

# Business News & Notes

## Study Shows Americans Work Longer Hours

(NAPSA)—When it comes to working, Americans are all business. A recent study found that the U.S. is tied with Germany as having the most efficient labor force, at 64 percent.

However, the results may be misleading. According to the study's authors, Americans are working more hours than any time since 1973. When the longer American workday and shorter annual vacation time are factored in, U.S. productivity actually lags behind Germany and France.

"Americans are working more hours per year than at any time since 1973," says Tom Long, North American president of Proudfoot Consulting, the group that conducted the study. "This is driven by heavy reliance on overtime to achieve increased output, and aggravated by insufficient planning and supervision."

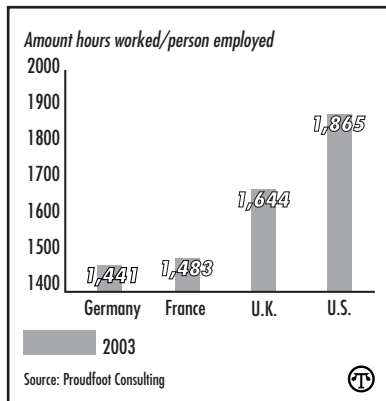
The study's findings are based on an analysis of 1,600 detailed studies representing more than 10,000 hours of work at client projects in Australia, Austria, France, Germany, Hungary, South Africa, Spain, the U.K. and the U.S. Other results include:

### Improved Efficiency

The study found that companies could become significantly more efficient by improving in three key areas:

- More effective management planning and control
- Increased supervision
- Better communication.

Combined, the three factors account for 81 percent of all lost work time. According to the



## Work It Out—Americans work over 400 more hours per year than do Germans.

study, these factors represent a "hidden opportunity" for companies. Businesses that improve in the three areas by just 10 percent could improve workforce productivity and reduce employee overtime while potentially increasing output.

### Wasted Expenditures

In an accompanying Gallup poll, most senior executives in U.S. companies see poor management as the biggest cause of lost time, yet 75 percent of them feel they need to make capital expenditures to address the problem.

"The survey reinforces what we've discovered from working on more than 16,000 client projects—most companies think they can spend their way out of poor productivity, but changing behavior and processes can actually yield the greatest results," says Long.

For more information, visit [www.proudfootconsulting.com](http://www.proudfootconsulting.com).