

One-in-Five Workers Are Taking the Office With Them on Vacation, CareerBuilder.com's Annual Survey Reveals

- Nearly 15 percent gave up vacation time in 2006 -

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E-leashes and hectic schedules are cutting into vacation time as increasingly wired workers are finding it hard to leave the office at home. Although an improvement from 27 percent in 2006, 20 percent of workers say they plan to stay in touch with the office during their vacation this year, according to CareerBuilder.com's annual vacation survey, conducted by Harris Interactive of more than 6,800 workers. Nearly 15 percent of workers say they gave up at least one of their vacation days in 2006 because they didn't have time to use it. Ten percent gave up four or more days.

Some workers may not be able to get away at all in 2007. Twenty percent of workers report they won't take a vacation this year and one-in-four (25 percent) will take five days or less. Nearly one-in-ten (9 percent) will limit themselves to weekend getaways.

When it comes to time off, more than forty percent (43 percent) feel they don't get enough paid vacation. The majority of workers (70 percent) get two weeks or more of paid vacation; nearly a quarter of workers receive four weeks or more. However, twelve percent of the workforce does not receive any paid vacation. If workers had their way, 69 percent say three weeks or more of vacation is appropriate.

Comparing industries, IT workers are the most likely to work while on vacation with more than one-third (36 percent) checking in with the office on their days off. They are followed by Sales workers at 32 percent and Banking/Finance workers at 29 percent.

While only nine percent of workers say their employers expect them to check voicemail or email on vacation, others may feel the pressure to do so anyway. "There are a host of reasons why employees feel compelled to forgo a vacation or obsessively check in," said Rosemary Haefner, vice president of Human Resources at CareerBuilder.com. "Some may fear if they are gone and things go smoothly, it will send a message that they aren't needed. However, the opposite can actually be true. If you prepare in advance and anticipate issues, it can positively reflect on your management and organization skills."

Fourteen percent of workers feel guilty that they are not at work while on vacation. Those trying to climb the corporate ladder are the most concerned, with 25- to 34-year-olds reporting the highest level of guilt (20 percent).

This guilt may lead some to lie about accessibility at their vacation destinations. Nearly one-in-ten (nine percent) workers have lied to their employers, claiming they couldn't be reached on vacation.

When planning a vacation, Haefner recommends the following tips to make your time off work-free and stress-free:

1. **Leave a Roadmap**

A few weeks before you leave, start recording important information, key contacts and any deadlines that will come up while you are gone. If you leave co-workers with a guide that will help them address questions that arise and keep things moving forward, they will be less likely to contact you on vacation and you will be less likely to walk into a war zone when you return.

2. **Stick to an Itinerary**

While it's best to leave the office at the office, if you must do work, set limits and boundaries for yourself and your co-workers. Don't let activities on vacation be interrupted by work. Set aside a half hour each day to think about work and stick to it. Instead of having co-workers call you, tell them when you are going to check in, so you can control the time allotted.

3. **Think Big.**

If you have a big project and a great vacation planned for the same week, you can expect one of the two to give. Schedule the dates before and

after the big stuff to lighten your load and enjoy your time off.

4. What if You're the Boss?

If you're working for yourself, make sure you anticipate your busy seasons by reviewing your previous sales and current situation. Save vacation time for slower periods and make sure to notify customers in advance.

Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted online by Harris Interactive on behalf of CareerBuilder.com among 6,823 private sector employees, ages 18 and over within the United States between February 15 and March 6, 2007. Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

With a pure probability sample of 6,823, one could say with a ninety-five percent probability that the overall results have a sampling error of approximately +/-1.2 percentage points, respectively. Sampling error for data from sub-samples is higher and varies. However that does not take other sources of error into account. This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

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