

Workers Name Their Top Office Romance Deal Breakers in New CareerBuilder Survey

- 37 percent of workers have dated someone with whom they work
- 24 percent of office romances involved a superior

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CHICAGO, Feb. 11, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- From Sam and Diane on 'Cheers' to Olivia Pope and the President on 'Scandal,' office romances have always made for good TV. Perhaps that's why so many workers have tried the same thing in real life. According to a new survey from CareerBuilder, 37 percent of workers have dated a co-worker, and 30 percent of those office romances have led to marriage.

But what work-related factors could make a person "undateable" in some co-workers' eyes? CareerBuilder's annual Valentine's Day study takes a closer look at romance at work.

The national survey was conducted online by Harris Poll on behalf of CareerBuilder from November to December of 2014, and included a representative sample of 3,056 full-time, private sector workers across industries and company sizes.

Workplace Dating Deal Breakers

While some workers have no problems mixing business with pleasure, others steer clear of getting involved with co-workers for a variety of reasons. Nearly 1 in 4 workers (23 percent) said that what someone does for a living influences whether they would date that person. When asked to name specific work-related traits that would make someone "undateable," workers said:

1. Doesn't work on a consistent basis: 39 percent
2. Has already dated someone else at work: 25 percent
3. Travels extensively for work: 21 percent
4. Has to work nights: 8 percent
5. Earns less money than me: 6 percent
6. Has to work weekends: 6 percent

When broken down by gender, however, women and men have differing opinions of what makes a colleague "undateable." Women are much less likely than men to date someone who doesn't work on a consistent basis (52 percent say they wouldn't versus 28 percent of men), has previously dated a co-worker (29 percent versus 21 percent), or earns less than them (10 percent versus 2 percent).

Blissfully Happy Hours

Sometimes, however, the heart wants what the heart wants – and those sparks just need the right atmosphere to ignite. Among those who have had an office romance, most say their office romance began at happy hour (12 percent), followed by late nights on the job (11 percent), lunches (11 percent) and chance meetings outside of work (10 percent). Nearly 1 in 10 workers (9 percent) claim they fell for their workplace loves at first sight.

Keeping It Classified

More than one third of workers who have had an office romance (36 percent) had to keep their relationship a secret, although 1 in 4 who have had an office romance (25 percent) have accidentally run into co-workers while out on a date with their office sweetheart.

Risky Business Affairs

Of those who have had an office romance, 25 percent have dated someone in a higher position than them, including the boss.

As if dating the boss wasn't perilous enough, nearly 1 in 5 workers who have had an office romance (19 percent) have had an affair with a co-worker where one person involved was married at the time.

Contentious Uncoupling

Some office romances end in more than heartbreak: 5 percent of workers who have had an office romance say they have left a job because of an office relationship gone sour.

Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the U.S. by Harris Poll on behalf of CareerBuilder among 3,056 U.S. workers ages 18 and over (employed full-time, not self-employed, non-government) between November 4 and December 2, 2014 (percentages for some questions are based on a subset, based on their responses to certain questions). With a pure probability sample of 3,056, one could say with a 95 percent probability that the overall results have a sampling error of +/- 1.77 percentage points. Sampling error for data from sub-samples is higher and varies.

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Media Contact

Mary Lorenz

773-527-3613

mary.lorenz@careerbuilder.com

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

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