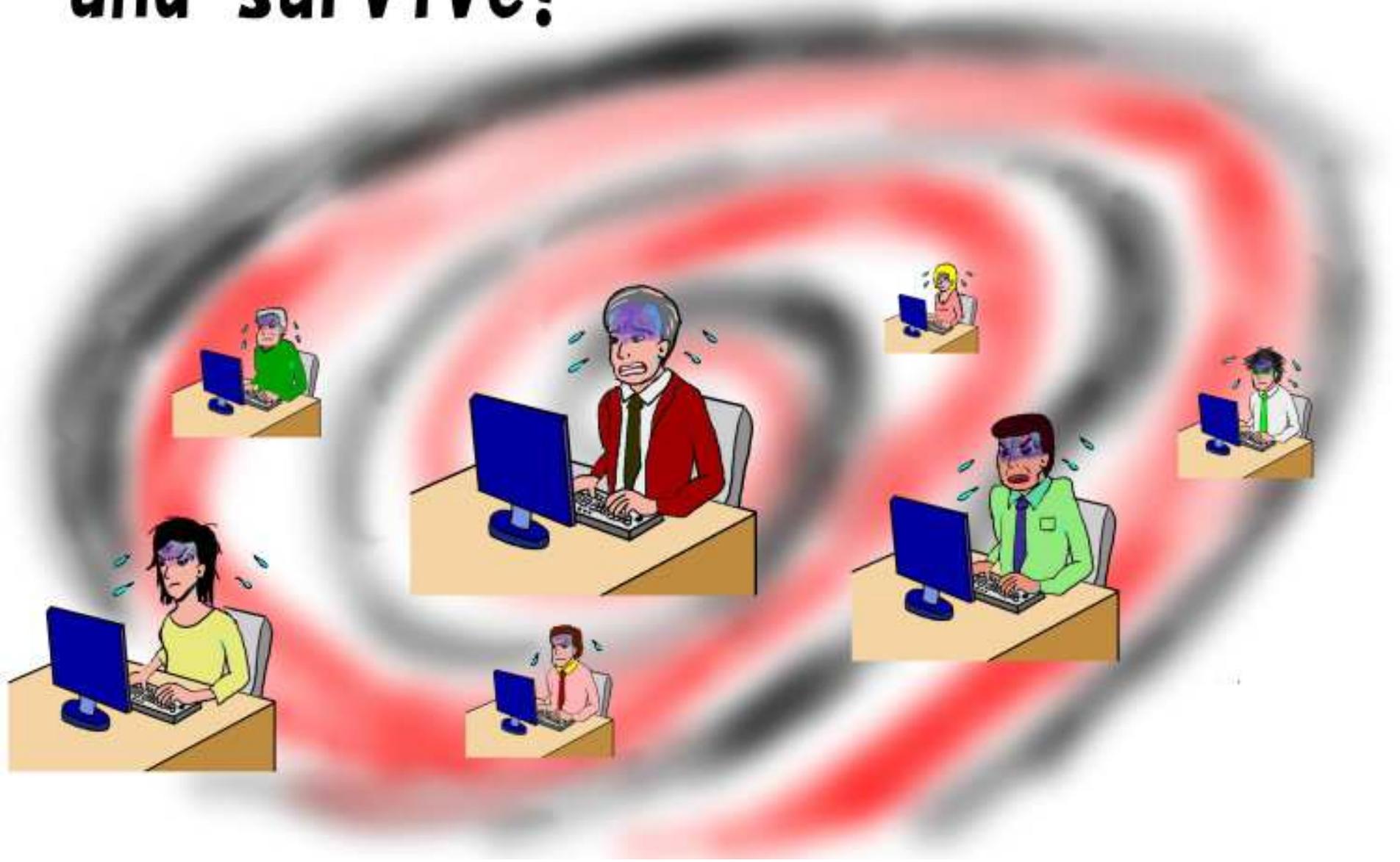


Why is our life so difficult? Is it because that our competitiveness is weak? The villagers worked even harder to improve their productivity.



However, as more productivity increased, the harder the competition becomes, the less the people survive, the more the number of unemployed people increase, the more the social unrest becomes serious, the more the debts of the village increase, the higher the tax rates rise.

How can I win the competition and survive?



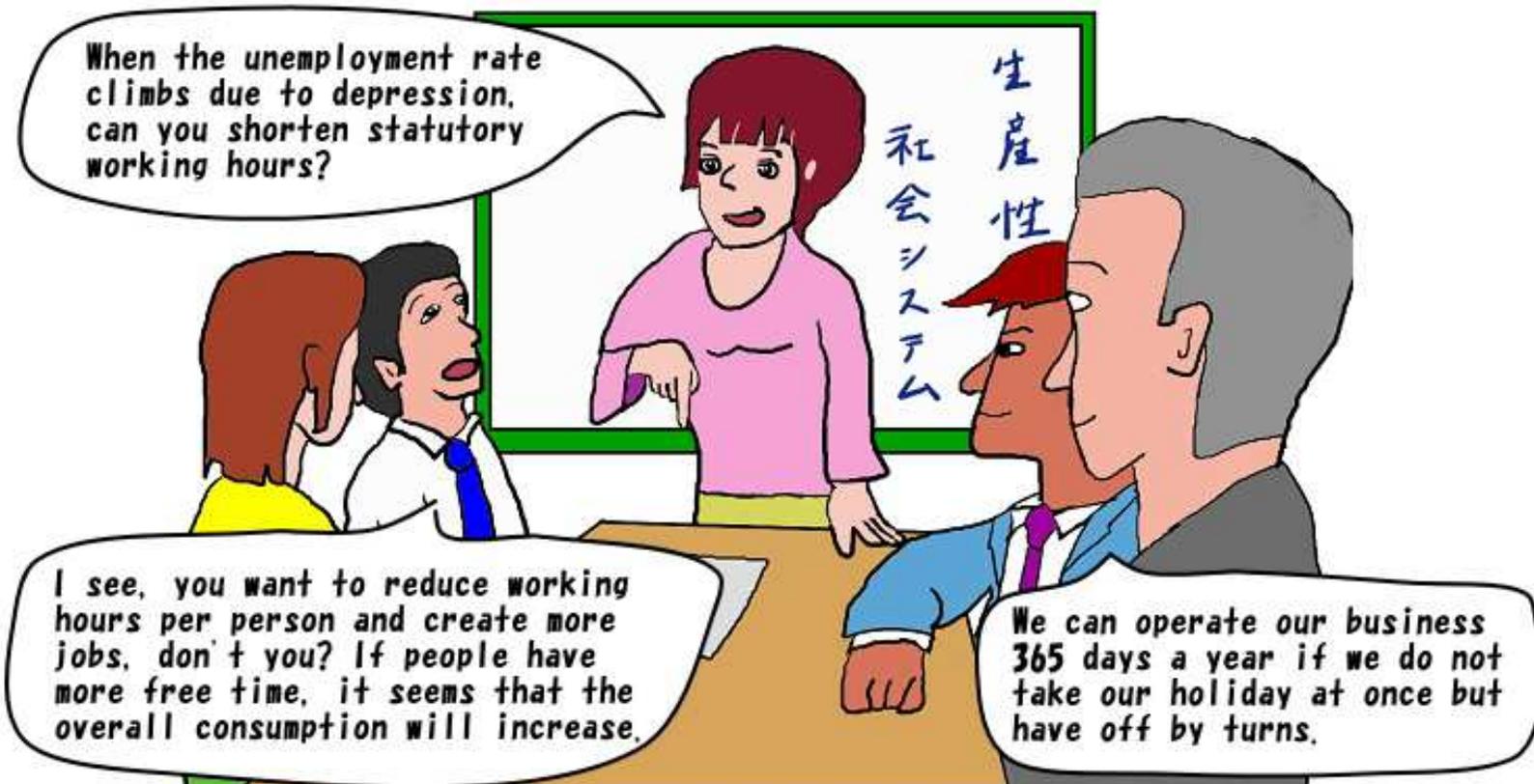
From P.5

The less working hours;

Since productivity doubled, all 50 villagers reduced their working hours to half. 20 working hours per day per person has changed to 10 hours. The villagers are free from long working hours with a smile.



Furthermore the villagers keep trying to improve their productivity. They have developed science, technology and improved the social system in various ways.



As the outcome of villagers' efforts, the productivity has improved even more to 10 times of the one at first. It only takes 100 hours per day to produce food, clothing and housing for all the 50 people. In this way, the working hours have become average 2 hours per day, which is just one-tenth of 20 hours (100 hours / 50 people).

People take longer holidays by turns and enjoy various sports, arts and habits. They also assist to improve the productivity of the other villages, joining volunteer works as well as peace activities. There is no bankruptcy or layoff due to the excessive competitions. As there are no jobless people, there is no wasting of public works, no debts in the village and tax rates are low. There are few crimes and no one commits suicide.



Gorgeous culture, arts are in full glory.

The same working hours

Go to P.6

Afterword –'For whom men compete' picture book

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