

## Temperature Wars Are Heating Up the Workplace, According to New CareerBuilder Survey

- One in five employees have argued with a coworker about their office's temperature
- More than 70 percent of workers think sitting in an office that is too warm impacts their productivity

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CHICAGO, Dec. 17, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- The weather outside may be frightfully bizarre this winter, but the temperatures inside can be just as difficult for many to adjust to. According to a new CareerBuilder survey, 23 percent of employees say their office is too cold, while 25 percent are too hot. Office temperature isn't just a source of discomfort, however; it can also be a source of conflict. One in five workers (20 percent) have argued with a coworker about office temperature, and 18 percent have secretly changed the temperature during the winter.

Drilled down by gender, survey findings indicate women feel temperature differently in workplaces from men. Thirteen percent of men say they are too cold, 28 percent too hot; and 31 percent of women are too cold, 22 percent too hot.

The national survey was conducted online by Harris Poll on behalf of CareerBuilder from August 12 to September 2, 2015, and included a representative sample of 3,321 full-time workers across industries and company sizes.

"It's impossible to change the thermostat to something that pleases everybody," said Rosemary Haefner, chief human resource officer at CareerBuilder. "But what you can do is look at what employees want and need to be productive and accommodate where you can."

### IT Gets It Just Right

Broken down by industry, information technology has the most comfortable employees:

	Health Care	Retail	Sales	Leisure & Hospitality	IT	Manufacturing	Financial Services
Too cold	27%	14%	26%	20%	19%	17%	32%
Too hot	22%	33%	27%	32%	11%	40%	11%
Just right	51%	53%	46%	48%	70%	43%	57%

### Rising Temperatures, Lower Productivity

According to this survey, the temperature of your office space can have a significant impact on the performance of your workforce and their productivity. More than half of employees (53 percent) said sitting in an office that is too cold has a negative impact on their productivity, while 71 percent said the same for a warm environment. Women are more likely than men to be negatively affected by both too cold and too warm environments — 58 percent are affected by cold (versus 47 percent of men) and 74 percent by hot environments (versus 68 percent for men).

To keep warm during the cold winter months, employees are taking action by:

- Dressing in layers: 44 percent
- Drinking hot beverages: 36 percent
- Wearing a jacket all day: 31 percent
- Wearing a heavy sweater: 27 percent
- Using a space heater: 15 percent
- Using a blanket: 7 percent

## How to Call a Truce on Office Temperatures

Differing opinions on an ideal office temperatures can send tempers running hot. Haefner offers employers a few tips for keeping the peace:

1. **Try to agree on the degrees:** Ask employees to agree on a temperature setting that will be acceptable to everyone. Let workers know you'll check for a few days and tweak settings until you find a happy medium.
2. **Make special arrangements:** Some employees, such as those who sit under a vent, may need special provisions, such as space heaters or cooling fans. Consider accommodating them, but make sure you set safety rules first.
3. **Check on your insulation:** Make sure windows are correctly sealed to keep warm air in during the winter and block heat in the summertime.

## Outside Workers Also Face Temperature Challenges

Those working in cubicles and offices aren't the only ones affected by temperatures at work. Although only 10 percent of respondents work outdoors, a quarter of them have had a medical issue tied to extreme temperatures in their working environments. These include:

- Heat exhaustion: 13 percent
- Severely dehydrated: 9 percent
- Badly sunburned: 7 percent
- Heat stroke: 3 percent
- Hypothermia: 2 percent
- Frost bite: 1 percent

## Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the U.S. by Harris Poll on behalf of CareerBuilder among 3,321 employees ages 18 and over (employed full-time, not self-employed, non-government) between August 12 and September 2, 2015. Percentages for some questions are based on a subset, based on their responses to certain questions. With a pure probability sample of 3,321, one could say with a 95 percent probability that the overall results have a sampling error of +/- 1.70 percentage points. Sampling error for data from sub-samples is higher and varies.

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