

# 2019 Job Seeker Nation Survey

## The Strength of the Job Market is One-Sided



Jobvite

# In 2019, one thing seems certain: it's a candidates' job market.

The U.S. economy continues to prosper on the back of record low unemployment, and with [more job openings than workers to fill them](#) and a string of [massive tech IPOs](#), the job prospects only look to perk up in the coming year.

But headlines can be misleading, and strong unemployment numbers don't paint the full picture, leaving out an important part of the labor market: the one that is falling behind. While all signs point to tip-top job hunting conditions for American workers — where candidates negotiate salary more often, preemptively reject companies, and turn down signed offers in lieu of better ones — not everyone is able to find work and cash in on the bustling economy.

This year's survey of 1,500 American job seekers examines who is able to get ahead today, the opportunity costs for those falling behind, and the daily realities (and challenges) for all workers.



## The Labor Market in 2019

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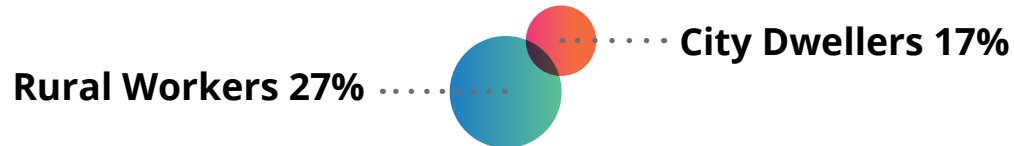
While jobs report numbers and the press paint a positive picture of employment, not everyone can find work, stay sharp, and move up in today's labor market.

# It's Not Easy to Find a Job for Everyone

How hard is finding work today? That depends on who you ask.

Despite the booming economy and hot streak of low unemployment numbers, **45% of job seekers** say it's harder to find a job than last year.

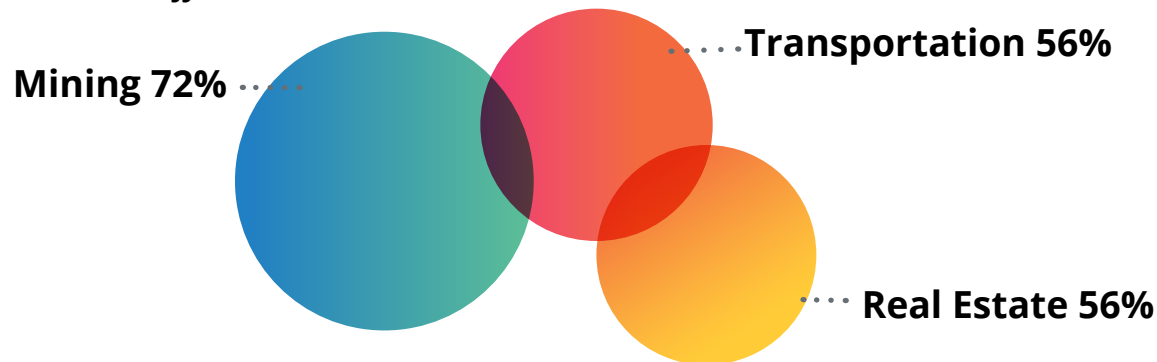
Rural workers are much more likely than city dwellers to believe that finding a job is ***much harder***.



Those without a college degree also say it will be ***much harder*** than job seekers who do.



Those in the industries of Mining, Real Estate, Transportation say it's ***more difficult***.



But an increased number of job seekers (20%) also said it's easier finding work.

Those include workers...

With college degrees **20%**

Who live in big cities **20%**

From "high-skill" industries:

Technology **26%**

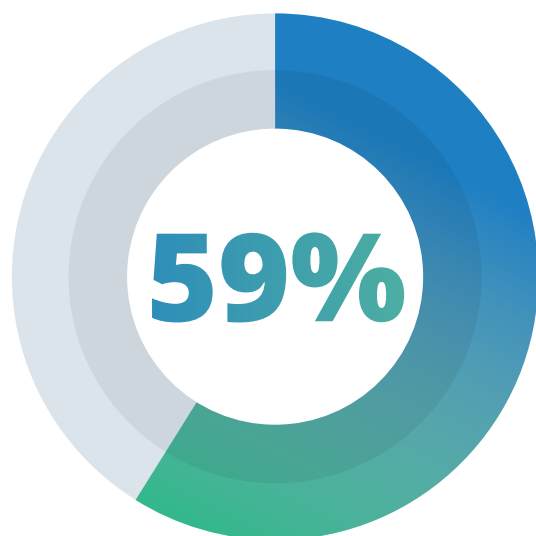
Telecommunications **23%**

Marketing **22%**

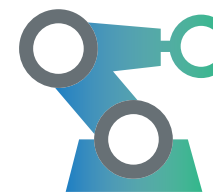
Workers making more than \$300k who find it ***much easier*** **26%**

# Part-Time Workers Want Full-time Jobs

Part-time workers may count as “employed,” but most are hoping to find more stable, full-time work.



**While U.S. unemployment hovers around 4%** — 59% of survey respondents who currently work part-time say they’re looking for full-time work and are considered “employed.”



## At Risk of Automation

**23%** A growing number (23%) of job seekers are concerned their job will be automated in the next five years (up from 15% in 2017).

## Who are the most wary of automation?

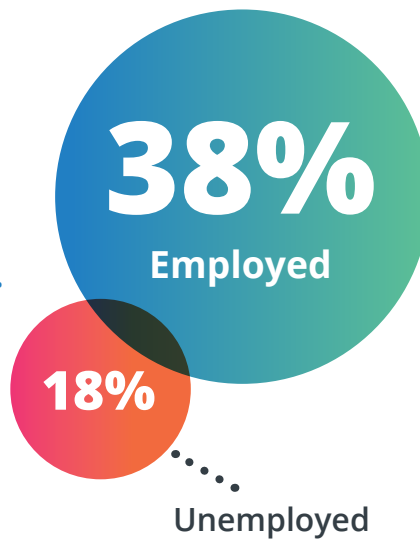
**Workers under 40 31%**

**Those with children 32%**

**Unemployed but searching for jobs 20%**

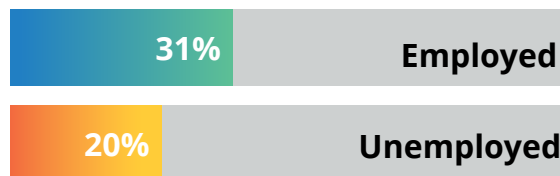
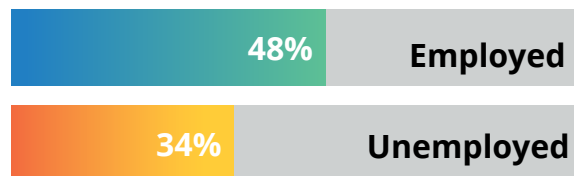
# Employed Workers Have Bigger Networks to Find Their Next Opportunity

Employed workers (38%) can use professional networks to find that next opportunity versus those who are unemployed (18%).



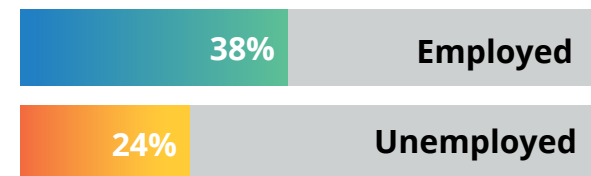
Holding down a job emboldens you to “reach” for better opportunities. Compared to those without a job, employed workers are more likely to apply for positions where they do not meet the skill requirements.

They can also afford to preemptively reject a potential employer due to unfavorable public reviews, like Glassdoor.



**15%** of American workers have, at some point, been arrested or convicted of a crime, resulting in denial of employment in a half of the cases.

...and consider company culture very important when deciding to apply to a job.



# Educated Workers are More Likely to Continue Growing Their Skills



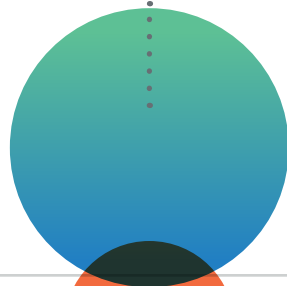
Those with college degrees are afforded more options and chances to stay ahead.

While the majority of workers today have taken additional educational or professional courses since entering the workforce, it's the already educated who are more likely to have done so:

The most likely to continue their education

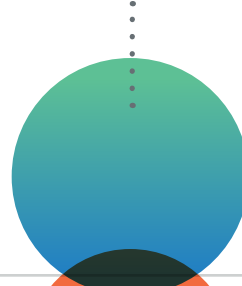
Less likely to continue education

**College-educated - 62%**



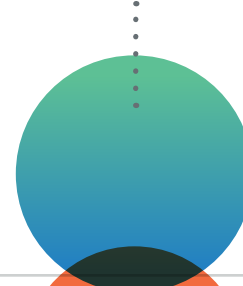
**No College Degree - 38%**

**City Workers - 53%**



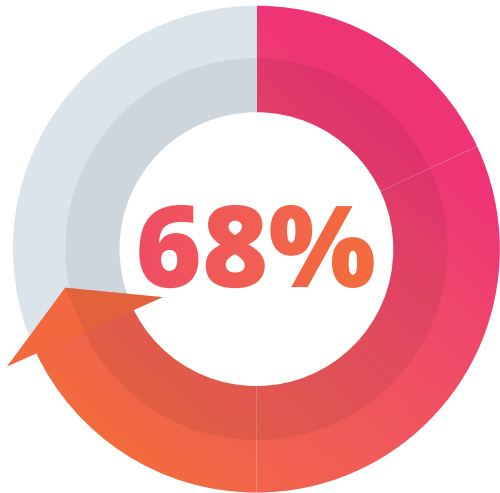
**Rural Areas - 46%**

**Employed - 53%**



**Unemployed - 49%**

# Job Hopping Has Peaked



While job satisfaction (68%) has improved among workers today (up from 61% last year), a majority still say they're open to other opportunities.

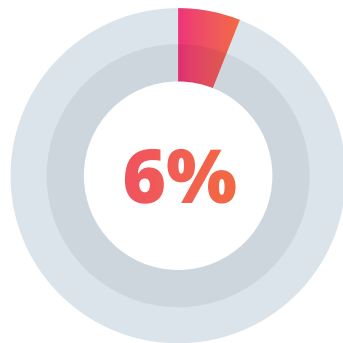
## A majority of workers

applied to at least one job last year **with no actual intention of leaving** their current job.



However, more satisfied respondents this year (19%) say they're not looking to make a change, and it shows when it comes to job hopping trends.

- Only **16%** say they change jobs every 1-3 years (down from 20% in 2017).
- However, **8%** say they change jobs every year or more frequently.



Very few workers (6%) have quit a job without notifying their employer.

# 13%

of surveyed workers have at some point been fired or asked to leave a job.





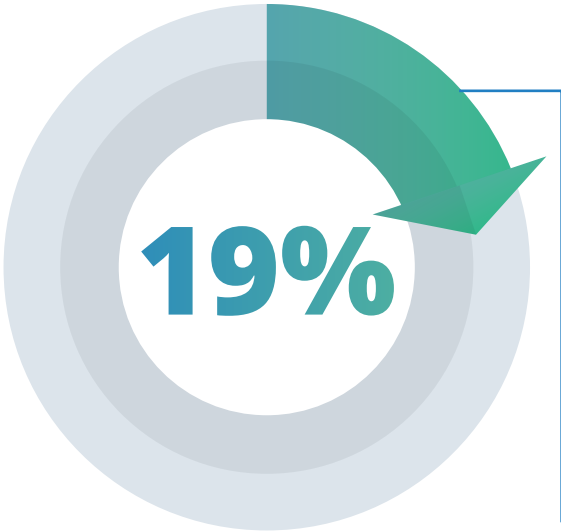
## A New Breed of Job Seeker

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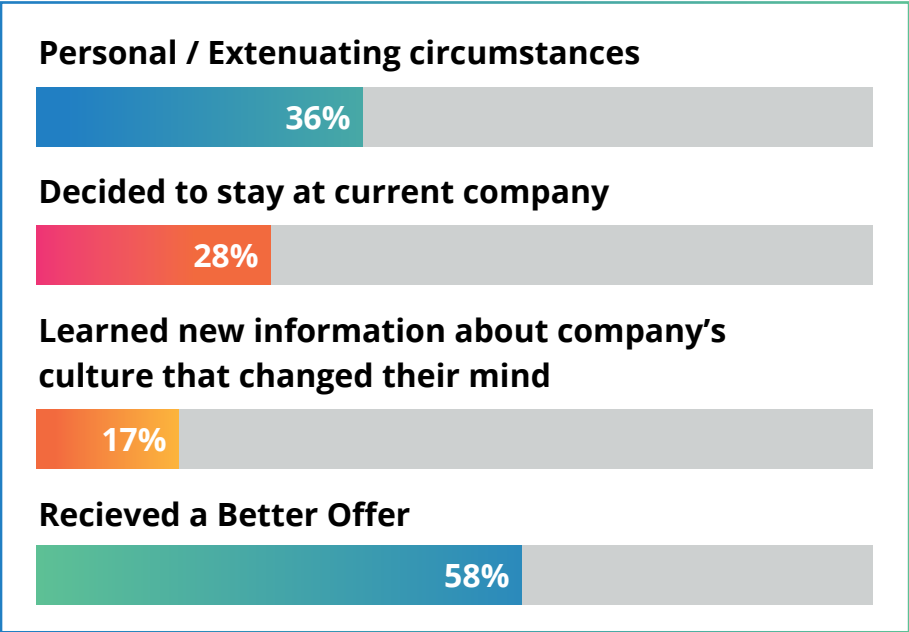
American workers today have modern standards and habits when considering new jobs — on career growth, healthcare coverage, and even texting with recruiters.

# Workers Still Go for the Best Overall Offer

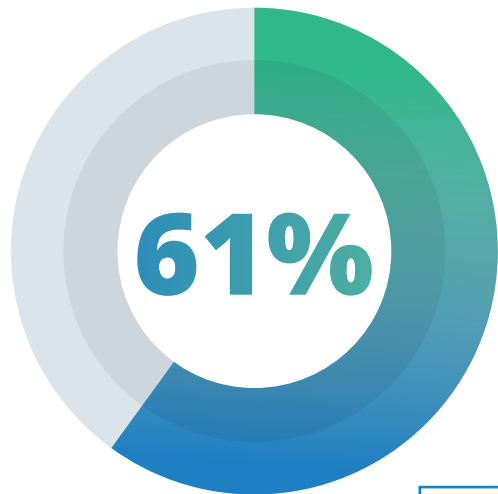
Today, an enticing offer to job seekers includes a lot more than just cash.



In an eight-point increase from last year's results, 19% of workers say that they have, at some point, turned down a job after signing an official offer but before their first day.



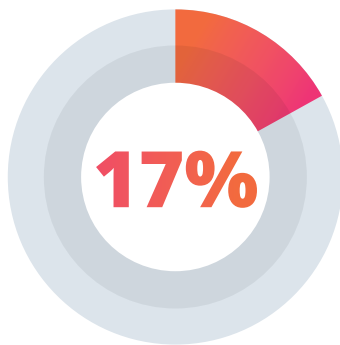
# Money Takes a Back Seat to Career Growth



For the first time, career growth opportunities now rank number one on the list of most important factors when looking for new opportunities — toppling long-time kings compensation (57%) and healthcare / retirement benefits (58%).

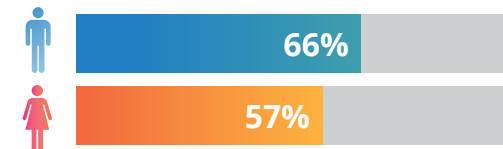
Especially for younger workers (**65%**).

Those who are unemployed are less likely to prioritize career growth (**51%**).

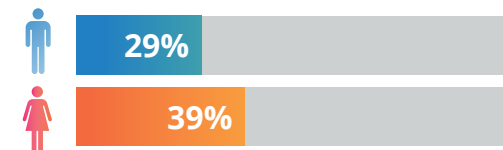


Money was also less of a factor for those who left their jobs in the last 12 months — only 17% say it was the reason they sought greener pastures.

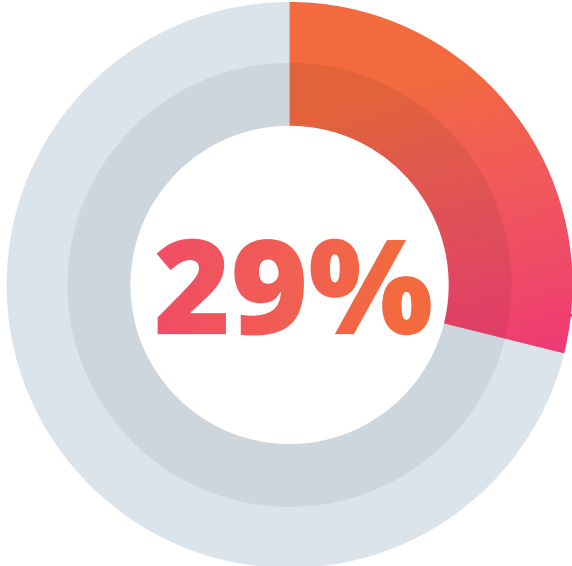
Men are more likely than women to consider growth within a company one of the most important factors when looking for new opportunities ...



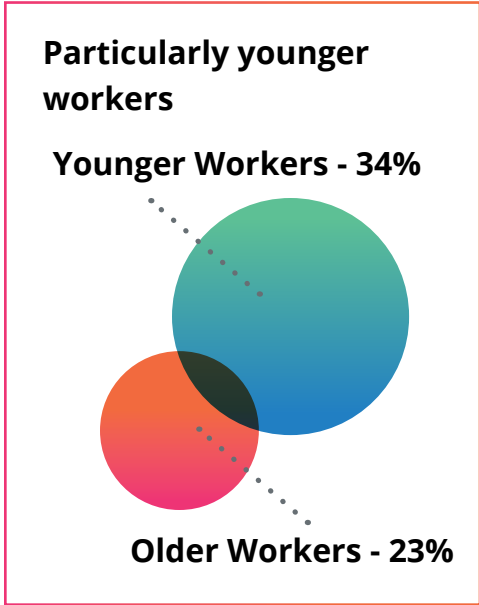
...while women place more value on flexible hours and remote work.



# A Signed Offer is Not the Finish Line



29% of workers have at some point left a job within the first 90 days, most often (45%) because the day-to-day role was not what they expected.



**Only 47%**

of workers believe that job descriptions reflect actual job responsibilities.

The entire content is enclosed in a green dotted border. At the top is an icon of a computer monitor with a magnifying glass over it, highlighting a specific area on the screen.

# Today, Recruiters are in the Hot Seat

Job seekers can be just as picky during the application process as recruiters, if given the chance.



Candidates who drop out during the application process are most likely to do so after an in-person interview (15%).

- A **recruiter's conversation skills (40%)** and **appearance or personal style (37%)** have the greatest impact on company image during onsite interviews.
- **Rudeness to coworkers** is the most likely (**46%**) to automatically disqualify a company in the interviewee's eyes.



## Good news

Only 7% of job seekers admit to “ghosting” a recruiter after an interview.

## When are job seekers most likely to give up on the application process?

- 9%** Sending an application, including cover letter
- 10%** The phone screen interview
- 15%** In-person interview
- 5%** Any writing or knowledge tests
- 7%** Receiving an offer

# Job Seekers Don't Budge on Healthcare or Retirement Benefits

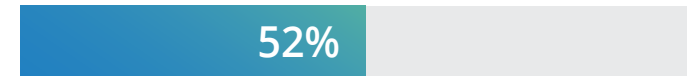
Today's workers have established a set of "essentials" when it comes to assessing opportunities:



Healthcare



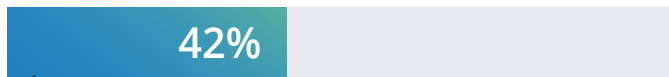
401K program



... Especially married workers (58%) vs. single (47%)



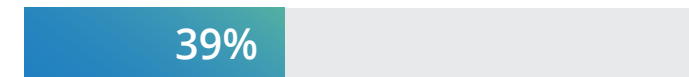
401K matching



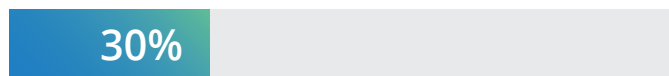
... Especially older workers (51%) vs. younger (32%)



Bonuses + stipends



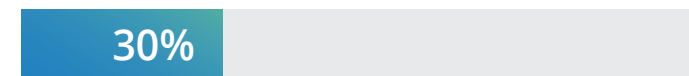
Parental leave



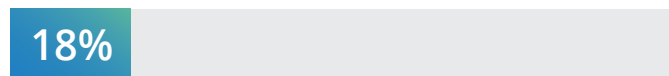
... Up eight-points from last year (22%)



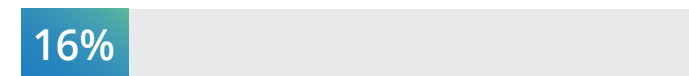
Casual dress code



Education subsidy

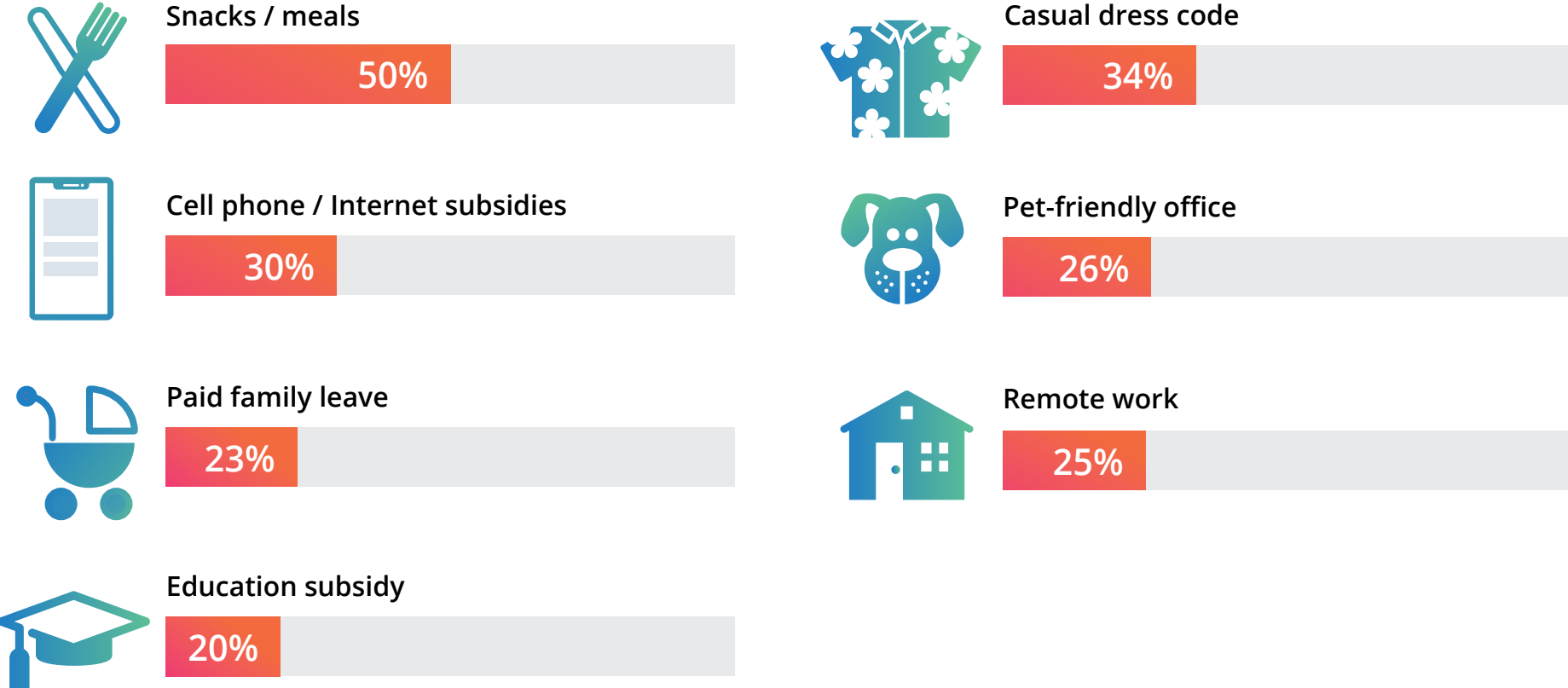


Remote work



# Workers Want (*But Don't Need*) Free Food

These are the “extra” benefits and perks employees would like to see the most, but not those they deem deal breakers when on the job hunt:

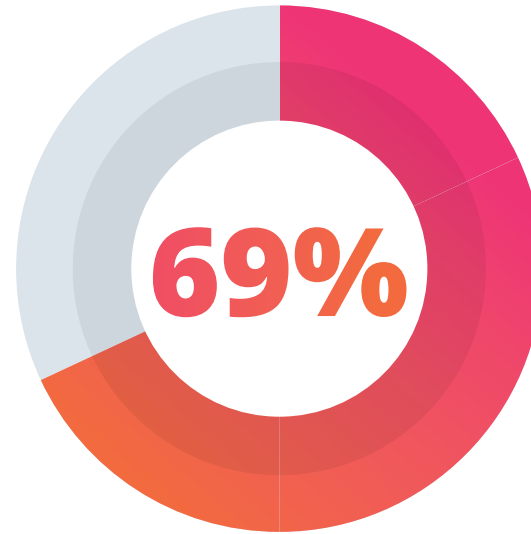


# Instagram is For More Than Memes

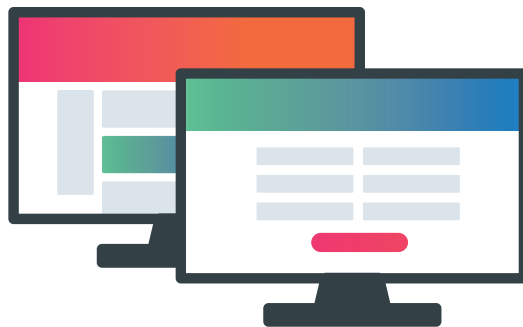
Online job boards (69%) are still most popular for posting job openings, but modern methods are gaining ground.

Social media is a rising star when it comes to seeking new opportunities — 35% of survey respondents say they find out about job openings there.

Nearly half of respondents also hear about jobs by word of mouth via friends, while 37% say they also learn through professional networks.



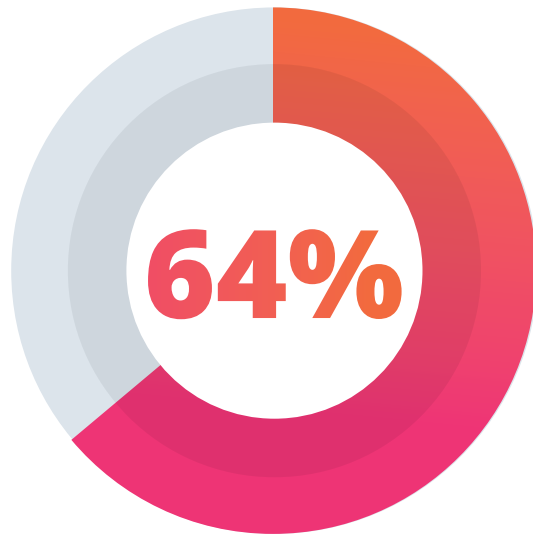
Unsurprisingly, younger workers (**41%**) are most likely to search for jobs on social media.



That said, online job boards and employer career sites remain the **top two places** for candidates to actually submit their applications.

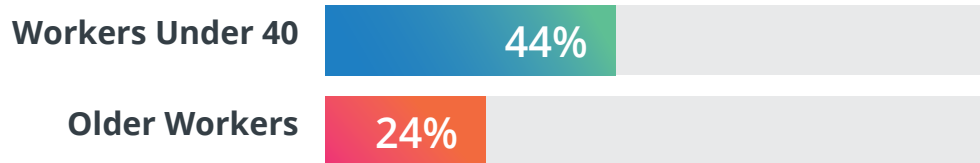


# Texts from Recruiters are Welcomed

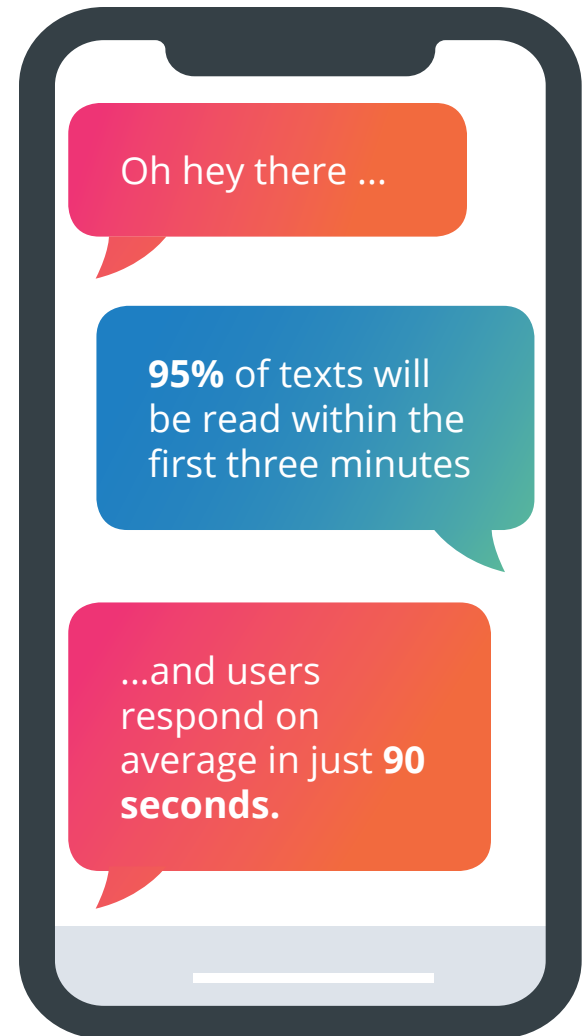


Two-thirds (64%) of workers who received a text message after applying for a job preferred this type of communication over email or phone call.

Those under 40 are much more likely than older workers to have been reached by a recruiter by text after applying for a job (44% vs. 24%).



They also are much more likely (71% vs. 53%) to report being happy to receive a text than their older counterparts.





## The Daily Realities For Workers

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Job seekers share hard truths about workaholism, parental leave, mental health, the pay gap, and how our work defines us.

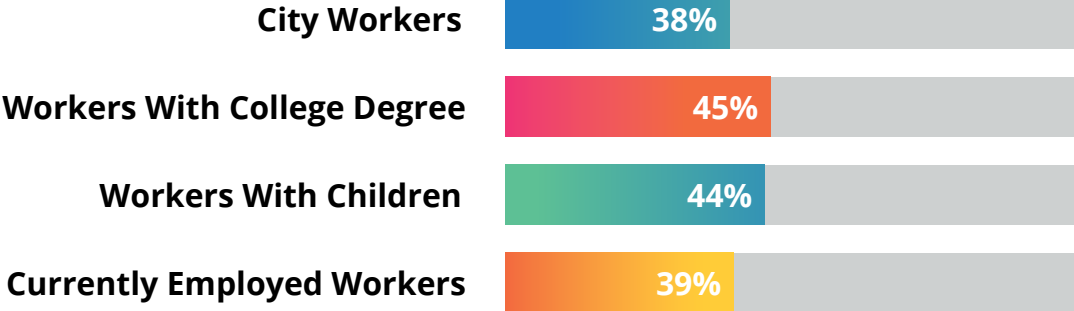
# There's a New Standard Around "Culture"

Company culture still matters, but more so for workers who have stable, full-time jobs.



While the vast majority of workers still recognize the need for a strong company culture, the number of respondents who say culture is "very important" has **declined to 37%** (previously 46% last year).

### Culture matters most to:



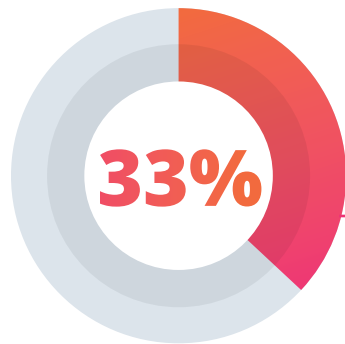
### But for those job seekers that either:

- 1. Turned down an offer after receiving it
- 2. Quit in the first 90 days

**17%** and **28%** cite company culture as the reason why.

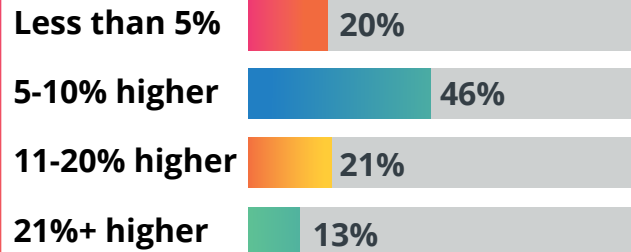
# Today, Salary Negotiation is Expected

60% of job seekers now report being at least somewhat comfortable negotiating, up from 51% who felt so last year.



A third of workers negotiated their salary at their current or most recent job (up from 31% in 2018).

For those who did negotiate, 83% say they received higher pay. How much higher?



**7%** of survey respondents say they lied about their previous salary during the interview process

## 24%

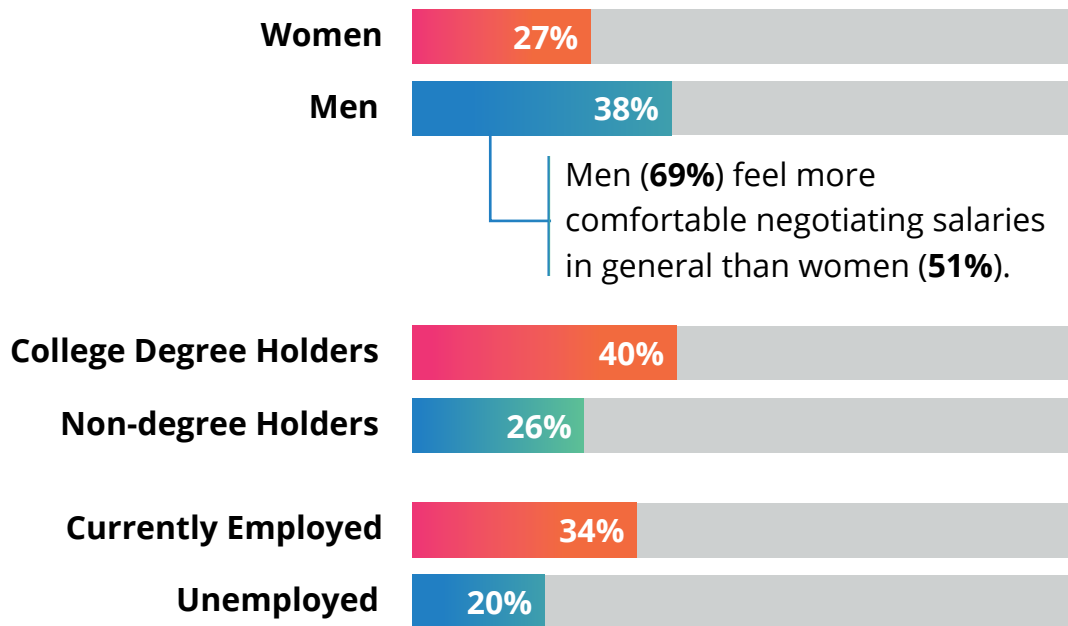
Nearly a quarter of workers say they've used an offer from another company to negotiate a higher salary.

## 36%

36% of workers (up from 32% last year) say they'd consider leaving a position if they discovered they were paid less than a colleague of a different gender or race.

# But the “Negotiation Gap” Between Men and Women Still Exists

Who is more likely to negotiate their salaries at their most recent job?

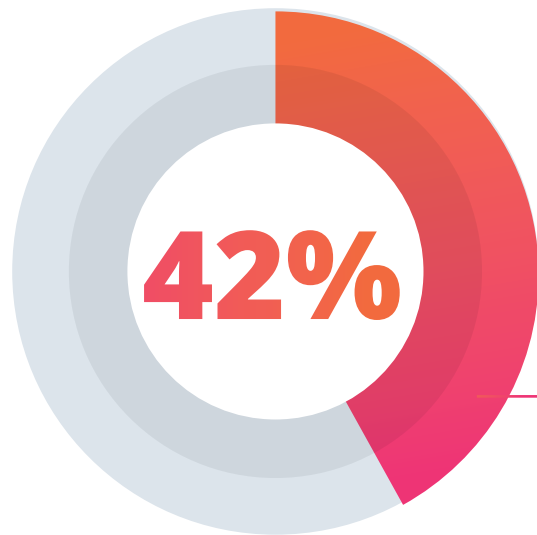


**Men (64%), married workers (61%), Republicans (62%) and those currently employed (57%)** are particularly likely to think that men and women are paid equally.

### “What Did You Previously Make?”

**The odds** of being asked previous salary during the interview process, which is illegal in 15 states, **are about 50%.**

# Job Seekers are Split on “Workism”



Half of Americans (42%) shape their identity based on the job they perform or company they work for, while half (46%) do not.

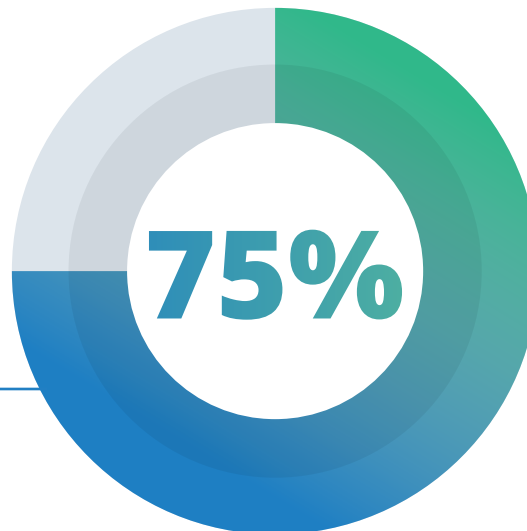
More than two-thirds (**65%**) of those who define themselves by their work say it's very important to who they are as a person (another **30%** say it's "somewhat important").

## *Workism (n.)*

The belief that work “is not only necessary to economic production, but also the centerpiece of one’s identity and life’s purpose.”

(The Atlantic)

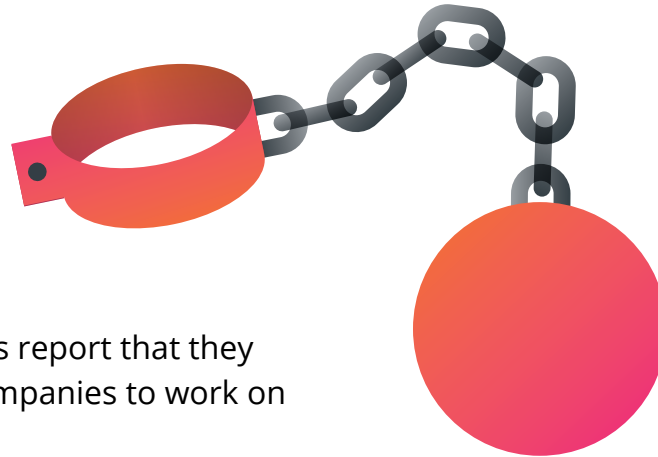
Three-quarters of workers consider it important to work for a company that supports charitable causes or gives back to a community.



**Who?** Democrats (**42%**), Workers under 40 (**39%**), city workers (**34%**), consider this very important.

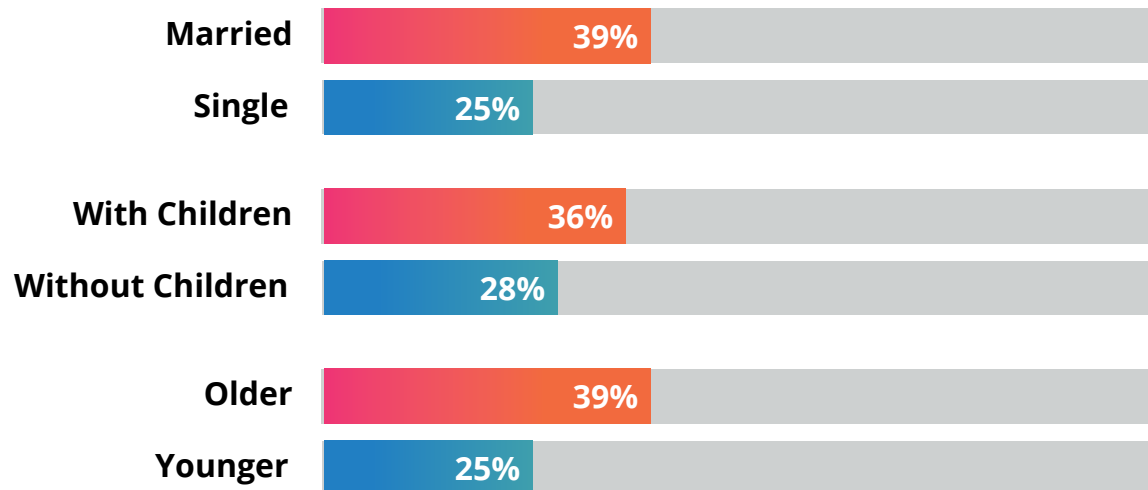
# Companies Expect an Always-On Employee

Most workers believe that a reasonable average workweek should be between 30-40 hours, yet work a lot more.



Close to half of survey respondents report that they have been encouraged by their companies to work on the weekend or after hours.

## Those expected to work on average between 41-50 hours



**30%** of workers say they have stayed up past midnight to finish a work project.

# But Workers Aren't Always on Their Best Behavior

While the majority of workers play by the rules and work hard, not everyone is afraid to “throw shade” at their employers, including:

Using a sick day when they weren't, in fact, sick



Working on their side hustle while at their full time job



Leaving early and turning off email notifications for the night



Quit without notifying their employer

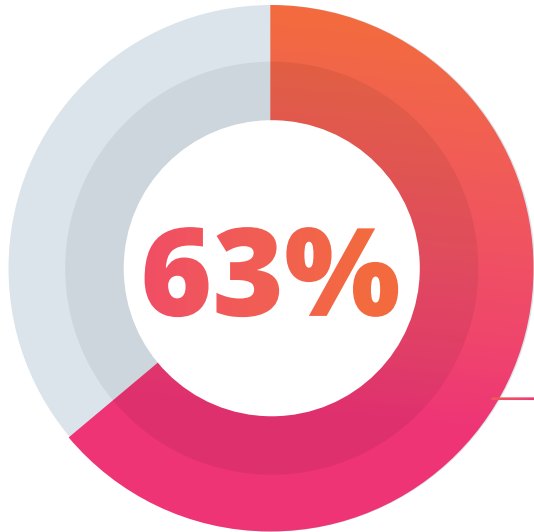


Didn't show up for the first day of work after accepting a job





# Workers Value Parental Leave, but Don't Use It

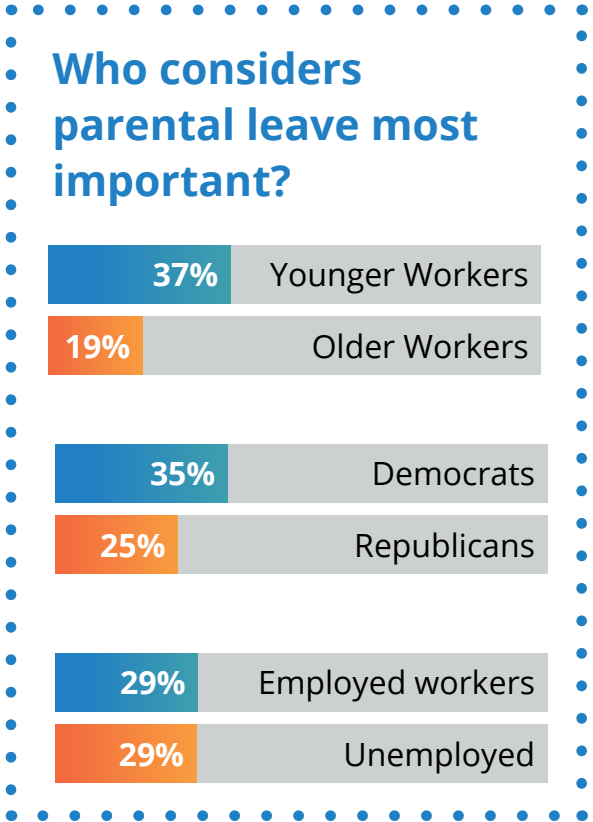


Parental leave benefits are at least somewhat important to two-thirds (63%) of American workers.

Yet, only a fifth (21%) have ever taken parental leave offered by their work.

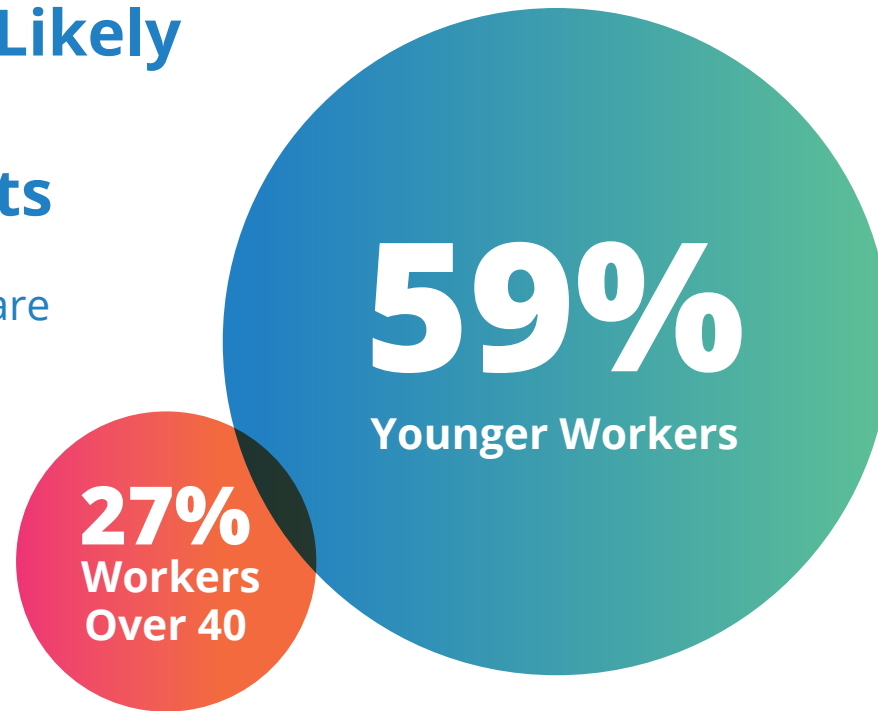
In most cases (75%) the leave was paid and lasted less than 4 weeks. Two-thirds (63%) of workers have taken extra time (such as saved up vacation, unpaid leave) not offered by their work.

**The "Opportunity Cost" continues:**  
College educated workers are much more likely to have paid leave (81% vs. 66% of non-degree holders).



# Millennials Are More Likely to Take Advantage of Mental Health Benefits

While workers under and over 40 are both likely to have mental health benefits/resources at work, younger respondents are far more likely to have utilized them.



## Who else is offered them?

- College-educated job seekers (**53% vs. 38%**)
- Workers with children at home (**55% vs. 38%**)
- Employed workers (**47% vs. 22%**)

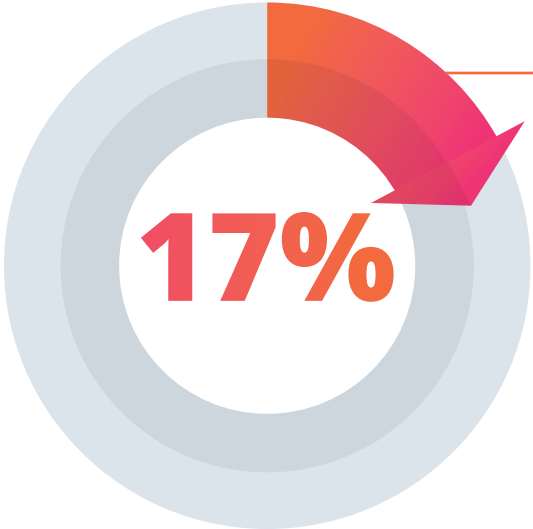


## Who else takes advantage of them?

- College-educated workers (**46% vs. 27%**)
- City dwellers (**45% vs. 29%**)
- Democrats (**50% vs. 41%**)

# The Impact of #MeToo on the Workplace

Young workers are more likely to come forward about sexual harassment — and report it to HR.



The number of workers who say they've been sexually harassed increased to 17%. **Up from 9% last year.**

A majority of the workers (57%) who were harassed have reported it to HR, but stayed at the company at their current role.

- ..... Workers under 40 - **20%**
- ..... Older Workers - **14%**

Workers under 40 are more likely than older workers to have been, at some point, sexually harassed at the workplace (20% vs. 14%).

- ..... Men - **60%**
- ..... Women - **57%**

Nearly a quarter of women and 13% of men say they've been sexually harassed in the workplace — yet men (60%) are still more likely to report it HR than women (57%).

- ..... Older Workers - **46%**
- ..... Younger workers - **67%**

Younger workers who have been harassed are also significantly more likely to have reported the incident to HR than older colleagues.

# Summary

The so-called “candidates’ job market” doesn’t exist for every worker, and so job hunting expectations vary greatly between job seekers.

## How hard is finding work today? That depends on who you ask:

- 45% of job seekers say it’s harder to find a job than last year, but an increased number of job seekers (20%) also said it’s easier finding work.
- 59% of survey respondents who currently work part-time say they’re looking for full-time work and are considered “employed.”
- Employed workers can use professional networks to find that next opportunity versus those who are unemployed (38% vs. 18%).
- The college-educated (62%), city workers (53%), and those already employed (53%) are the most likely to continue their education and “upskill.”

## A new breed of job seekers have sky-high expectations when considering new job

- For the first time, career growth opportunities now rank number one (61%) on the list of most important factors when looking for new opportunities — toppling long-time kings compensation (57%) and healthcare / retirement benefits (58%).
- Candidates who drop out during the application process are most likely to do so after an in-person interview (15%).
- 29% of workers have at some point left a job within the first 90 days, most often (45%) because the day-to-day role was not what they expected.
- Two-thirds (64%) of workers who received a text message after applying for a job preferred this type of communication over email or phone call.

# About the Study

Zogby Analytics was commissioned by Jobvite to conduct an online survey of 1504 adults in the US who are working full time, part time, or looking for work.

Using internal and trusted interactive partner resources, thousands of adults were randomly invited to participate in this interactive survey. Each invitation was password coded and secure so that one respondent could only access the survey one time.

Using information based on census data, voter registration figures, CIA fact books and exit polls, we use complex weighting techniques to best represent the demographics of the population being surveyed. Weighted variables may include age, race, gender, region, party, education, and religion.

Based on a confidence interval of 95%, the margin of error for 1504 is +/- 2.5 percentage points. This means that all other things being equal, if the identical survey were repeated, its confidence intervals would contain the true value of parameters 95 times out of 100.

Subsets of the data have a larger margin of error than the whole data set. As a rule we do not rely on the validity of very small subsets of the data especially sets smaller than 50-75 respondents. At that subset we can make estimations based on the data, but in these cases the data is more qualitative than quantitative.

Additional factors can create error, such as question wording and question order.

# Jobvite

Jobvite is leading the next wave of recruitment innovation with Continuous Candidate Engagement (CCE), a candidate-centric recruiting model that helps companies engage candidates with meaningful experiences at the right time, in the right way, from first look to first day. The Jobvite Platform infuses automation and intelligence into today's expanded recruiting cycle to increase the speed, quality, and cost-effectiveness of talent acquisition. Focused exclusively on recruiting software since 2006 and headquartered in San Mateo, Jobvite has thousands of customers including LinkedIn, Schneider Electric, Premise Health, Zappos.com, and Blizzard Entertainment. To learn more, visit [www.jobvite.com](http://www.jobvite.com) or follow us @Jobvite.

Jobvite was also named a leader in the "Forrester Wave for Talent Acquisition, Q3 2015," and a leader in IDC's MarketScape: Worldwide Modern Talent Acquisition Systems 2017.

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