

One-in-Four Workers Plan to Work While on Vacation, CareerBuilder.com's Annual Survey Finds

- Career Expert Offers Tips for Escaping from the Office -

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Some workers are finding it difficult to unwind when taking time off from the office, according to CareerBuilder.com's annual vacation survey. Although an improvement from 33 percent in 2005, 27 percent of workers still say they plan to work while on vacation this year. Sixteen percent of workers report feeling guilty about missing work while on vacation and seven percent actually fear that time off could lead to unemployment. CareerBuilder.com's "Vacation 2006" survey was completed in March and included more than 2,500 workers.

More than half of workers say they work under a great deal of stress, and 77 percent say they feel burned out on the job. While 84 percent of workers are planning to take a vacation this year, they might not be taking enough time to recharge. Thirty-two percent of workers are taking a vacation of five days or less while one-in-ten are limiting themselves to weekend getaways.

To enjoy uninterrupted time off, some workers have elected to lie about accessibility at their vacation destinations. Eleven percent of workers blamed bad wireless connections and other technology issues to avoid work while away from the office. Men were slightly more apt to lie about finding Internet access or cell phone signals to avoid being contacted by their employers at 13 percent, compared to 10 percent of women.

The survey also shows men are more likely to work while on vacation. Thirty-three percent of men expect to work on projects or check in with the office while on vacation, compared to 25 percent of women.

"Work can be demanding, but taking it all with you just brings the stress to a new location," said Rosemary Haefner, Vice President of Human Resources at CareerBuilder.com. "Cell phones, pagers and other electronic devices can create an e-leash of sorts. Planning ahead, managing expectations and setting boundaries with your co-workers are key to making sure you get the break you need."

To enjoy a stress-free and work-free vacation, Haefner recommends the following tips:

- Give 'em the 411. If you, your significant other and your travel agent are the only ones who know about your plans, you're heading into trouble. Give early notice for the dates you plan to take off to make sure your schedules run smoothly.
- 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.
- Cross-train. You may feel you are irreplaceable for the work ahead, but cross-training a co-worker to share your task enables you to take time off and creates a network. Next time a co-worker needs to take a vacation, you can return the favor.
- "Sorry, I missed your call ... " Giving an alternative contact via voicemail or an automated email response lets people know you'll be out and where they can get immediate assistance, so you don't experience inbox overload when you return.
- Set limits. Checking in a couple of times during a week off is one thing, but if your job requires you to be a slave to your cell, you may want to talk it out with your boss before you go to establish boundaries.
- 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

The new CareerBuilder.com survey, "Vacation 2006," was conducted from February 21 to March 6, 2006.

Methodology used to collect survey responses totaling more than 2,500 workers for this study involved selecting a random sample of comScore Networks panel members. These Web Panel members were approached via an e-mail invitation, which asked them to participate in a short online survey. The results of this survey are statistically accurate to within +/- 1.96 percentage points (19 times out of 20).

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