

Nearly 6 in 10 Workers Feel They Are Overweight, Finds Annual CareerBuilder Survey

- **Extremely high-stressed workers 49 percent more likely to be overweight than those under extremely low stress**
- **63 percent of workers with wellness benefits/gym access do not use them**
- **Professional & business services/IT workers most likely to gain weight at present jobs**

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CHICAGO, April 30, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- The workplace has long been an enabler of Americans' ever-expanding waistlines, and according to an annual survey by CareerBuilder, the stresses associated with full-time employment will likely continue to contribute to the problem.

Fifty-seven percent of U.S. workers feel they are overweight, up from 55 percent in 2014. Additionally, 42 percent of workers say they've gained weight in their present job, up from 39 percent last year. Twenty-two percent reported gaining more than 10 pounds, while 16 percent of workers say they've lost weight.

The national survey was conducted on behalf of CareerBuilder by Harris Poll between February 11 and March 6, 2015 and included a representative sample of more than 3,000 full-time, U.S. workers across industries and company sizes.

Job stress may lead to weight gain

The survey reveals a strong correlation between on-the-job stress levels and overweight workers. Fewer than half of workers (47 percent) with extremely low stress levels feel they are overweight compared to 70 percent of workers with extremely high stress levels. Meaning, workers with extremely high on-the-job stress are 49 percent more likely to say they're overweight than workers with extremely low stress.

Stress Level of Worker	Extremely low	Low	Neutral	High	Extremely High
% Overweight	47%	52%	53%	66%	70%

When asked what they felt contributed to their weight gain at their current job, 37 percent of workers said "eating because of stress," and 43 percent said they are "too tired from work to exercise." Sedentary behavior, however, is seen as the leading culprit, in workers' minds. Fifty-six percent said "sitting at the desk most of the day" contributed to the weight gain at their present job.

"The health of a company's workforce is a paramount issue for many employers, as neglecting it can significantly dampen workplace morale and productivity," said Rosemary Haefner, chief human resources officer at CareerBuilder. "There's a clear incentive to make wellness and work-life balance a focus of organizational culture, and we're encouraged to see many companies making them a priority year-after-year."

More than 1 in 4 U.S. workers (27 percent) have access to employer sponsored wellness benefits, including onsite workout facilities and gym passes, but 63 percent of this group does not take advantage of them.

The keys to losing weight on the job

While hardly surprising, workers who managed to lose weight at their current job tend to snack and eat out less, exercise more and take advantage of their employers' wellness benefits. Even leaving one's desk for lunch may encourage healthier habits.

	Have Lost Weight at Current Job	Have Gained Weight at Current Job
Eat takeout or dine out at least once week for lunch	52%	56%
Snack at work	70%	75%
Eat lunch at desk	51%	67%
Take advantage of company gym or wellness benefits*	45%	34%
Exercise three or more times a week	52%	37%

**Only employees of companies that offered wellness benefits/gym memberships are included.*

Who is adding extra notches to the belt?

Industry/Job type: Workers in desk or office-based jobs are more likely to be gaining weight at their present job:

- Professional & Business Services: 51 percent
- IT: 48 percent
- Financial Services: 45 percent
- Health Care: 45 percent
- Sales: 41 percent
- Leisure & Hospitality: 39 percent
- Manufacturing 39 percent
- Retail: 35 percent

Gender: Women (46 percent) are more likely to report gaining weight at their present jobs than men (38 percent).

Job-level: Workers in management roles (43 percent) are almost equally likely as workers in non-management roles (42 percent) to report weight gains at their present jobs.

Age: Workers in the middle of their careers appear more prone to weight gain than younger or mature workers. Forty-five percent of workers age 35-54 reported gaining weight at their present job, compared to 38 percent of workers age 18-34 and 39 percent of workers 55+.

Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the U.S. by Harris Poll on behalf of CareerBuilder among 3,105 workers ages 18 and over (employed full-time, not self-employed, non-government) between February 11 and March 6, 2015 (percentages for some questions are based on a subset, based on their responses to certain questions). With a pure probability sample of 3,105, one could say with a 95 percent probability that the overall results have a sampling error of +/- 1.76 percentage points. Sampling error for data from sub-samples is higher and varies.

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