

New CareerBuilder Survey Finds Majority of Workers Feel They Are Overweight

Survey Reveals Who is Most Likely to Gain Weight on the Job

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CHICAGO, April 17, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- As the polar vortex finally releases its grip on the U.S. and beach season is no longer a mirage, workers are examining their physical fitness with mixed results. More than half of workers (55 percent) categorize themselves as overweight, on par with last year. Thirty-nine percent say they've gained weight at their current job, with 21 percent putting on more than 10 pounds and 9 percent putting on more than 20 pounds. Sixteen percent report they have actually lost weight at their job, while 45 percent say their weight stayed the same.

The study shows that physical fitness may have some influence on how people are treated at the office. Nearly one in five workers (18 percent) feel that people who are thin and fit are shown more favoritism in their workplace.

The national survey was conducted online by Harris Poll on behalf of CareerBuilder from February 10 to March 4, 2014, and included a representative sample of 3,022 full-time, private sector workers across industries and company sizes.

So, who is most likely to gain weight at work?

Management

That corner office may come with some drawbacks. Forty-four percent of people in management roles have gained weight in their current job, compared to 38 percent of people in non-management roles.

Workers Ages 35 and Up

Seasoned workers are more likely to report tipping the scales in their current position, with 40 percent of workers ages 35 and older gaining weight, compared to 36 percent of those under 35 years of age. Eighteen to 24 year olds were the least likely, with 30 percent saying they put on extra pounds.

Women

Forty-six percent of female workers say they've gained weight on the job, compared to 33 percent of their male counterparts. Men are also more likely to exercise on a consistent basis, with 59 percent regularly going to the gym compared to 56 percent of women.

IT Professionals

Some industries are more prone to weight gain, with Information Technology and Government leading the pack. Industries that outpaced the national average for weight gain include:

- Information Technology – 50 percent
- Government – 48 percent*
- Financial Services – 46 percent
- Health Care – 42 percent
- Professional and Business Services – 42 percent

Workers in the West

Workers in the West were the most likely to pack on pounds, with 44 percent saying they've put on weight at their current job. They are followed by the Northeast (40 percent), the South (37 percent) and the Midwest (37 percent).

Tips for Staying Fit at Work

For those looking to shed some pounds this summer, CareerBuilder experts offered the following suggestions:

- **Avoid Too Many Treats:** Twenty-one percent of workers who have gained weight on the job blame part of it on coworkers who bring treats into the office. Don't be afraid to politely decline when someone is passing around sweets. It's good practice to have a set of personal rules regarding treats in the office, such as a per-week limit or an "only Friday" policy.
- **Make Exercise a Part of Your Routine:** Forty-two percent of workers don't exercise regularly, with 13 percent not exercising at all. Try sneaking a workout into your daily routine by getting off the bus or subway a stop early, working at a standing desk or taking the stairs instead of the elevator.
- **Get Up:** It's all too common in the modern office setting for people to send an email or instant message rather than get up and walk across the room. When you have the opportunity to stretch out your legs, take it!
- **Pack a Lunch:** Twenty-eight percent of employees who gained weight in their current job say that one of the main culprits is regularly eating out. Packing your own lunch the night before allows you to take better control of your portion sizes, not to mention it helps you avoid impulse decisions that often lead to less-healthy fast food.
- **Look Into Perks and Benefits:** More than 1 in 4 workers (28 percent) say their companies provide gym memberships or other wellness benefits, but nearly one in ten workers (9 percent) say they don't know whether their company offers such perks. Check with your human resources department to make sure you're taking full advantage of what's offered.

** CareerBuilder commissioned study, conducted online by Harris Poll 2014 Job Forecast, February-March 2014*

Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the U.S. by Harris Poll on behalf of CareerBuilder among 3,022 workers ages 18 and over (employed full-time, not self-employed, non-government) between February 10 and March 4, 2014 (percentages for some questions are based on a subset, based on their responses to certain questions). With a pure probability sample of 3,022, one could say with a 95 percent probability that the overall results have a sampling error of +/- 1.78 percentage points. Sampling error for data from sub-samples is higher and varies.

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