

CareerBuilder.com and ShopLocal Survey Reveals How Many Bosses and Workers Will Give Holiday Gifts at the Office, How Much They'll Spend and the Most Popular and Least Popular Gifts

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Fifty-six percent of managers will be spreading holiday cheer around the office this year by giving presents to their employees, according to a recent survey by CareerBuilder.com and ShopLocal(TM) (<http://www.shoplocal.com/>). While one-third of bosses who will purchase gifts plan to spend \$10 or less per staff member, one-in-five bosses expect to spend more than \$25 and nearly one-in-ten expect to spend more than \$50. Twenty-nine percent of workers will reciprocate the gesture, with those making less than \$50K being the most likely to buy holiday gifts for their bosses. The survey, "Holidays at the Office," was completed in September 2006 and included 1,650 workers and 1,150 hiring managers nationwide.

Managers

While more than half of employers plan to give holiday gifts to their staffs, 9 percent said they feel obligated to do so. Female managers are more likely to holiday shop with 62 percent planning to buy gifts for their staffs, compared to 51 percent of male managers.

The amount employers said they spend on each employee for holiday gifts is:

- 11 percent - \$5 or less per person
- 22 percent - \$6 to \$10
- 16 percent - \$11 to \$15
- 13 percent - \$16 to \$20
- 16 percent - \$21 to \$25
- 13 percent - \$26 to \$50
- 9 percent - \$51 and or more

Cash ranked highest on office shopping lists. Fifty-two percent of managers plan to give gift cards, gift certificates or money to their staff members. Twenty-three percent will fuel holiday indulgences with gifts of candy while 21 percent will buy their staffs holiday ornaments or decorations. Other popular gifts are books (15 percent), wine/alcohol (13 percent), food baskets (12 percent) and gag gifts (11 percent).

Workers

Nearly three-in-ten workers plan to buy holiday gifts for their bosses with 5 percent feeling obligated to do so. Female employees are more likely to holiday shop with 39 percent planning to buy gifts for their bosses compared to 16 percent of men. Thirty-five percent of workers said they will buy for other co-workers.

The study also found the more you make, the less likely you are to spend it on the boss. Twenty-three percent of workers with incomes over \$100K and 27 percent of those with incomes between \$50K and \$100K said they will buy a gift for their boss compared to 34 percent of workers who earn less than \$50K.

The amount workers said they personally spend on a team gift for the boss is:

- 18 percent - \$5 or less per person
- 29 percent - \$6 to \$10
- 13 percent - \$11 to \$15
- 17 percent - \$16 to \$20
- 7 percent - \$21 to \$25
- 8 percent - \$26 to \$50
- 8 percent - \$51 and or more

Gift cards, gift certificates or money topped the shopping lists for 38 percent of employees buying for their bosses. Food baskets and wine/alcohol tied for second most popular at 13 percent. Business card holders, paperweights or other office items came in third at 12 percent.

Nearly half of workers (49 percent) reported their companies host holiday parties and 23 percent said their companies host a grab bag or gift exchange. One-in-ten (12 percent) admitted to feeling there would be negative consequences if they didn't participate in a grab bag or gift exchange.

When asked to identify some of the more unusual holiday gifts they or a co-worker had received at the office, respondents offered the following examples:

- Gift certificate to a strip club
- A voodoo doll
- Underwear
- What Would Jesus Do? bracelet
- Used make up
- Bottle of vodka for a recovering alcoholic
- Package of over-the-counter medicines
- Tin of burnt cookies
- Used cookbook with food stains on it

Tips for Gift-Giving at the Office

If you plan to give presents at the office, CareerBuilder.com and ShopLocal experts offer the following advice:

- 1) Ask around. Companies have different policies when it comes to gift-giving at the office. Some may restrict dollar value amounts or outright prohibit gifts. Check with HR and ask other employees how gift-giving was handled in the office in previous years.
- 2) Err on the conservative. The best of intentions can turn into the worst of consequences if the recipient of the gift feels it is offensive or inappropriate. The safest bets are to stay with classic items such as portfolios, books, picture frames, food baskets, etc. And remember to stay away from religious themes.
- 3) Consider charities. Thirty-eight percent of workers said their office gets involved in charitable activities including Toys for Tots, adopt a family or adopt a classroom and group volunteering. Instead of buying a present for your boss or co-worker, make a charitable donation in his/her name for those in need.
- 4) Quality counts. Closeouts and clearance sales can be tempting, but beware of dead batteries, cheap construction and spoiled goods. If you want to make a lasting impression, make sure it's a positive one.

Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the United States by Harris Interactive(R) on behalf of CareerBuilder.com between August 31 and September 5, 2006 among 1,650 workers and 1,150 hiring managers, ages 18 and over. Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region, household income and number of employees were weighted where necessary to the 'Employee' segment in order to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. The 'Employer' segment was weighted by number of employees to bring them in line with their actual proportions in the population. Both segments were weighted using propriety algorithms in order to align the online population to be more representative demographically and behaviorally of the total population of online and offline workers.

With a pure probability sample of 1,150 or 1,650, one could say with a 95 percent probability, that the overall results have a sampling error of +/- 4 and 2 percentage points, respectively. Sampling error for data from sub-samples may be higher and may vary. 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.

About ShopLocal

ShopLocal offers consumers and retailers a comprehensive marketplace for multi-channel shopping and advertising. With ShopLocal.com (<http://www.shoplocal.com/>) and The ShopLocal Network -- made up of more than 200 affiliate media, search and shopping sites -- consumers have access to the only Web site with information on products from local stores side-by-side with e-commerce options. With ShopLocal's SmartCircular(TM), SmartCatalog(TM), SmartMedia(TM) services and MyStore(TM) by ShopLocal, retailers can

distribute sales and promotional content on the ShopLocal site as well as through their own Web sites, integrating e-commerce and local in-store promotions. Gannett Co., Inc. , Tribune Company and The McClatchy Company are partners in ShopLocal and other joint ventures.

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Media Contacts:

CareerBuilder.com	ShopLocal
Jennifer Sullivan	Marcy Dockery
773-527-1164	312-768-7523
Jennifer.Sullivan@careerbuilder.com	mdockery@shoplocal.com

First Call Analyst:

FCMN Contact:

SOURCE: CareerBuilder.com

CONTACT: Jennifer Sullivan of CareerBuilder.com, +1-773-527-1164, or Jennifer.Sullivan@careerbuilder.com , or Marcy Dockery of ShopLocal, +1-312-768-7523, or mdockery@shoplocal.com

Web site: <http://www.careerbuilder.com/>
<http://www.shoplocal.com/>

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