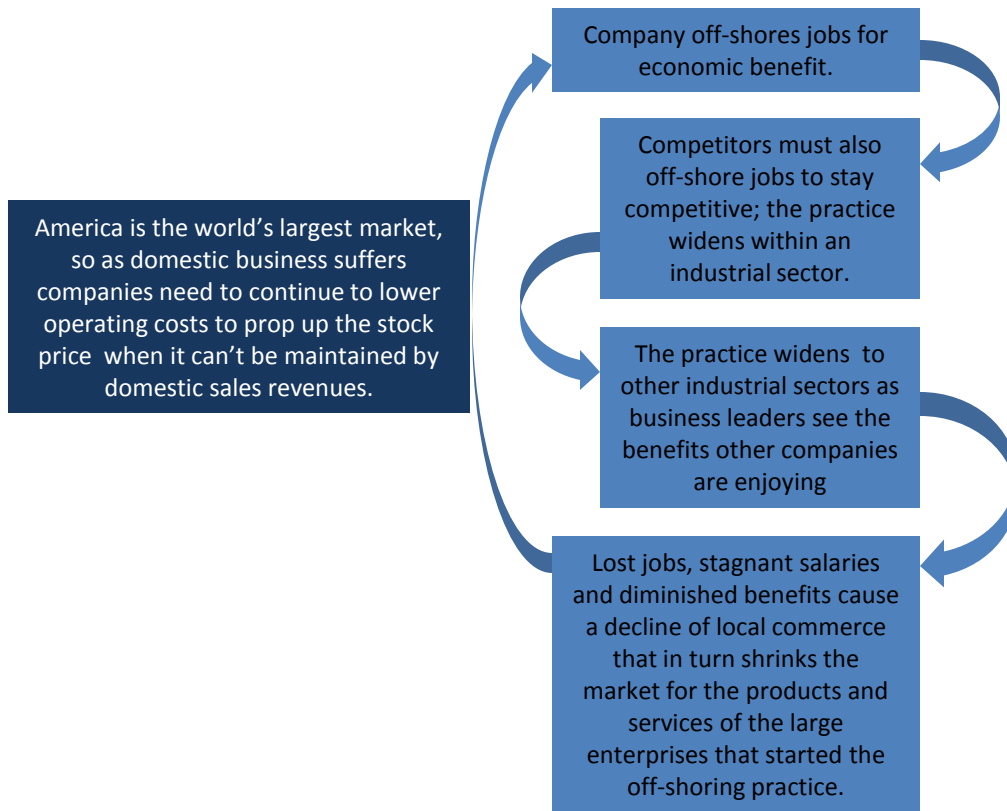


Off-shoring Opportunity

Corporate Underinvestment in America

Is there a negative impact to national security from off-shoring jobs? Is off-shoring an attack on our economic vitality? I have a couple of theories that it is.

Theory 1 – When off-shoring is done only to lower employment costs it will become a self-perpetuating necessity, bleeding jobs to lower-cost foreign markets at the expense of local home markets.



Theory 2 – Goes along with the first but addresses the individual. I know of five people in five companies other than my own also going through this same cycle. They've been through it before, much as my co-workers in my company and I have been through this before.

One guy has been told it's between him and one other person, one of the two has to go. At another company, the announcement was made but individual decisions weren't, so whole departments are on pins and needles. Other friends have been told that they're to hang around but without a defined role. Finally, others who have a defined role and are even gaining some additional responsibilities confess that their nerves are shot and they can't take solace in their opportunity because they feel that the next round could target them.

All are in a position where they believe that even if they survive the job cuts and perhaps even thrive and receive additional responsibility they won't benefit from it, because they won't be promoted. The company will expect them to be happy because they have a job, and if they don't like it, there are others waiting for the same position. The same argument applies to salary increases and benefit coverage.

I know the military isn't an economic model, but it is a leadership model and leadership is what seems to be at issue. With leadership comes responsibility. Leadership is complex, it is concerned with efficiency but it also needs to balance wider issues such as workers needs and health as well as the company's impact on the wider world at large.

I'm no socialist, I'm a pretty conservative capitalist, but here's a question: at what point do free-markets feed on themselves? Free-markets are agnostic, it doesn't matter the denomination of the money so long as it's plentiful. Do American companies have a responsibility to America even if they have to bear a cost to fulfill that responsibility?

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