



AHEAD OF WHAT'S NEXT.



National Survey of Working America 2011

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Background and Objectives



Background

- Harris Interactive was commissioned by NCDA to conduct a national telephone survey of U.S. adults in early 2011 to support its upcoming efforts to update and refresh research on “Working America,” most recently conducted in 1999.

Objectives

- To better understand how adults attitudes about work and career development has changed since 1999.
- To see what Americans currently think, feel and believe about the state of the workforce and career development.
- To determine how those attitudes and beliefs affect career development actions they may take.

Methodology

This report is based on the following research:



Survey Dates: April 18 – May 2, 2011

Survey Length: 15 minutes, on average

Method: Conducted via telephone interviews in the evenings and on weekends with a random digit dial (RDD) sample

Respondents: 1,000 U.S. adult (18+) residents including a total of 510 employed residents and 602 residents in the labor force (employed and/or not employed but looking/not looking for work, excluding retired residents)

Weights: Weighted to the U.S. Adult Population

Trending: Where appropriate, 2011 data is compared to the 1999 data. The 1999 telephone survey was conducted by Gallup among 1,003 adults, 18 or older, between June 19 and July 24, 1999. Of the 1,003 respondents, 659 were employed full- or part-time.

Areas of Exploration



The survey covered the following topics:

- Current employment status
- The need for help in the last year with selecting or getting a job
- Sources of help and information in selecting, changing or getting a job
- Evaluation of availability and usefulness of information
- Use of job or career counseling
- Perceived need for more job training or education
- Future employment outlook
- Satisfaction with current job, reasons for leaving a job
- How adults get started in a job or career
- On the job assistance
- Perception of discrimination in workplace
- Perception of globalization



Executive Summary



Executive Summary: Need for Career Help



The 2011 data suggests that more adults could benefit from working with a career practitioner. Sizeable numbers report needing career help and have visited with a career counselor.

- Twenty-one percent of adults in the labor force reported needing help in making career plans, selecting, changing, or getting a job (16% last year; 14% prior to last year).
 - This represents a 7% increase since 1999 in adults needing help in the past year.
 - Young adults, particularly 18-24 year olds, are more likely than any other group (30%) to report needing help.
 - African Americans (32%), Hispanics (31%) and those who completed some high school (30%) were much higher in their need for help.
- One-quarter (24%) say they have visited with a career practitioner about possible career choices.
 - The majority (86%) who have visited a career practitioner found it helpful.

Executive Summary: Sources of Career Help



The data suggest that individuals have a need for greater career assistance, and many have sought career help. However, it is possible they are not accessing the best or most useful resources.

- Adults seek help to select, change or get a job from, friends, relatives and associates (70%); online career sites (57%); newspapers (46%) and co-workers (46%).
- Sixty-one percent would seek help from a counselor, at their place of employment (37%), a counselor in an education-based setting (30%), a career specialist in private practice (28%), and in a public employment or welfare agency (27%).
- The use of the Internet has exploded since 1999, with 57% now citing this as a source of information for selecting, changing or getting a job, up from 13% in 1999.
- Related to these findings, just 37% say they made a conscious choice and followed a definite plan when choosing their present job or career. Others (28%) were influenced by parents, friends, school, etc. A similar proportion (28%) say they took the only job available or whatever job looked interesting at the time.

Executive Summary: Importance of Information



Adults see the importance of quality career information in making career decisions. Many believe they need more training or education in the future and feel it would be difficult for them to find jobs similar in compensation and skill to what they have now.

- Fifty-nine percent of adults in the workforce would try to get more or different information about their options if they could start their work life over again.
- Similarly, 45% of adults think they will need more training or education to maintain or increase their earning power during the next few years, and one-third (36%) of working adults think it would be extremely or very difficult to find a new job at their current skill and salary level in the current economic environment.
 - The perceived need for additional education and training is particularly true for those who are less satisfied with their current jobs.
 - Those who have visited a career practitioner are more likely to believe they will need further education.

Executive Summary: Information Needs



Information that is sought is focused more on job search mechanics rather than the career-planning process.

- Adults report using job postings (48%), information about occupations (35%), and information about job seeking skills most commonly (33%).
- Twenty-nine percent report using information about interests and skills, and 16% have used information related to help with the career planning process.
- For those who would have wanted more or different information, information about job availability and job descriptions (14%) and information on different occupations or career paths based on their strengths (12%) were preferred.

Employers represent a significant source of career assistance and the role they have played has increased since 1999.

- Compared to 1999, employees in 2011 are more likely to report receiving career assistance from employers, including training programs to perform their current job better, yearly evaluations with plans for the coming year, training programs for advancement, problem resolution, and retirement planning.

Executive Summary: Job Satisfaction



Job satisfaction remains high. Fewer employees who left their previous job did so because they wanted to (46% vs. 60% in 1999) rather than because they had to or for some other reason.

- Most employed adults (77%) report they like their job very or quite a bit vs. 81% in 1999.
- Satisfaction with work increases with age, education, income, and full time workers are more satisfied than part-time workers.

Executive Summary: Globalization Impacts

A large majority reports various impacts of globalization but report that the overall U.S. economy (64%) has been impacted far more than they have personally (26%).



- About three in four respondents who said that the US economy had been affected by globalization believe that millions of jobs have been outsourced (79%); that it has forced people to learn new skills (77%); it has forced people to be retrained (76%) and many middle class Americans are forced to accept lower paying jobs (74%).
- Those who have been personally affected by globalization and are most likely to have lost their jobs or had their jobs outsourced included Blacks (34% lost job; 26% job outsourced), minority men (34% lost job; 17% outsourced) and low income workers making less than \$25,000 (27% lost job; 14% outsourced).
- Those who think the U.S. economy has been affected by globalization with a college degree or higher believe that globalization has created new jobs (59%).
- In terms of individuals personal situation, adults personally affected by globalization most commonly cite the following kinds of impacts: significant changes in how they work (36%); having to learn new skills (36%); and globalization having a significant impact on job or career prospects (35%).

Executive Summary: Challenge for Special Groups



In most of the topics discussed here, the workplace and work-force environment remains less positive and more challenging for younger adults, minority adults and those with lower levels of education.

- Blacks and Hispanics are more likely than Whites (32% and 31% vs. 10%) to report needing help in the past year.
- Blacks (15%) are more likely than Whites (6%) or Hispanics (4%) to expect that they will be forced to change jobs because of downsizing or going-out-of-business.
- Asked about discrimination in the workplace, most employed adults (70%) said they do not believe it exists at their place of work. Those under 40 (29%) are more likely to say that there is discrimination against women/minorities than those who are 40 or older (16%).



Conclusions and Recommendations



Conclusions and Recommendations



- These results reinforce the federal agenda related to developing career readiness, which includes learning how to make career decisions effectively, being aware of occupational and educational opportunities, and knowing how to gain access to such opportunities.
- Despite a decade which has upended the workplace and with the highest unemployment rates seen in many years, career specialists are underutilized relative to the potential need and value.
- Significant numbers of employees are less than fully satisfied with their current jobs, majorities continue to report that they wish they had known more than when they started their career.

Conclusions and Recommendations (cont'd)



- Certain segments of the population who have historically faced greater challenges in gaining full employment, including minorities, younger adults, unemployed adults continue to face obstacles and are more likely to report needing help, needing more training, and so forth.
- Employers should continue with the efforts made since 1999. Employees reported having more training opportunities and employers have a role to play to ensure that employees have the appropriate skills and training to perform their jobs; and have a clear career path defined.

Conclusions and Recommendations (cont'd)



- Employers can make career development more of a priority with a particular focus and emphasis on those employees not fully satisfied in their current jobs. This could lead to not just greater satisfaction but greater productivity, commitment and loyalty from employees as well.
- School and work-based settings are the key places to reach those that may benefit from career services. Employers and counselors should be more proactive in reaching employees who are in or may need career planning assistance.
- Regardless of one's education, every individual should have access to quality career planning and information.

The Role of Career Practitioners



- Career practitioners assist individuals by helping with career concerns such as making an initial career choice, linking career aspirations to training options, utilizing labor market information, supporting career transitions, and planning an effective job search.
- Instead of choosing work based on what is currently available, career practitioners can help individuals make a conscious choice by combining an individual's strengths with available options.
- If the economy is to grow, we must maximize people's talents. A happier work force is a more productive work force and also translates into less turnover. Career practitioners can increase employee satisfaction by consulting with employers.

The Role of NCDA



- The mission of NCDA is to inspire and empower the achievement of career and life goals by providing professional development, resources, standards, scientific research, and advocacy.
- NCDA achieves its mission by providing :
 - A top quality professional peer-reviewed journal with empirical studies about the impact of career techniques and tools with various populations, distributed quarterly.
 - Resources in the form of books, monographs and a web magazine
 - An annual professional conference with workshops designed to enhance career knowledge and skills, as well as ongoing training throughout the year
 - Training for those interested in becoming certified career development facilitators
 - Multiple networking opportunities including social networking sites
 - A registry of certified career development practitioners at ncda.org

National Career Development Association



Inspiring Careers – Empowering Lives

The National Career Development Association (NCDA) is dedicated to inspiring and empowering people to achieve their career and life goals. As the pre-eminent career organization, NCDA advocates for competencies and standards for career counselors and other career service providers.

Quality, comprehensive career development services, delivered by competent professionals, provide individuals with the information, education and assistance they need to have increased opportunities for employment and career satisfaction in a highly competitive and unequal world. These services can serve to combat illiteracy, poverty and discrimination, while increasing overall societal performance and productivity, leading to improved social and economic conditions for all.

NCDA is a founding division of the American Counseling Association.