Perceptions of Career Development from Working America

August 2021

Conducted by





National Career Development Association

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Research Method



Methodology Statement (*To be used in all materials for public release*) The research was conducted online in the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of NCDA among 1,535 adults aged 18+. The survey was conducted July 22 – August 5, 2021.

Data are statistically weighted where necessary by age, gender, race/ethnicity, region, education, marital status, household size, household income, and propensity to be online to bring them in line with their actual proportions in the population. No estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

Audience Definition





Not employed but looking

for work

Notation Guide

Please refer to this slide for explanations of the various notation and formatting used throughout this deck:

Audience Notation:

Scale NET Notation:

The following banners and colors are used as throughout the report to notate audiences;



Subgroup Callouts:

These graphics indicate groups that are statistically more likely to agree with or select a particular statement or response option, compared to their respective peers.



The percentages to the right of the colon reflect those who agree/select in the significant subgroup, while the percentages in parentheses reflect those who agree/select from a complementary subgroup.



The percentages in the middle of the diagram indicate a NET of the top two items in a scale. For example, the blue percentage to the left indicates that 92% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree with a statement.

Notes on Reading the Report:

- Percentages may not add up to 100% due to weighting, computer rounding, and/or the acceptance of multiple responses.
- Throughout the report statistically significant differences by subgroups are noted. Statistical significance testing was conducted at the 95% level of confidence. All comparative claims made in this report are statistically significant.
- Throughout the report the terms "workforce" and "labor force" are used interchangeably.

Executive Summary

Past Career Experiences

Most Americans found the job they are currently (or were previously) in by relying on some sort of external influence, either personal connections or professional services. Receiving career assistance from past employers or outside sources is felt to be helpful, though many adults seem to especially appreciate more independent or objective support from sources like professional career specialists and career assistance centers.

There is no one way to choose a job, but for more than two in five all adults (42%) the process involved being influenced by other people. This includes friends/associates (22%), parents/relatives (17%), school/private counselors (13%) or counselors in public service/job training programs (9%)¹.

When it comes to making *career* plans, a slight majority of all Americans (57%) have accessed outside help, and threequarters (74%) of those who have received support found career specialists in private practice to be *very* helpful. Further, around three in five or more have found career specialists at a place of employment (67%), career specialists at schools or other educational settings (62%), and career websites (59%) to be *very* helpful².

Nearly two-thirds of those who have a past employer (65%) have received career assistance from them, and for those employees the most helpful resource utilized was a career assistance center where they can meet with a counselor, participate in group career activities or read career information (75% very/extremely helpful)³.

Looking Forward – The Need For Career Resources

As U.S. adults in the labor force explore their future career plans, many hope to receive help from career websites and career services professionals. There are many national (and international) trends and events that will undoubtedly influence the working landscape going forward, and the majority of employed adults think they personally will need to adapt their work lives in some way due these shifts.

If they could start over again and plan their career or work life, over half of all Americans (53%) would try to get more or different information about jobs or career options than they did the first time¹.

Thinking ahead to the next few years, most employed adults (56%) do *not* plan to stay with their current employer. If adults in the labor force need help in the future to aid their career plans such as selecting, changing, or getting a job, over a third indicate that they will seek support from career websites (36%), and a quarter would seek help from a career specialists (25%)².

Looking ahead to future trends, the majority of adults in the labor force believe the effects of technological automation (70%) and the "globalization of the American economy" (64%) will be impactful, either to them personally (53%) or to the job market in general (30% technical automation, 20% globalization). Around one-fifth say these trends will have a significant impact on their job or career (19% technical automation, 21% globalization) and many others say they will be forced to learn new skills (32%, 32%), will need to be re-trained (17%, 15%), or will lose their job altogether (10%, 9%)³.

1 – Q880, see more on slide 36 2 – Q1010, Q2150, see more on slides 33, 38 3 – Q2165, Q2170, see more on slides 39, 40

Looking Forward – The Value of Career Resources

There is little doubt that working adults see getting support from a career services professional as a valuable step as they pursue a job hunt or figure out their future career path. Further, most Americans express some regret over not seeking support and think it would be a good idea for them personally to seek help from a career services professional in the future. Recent events may be fueling these sentiments, as the majority of those who experienced career impacts from COVID-19 think it would have been valuable to talk to a career services professional over the course of the pandemic.

The vast majority U.S. adults (85%) feel that career services professionals provide valuable assistance and nearly seven in ten (68%) believe most people need career assistance from a career services professional. When reflecting on their past choices, the majority (58%) wish they personally had sought services from a career professional. Now looking forward, most U.S. adults (65%) agree it would be helpful for them to talk to a career services professional as they explore future jobs or careers¹.

For about one in three adults (32%) the COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on their career, in particular by having hours/shifts cut (12%), being laid off/furloughed (11%) or changing their career path (9%)².

The majority of those whose job has been impacted by COVID-19 (59%) think it would have been valuable to talk to a career services professional over the course of the pandemic, and over one-third (37%) would have found this type of support to be *very* valuable³.

Career Experiences by Employment Status

While employed adults are more likely to recognize the value of career services professionals when asked, their unemployed counterparts seem to be more likely to need these career services in the short term. Unemployed adults are more likely to consider a career change in the next few years, and to desire information on resume building, interviewing skills, and job search strategies.

Most adults in the labor force (64%) are at least somewhat likely to consider a new career in the next few years, and more than one-quarter (26%) are very likely, especially those who are unemployed (43% vs 25% employed)¹.

Employed adults feel more strongly than those unemployed that most people need career assistance from a career services professional (72% vs. 62%). Likewise, employed adults are more likely to recognize the value of a career services professional for them personally as they explore future jobs and careers (69% vs. 60%) and to say their career choice was influenced by someone in this role in the past (48% vs. 30%)².

When thinking about career assistance they would like to receive from future employers, unemployed adults are more likely than their employed counterparts to desire training programs that would help them advance to a better job (48% vs. 34%)³.

Further, those who are unemployed but looking for work are more likely to feel that resume and interviewing skills (50% vs. 27% of those currently employed), and job search strategies (39% vs. 26%) would be helpful to know more about⁴.

Career Experiences by Race/Ethnicity

Hispanic and Black adults are more likely than their White peers to be looking for a career change in the next few years, and Hispanic adults seem to be more likely to appreciate that a career services professional would provide value to them. Further, the events of the past year seem to have impacted adults of color in particular, and as a result, nine in ten say it would have been valuable for them to speak with a career services professional over the course of the pandemic.

When reflecting on how they landed their current or previous job, White adults (35%) were more inclined to make a conscious choice and follow a definite plan than their Black (22%) and Hispanic (18%) peers were¹.

And, when thinking ahead to the future, Hispanic and Black adults are more likely to be looking for a career change compared to their White colleagues (81% and 71% at least somewhat likely vs. 55%)².

Hispanic adults, more than their White counterparts, are inclined to feel that most people need the support of a career services professional (76% vs. 66%), to say that their career choice has been inspired by someone like this in the past (50% vs. 35%), and to agree that it would be helpful to talk to a career professional in the future (75% vs. 61%)³.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had disproportional effects on people of color, as two in five (41%) reported career impacts as a result of the pandemic compared to just 25% of White adults. Perhaps unsurprisingly then, adults of color are more likely to feel it would have been at least somewhat valuable for them to talk to a career services professional over the course of the pandemic (89% vs. 78% White adults)⁴.

Working America Profile (As of August 2021)

Employment Status of American Adults



BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (N=1535)

Employment. Which of the following best describes your employment status?



A Quarter of Americans Work in the Services Industry

24%



Industries Worked In

Top 12* Types of Work Executed for Primary Job



BASE: ALL EMPLOYED RESPONDENTS (N=1087)

Q2000 What kind of business or industry do you work in?

Q2005 Thinking about your primary job, what type of work do you do?



Four in Ten Labor Force Members Have Been Working For Ten Years or Less

Number of Years Working Overall



Number of Years Working in Current Career



BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS IN THE LABOR FORCE (N=1213)

Q750 How many years have you been working? Please enter 0 if you have been working for less than a year.

Q2100 How many years have you been working in your current career? Please enter 0 if you have been working for less than a year.

Over the Course of Their Working Career, Three in Ten Labor Force Adults Have Worked Five Jobs or More



BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS IN THE LABOR FORCE (N=1213)

Q760 In that timeframe, how many different jobs have you held?

BASE: ALL EMPLOYED RESPONDENTS (N=1087)

Q720 How many jobs do you currently work?



The Majority of Labor Force and Currently Employed Adults Are Satisfied with Careers and Jobs, Though Just About Half Are Very Satisfied



Career Resources and Help

Past Experiences

- Present Experiences
- Future Expectations

Nearly Two Thirds of Those Who Have a Past Employer Have Received Career Assistance From Them, Most Commonly Training Programs and Yearly Evaluations



BASE: HAS A PAST EMPLOYER (N=1396)

Q2118 What types of career assistance have you received from your <u>past</u> employer(s)? Please select all that apply.

The Most Helpful Career Assistance Received from Past Employers Come From A Career Assistance Center and Training Programs to Help Advance to a Better Job



BASE: RECEIVED CAREER ASSISTANCE FROM PAST EMPLOYER(S) (BASE VARIES)

Q2119 You mentioned you received career assistance from your past employer(s). How helpful was each service you received?

The Majority of US Adults Have Used Job Information in the Past, Most Commonly Job Postings



BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (N=1535)

Q830 Which of the following types of job information, if any, have you used in the <u>past</u>? Please select all that apply.

When it Comes to Utility, the Most Helpful Type of Job Information Used is Information That Helps with the Career Planning Process



BASE: USED JOB INFORMATION (BASE VARIES)

Q2117 You mentioned you have used job information in the past. How helpful were each of these types of job information?

While Just Over One in Ten Report Using Career Specialists in the Past, The Majority Wish They Had Sought These Types of Services



BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (N=1535)

Q2105 In the <u>past</u>, did you receive help from any of the following sources to aid you in making career plans such as selecting, changing, or getting a job? Please select all that apply. Q2180 How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about career services professionals?

Three Quarters of Americans Who Have Used Private Career Specialists Found Them to be Very or Extremely Helpful



BASE: HAVE RECEIVED HELP (BASE VARIES)

Q2110 You mentioned you received help making career plans, such as selecting, changing, or getting a job. How helpful were each of the sources you received help from?

EXTREMELY/

When Asked In Which Way Past Career Resources Were Helpful, Nearly Half Cite That They Provided Career Guidance or Assistance



BASE: HAVE RECEIVED HELP (BASE VARIES)

Q2115 Thinking about the resources that were most helpful to you in making career plans, in which ways were they helpful?

Career Resources and Help

- Past Experiences
- Present Experiences
- Future Expectations



Most Employed Adults Receive Career Assistance Their Current Employers



BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS EMPLOYED BY SOMEONE OTHER THAN SELF (N=971)

Q1070 What types of career assistance have you received from your <u>current</u> employer(s)? Please select all that apply.

Career Assistance Centers Top The List of The Most Helpful Resources Currently Employed Adults Are Receiving



BASE: RECEIVED CAREER ASSISTANCE FROM CURRENT EMPLOYER(S) (BASE VARIES)

Q2127 You mentioned you have received career assistance from your current employer(s). How helpful is each service you received?

More Than Two in Five Labor Force Adults Are Currently Utilizing Career Assistance, and One in Ten Are Utilizing a Career Specialist





BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS IN THE LABOR FORCE (N=1213)

Q2130 Currently, are you receiving help from any of the following sources to aid you in making career plans such as selecting, changing, or getting a job? Please select all that apply.

More Than Four in Ten American Adults Were Influenced by Others in Choosing Their Jobs, While Three in Ten Report They Made a Conscious Choice and Followed a Definite Plan

Ways Current/Previous Job Was Chosen



BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (N=1535)

Q1050 Which of the following helps explain how you chose your [current/previous] job? Please select all that apply.

Career Resources and Help

- Past Experiences
- Present Experiences

Future Expectations



Half of Those in Labor Force Would Like to Receive Training Programs From Their Employers in the Future



BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS IN THE LABOR FORCE (N=1213)

Q2160 What types of career assistance would you like to receive in the <u>future</u> from your employer(s)? Please select all that apply.

A Quarter of Those in the Workforce Would Like to Seek Services from a Career Services Professional in the Future

Sources for Career Assistance Labor Force Adults would Seek in the Future



BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS IN THE LABOR FORCE (N=1213)

Q2150 If you needed help in the <u>future</u> to aid you in career plans such as selecting, changing, or getting a job, where would you seek it? Please select all that apply.

Further, Nearly Two Thirds Say it Would be Helpful to Talk to a Professional as They Explore Future Career Moves



Q2180 How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about career services professionals.



When Looking Only at Adults in the Workforce, Seven in Ten Agree it Would Be Helpful to Talk to a Career Services Professional in the Future, With Nearly One Quarter *Strongly* Agreeing

"It would be helpful for me to talk to a career services professional as I explore future jobs or careers."



Q2180 How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about career services professionals.

Job Security and Work-Life Balance Top The List of Topics Labor Force Adults Would Like to Learn More About

Topics Labor Force Adults Would Like to Learn More About



BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS IN THE LABOR FORCE (N=1213)

Q2155 When thinking about your <u>future</u> career goals and decisions, what topics do you think will be helpful to learn more about? Please select all that apply.
If They Could Start Over , Over Half of Americans Would Try to Get More or Different Information About Career Options



BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (N=1535)

Q880 If you could start over again and plan your career or work life, would you try to get more or different information about jobs or career options than you did the first time?

BASE: WOULD GET MORE OR DIFFERENT CAREER INFORMATION (N=876)

Q890 What information do you wish you had?

Looking Forward – Trends, Plans and the Value of Career Services



Looking Ahead To The Next Few Years, Two in Five Adults are Likely to Pursue a New Career



BASE: ALL EMPLOYED RESPONDENTS (N=1087)

Q1010 Thinking ahead to the next few years, which one of the following best describes what is most likely to happen with regard to your current job?

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS IN THE LABOR FORCE (N=1213)

Q2145 Thinking ahead for the next few years, how likely are you to pursue a new career?

Nearly a Third of Labor Force Adults Believe They Will Need to Learn New Skills Due to Globalization of The American Economy



BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS IN THE LABOR FORCE (N=1213)

Q2165 There has been discussion in the media of the "globalization of the American economy." What do you believe the effects of globalization will be? Please select all that apply.

Over Half in Labor Force Believe They Will Be Personally Impacted by Technological Automation



BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS IN THE LABOR FORCE (N=1213)

Q2170 Technological automation of some jobs or job duties is becoming more prevalent. What do you believe the effects of technological automation will be? Please select all that apply.

The Vast Majority Agree That Career Services Professionals Provide Valuable Assistance, and Two in Five Say Their Own Career Choice Was Inspired by a Career Services Professional

"Most people need career"

assistance from a career

services professional."

"Career services professionals provide valuable assistance."



"My career choice was inspired by a career services professional."



BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (N=1535)

Q2180 How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about career services professionals?

When Looking at Attitudes by Subgroup, Hispanic and Black Adults are More Likely Than White Adults to Say Their Career Choice was Inspired by a Career Services Professional

> % Agree by subgroups (Statistically significant)

"Career services professionals provide valuable assistance."



Has Children <18 in Household



"Most people need career assistance from a career services professional."



"My career choice was inspired by a career services professional."



BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (N=1535)

Q2180 How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about career services professionals?

COVID-19 Impact



Nearly a Third of Americans Experienced Some Sort of Career Impact During The COVID-19 Pandemic



BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (N=1535)

Q2125 Has your <u>career</u> been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in any of the following ways? Please select all that apply.

Those Who Are Currently Employed Were More Likely to Have Experienced Career Impacts As a Result of The Pandemic Than Those Not Employed

Experienced Career Impacts From the COVID-19 Pandemic by Employment Status (Statistically significant)



BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (N=1535)

Q2125 Has your <u>career</u> been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in any of the following ways? Please select all that apply.

Hispanic and Black Adults Experienced Career Impacts From the COVID-19 Pandemic at Higher Incidences Than White Adults

Experienced Any Career Impact From the COVID-19 Pandemic by Subgroup (Statistically significant)









BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (N=1535)

Q2125 Has your career been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in any of the following ways? Please select all that apply.

The Vast Majority of Those Who Had Their Career Impacted by COVID-19 Think it Would Have Been at Least Somewhat Valuable to Talk to a Career Services Professional During the Pandemic

"How valuable do you think it would have been for you to talk to a career services

professional over the course of the pandemic?"

(Of those who experienced a career impact from COVID-19)



BASE: CAREER IMPACTED BY COVID-19 (N=599)

Q2126 You mentioned your career has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. How valuable do you think it would have been for you to talk to a career services professional over the course of the pandemic?

Demographics

mographic Profile			
nographierronie	All American Adults	Adults In the Labor Force	Currently Employed Adults
Gender	N=1535	N=1213	N=1087
Male	48%	51%	52%
Female	51%	48%	46%
Transgender	*	*	*
Non-binary or Gender non-conforming	*	*	*
Prefer not to answer	1%	*	*
Age	N=1535	N=1213	N=1087
18-24	12%	12%	12%
25-34	18%	24%	24%
35-44	17%	23%	24%
45-54	15%	20%	20%
55-64	16%	15%	14%
65+	22%	6%	6%
Race-Ethnicity	N=1535	N=1213	N=1087
White	59%	52%	53%
Hispanic	17%	20%	19%
Black/African American	12%	13%	13%
Asian	6%	7%	8%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1%	1%	1%
Native American or Alaskan Native	1%	1%	1%
More than one race	3%	4%	4%
Other	2%	2%	2%

Demographic Profile

	9.9.9	All American Adults	Adults In the Labor Force	Currently Employed Adults	
	Children in Household	N=1535	N=1213	N=1087	
і П.	None	64%	57%	57%	
	One	17%	21%	22%	
	Two	11%	14%	13%	
	Three	6%	6%	6%	
	Four or more	2%	2%	2%	



People in Household	N=1535	N=1213	N=1087
One	15%	15%	15%
Two	35%	28%	28%
Three	20%	23%	23%
Four	16%	19%	19%
Five or More	14%	15%	15%



Marital Status	N=1535	N=1213	N=1087
Married / Living With Partner (Net)	53%	50%	54%
Married or civil union	46%	43%	46%
Living with partner	7%	8%	8%
Never married	29%	34%	31%
Divorced / Separated / Widowed (Net)	17%	15%	15%
Divorced	11%	10%	10%
Separated	2%	3%	3%
Widowed	4%	2%	2%

Demographic Profile

• 0		All American Adults	Adults In the Labor Force	Currently Employed Adults	
	Region	N=1535	N=1213	N=1087	
	Northeast	17%	18%	18%	
	Midwest	21%	20%	20%	
	South	39%	39%	39%	
	West	23%	23%	23%	

	Education Level	N=1535	N=1213	N=1087
\sim	Less Than High School (Net)	8%	7%	6%
	Less than high school	3%	2%	2%
	Completed some high school	5%	5%	4%
	High School To Less Than 4 Year College Degree (Net)	56%	52%	50%
	High school graduate	28%	27%	25%
	Job-specific training program(s) after high school	3%	2%	2%
	Some college, but no degree	17%	14%	13%
	Associate degree	8%	9%	10%
	4 Year College Degree Or More (Net)	36%	41%	44%
	Bachelor's degree (such as B.A., B.S.)	20%	24%	25%
	Some graduate school, but no degree	2%	2%	2%
	Graduate degree (such as MBA, MS, M.D., Ph.D.)	14%	15%	17%

Demographic Profile

lographie i tonie	All American Adults	Adults In the Labor Force	Currently Employed Adults
Income	N=1535	N=1213	N=1087
Less than \$15,000	6%	4%	3%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	6%	5%	5%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	7%	8%	8%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	10%	10%	9%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	17%	17%	16%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	13%	12%	12%
\$100,000 Or More (Net)	40%	44%	47%
\$100,000 to \$124,999	15%	17%	18%
\$125,000 to \$149,999	9%	10%	11%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	9%	9%	10%
\$200,000 to \$249,999	4%	4%	4%
\$250,000 or more	4%	4%	4%
Urbanicity	N=1535	N=1213	N=1087
Suburban	53%	50%	51%
Urban	29%	33%	32%
Rural	18%	17%	17%
Served in the Military	N=1535	N=1213	N=1087
Yes, I am now on active duty	3%	5%	5%
Yes, I have served on active duty in the past, but do not currently	10%	7%	8%
No	87%	88%	87%

Appendix



Type of Work Executed for Primary Job

Sales	11%
Management	8%
Office or administrative support	6%
Educational instruction or library	6%
Construction or extraction	6%
Business or financial	6%
Production	5%
Food preparation or serving	5%
Transportation or material moving	5%
Computer or mathematics	4%
Healthcare support	4%
Healthcare practitioner	3%
Personal care or service	2%
Installation, maintenance, or repairs	2%
Architecture or engineering	2%
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, or media	2%
Building and grounds management	1%
Legal	1%
Life, physical, or social science	1%
Military	1%
Community or social service	1%
Farming, fishing, or forestry	<u> </u>
Protective service	-
Other	18%



Year Received Highest Degree to Date

1940-1949	*
1950-1959	1%
1960-1969	6%
1970-1979	15%
1980-1989	13%
1990-1999	17%
2000-2009	18%
2010-2019	23%
2020-2021	7%
MEAN	1996
MEDIAN	1999