

More Workers Losing Weight on the Job, Finds Annual CareerBuilder Survey --Expert Offers Tips to Help Make Healthy Choices on the Job This Summer--

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CHICAGO, May 12, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- Are workers trading doughnuts for carrot sticks? Some workers' waistlines may continue to expand, but the good news is that more of them are finding ways to slim down. According to a new CareerBuilder survey, 18 percent of workers report they've lost weight in their current jobs, compared to 16 percent who said the same last year. Forty-three percent of workers said they have gained weight in their current jobs, though, in line with findings from the last two years. The survey was conducted from February 21 through March 10, 2011 among more than 5,600 workers.

Less stressful work environments may be contributing to workers' weight loss, as one-quarter (24 percent) of workers said stress has contributed to their weight gain, down from 32 percent last year. Other factors workers cite for contributing to weight gain in the office include:

- Sitting at a desk most of the day - 36 percent
- Eating out regularly - 16 percent
- Skipping meals because of time constraints - 13 percent
- Workplace celebrations (potlucks, birthdays, etc...) - 12 percent

"While many employees still struggle to lose weight, it's encouraging to see that more workers are embracing healthier habits at the office," said Rosemary Haefner, vice president of human resources for CareerBuilder. "Most organizations are mindful of the higher costs, both to their bottom line and to their workers' overall quality of life, that are associated with unhealthy behaviors. As a result, many workplaces are taking a more proactive role in their staff's well-being by implementing programs and benefits that promote wellness."

To help workers maintain healthier lifestyles, more than one-quarter (28 percent) of companies provide gym passes, workout facilities or wellness benefits.

Not packing a lunch can be an obstacle on the road to weight loss. Half of workers surveyed say they eat out for lunch at least one day a week, making it difficult to control portions and calorie intake. Snacking can also be a slippery slope for those trying to cut back on calories; two-thirds (65 percent) of employees snack at least once a day, including one-quarter that snack twice a day.

Haefner recommends the following tips for fending off workplace weight gain:

Take a brisk walk - Even if you only have a few minutes a day to be away from your desk, use that time to get out of the office and take a brisk walk. Walking not only helps you burn calories, it can help you clear your mind to better focus on the tasks ahead.

Plan out your meals each week - Eating out can rack up calories quicker than you can say "I'll have fries with that." Take time each week to plan out the meals you'll be eating at work, making sure to include fresh fruits and vegetables, lean proteins and whole grains in your menu.

Stay hydrated - Sometimes a snack craving can be mistaken for dehydration. Be sure to keep h2o or another healthy beverage at your desk throughout the day so that you can hydrate when you need it.

Get a healthy work buddy - Need motivation to get to the gym? Or to avoid the endless celebratory cakes and cookies in the break room? Nearly one-in-ten workers say they have joined a weight loss program with co-workers, so buddy up to a friend at the office so you can help keep each other in check.

Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the U.S. by Harris Interactive© on behalf of CareerBuilder.com among 5,671 U.S. workers (employed full-time; not self-employed; non government); ages 18 and over between February 21 and March 10, 2011 (percentages for some questions are based on a subset of U.S. Employees, based on their responses to certain questions). With a pure probability sample of 5,671 one could say with a 95 percent probability that the overall results have a sampling error of +/- 1.30 percentage points. Sampling error for data from sub-samples is higher and varies.

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Media Contact:

CareerBuilder

Allison Nawoj

773-527-2437

allison.nawoj@careerbuilder.com

<http://www.twitter.com/CareerBuilderPR>

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