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One-Third of U.S. Workers Ready to Quit

Employers could soon see a major slowdown in productivity, new research suggests.



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Thirty-two percent of U.S. workers say they are seriously considering leaving their employers, according to a [survey](#) released Monday by Mercer LLC, a global consulting company. Mostly young workers — 40% of employees ages 25 to 34 and 44% of those 24 and younger — have one foot out the door.

The survey was conducted at the end of 2010 on Mercer's behalf by research firm Toluna, which polled more than 2,400 U.S. workers nationwide. While respondents hail from employers of various sizes — the smallest with between 100 and 199 workers and the largest with 5,000 or more — the findings could prove particularly troublesome for small-business owners. Their workforces are normally limited in size,

and the weak economy has forced many in recent years to downsize to even lower levels.

The survey offers a few possible reasons to explain why so many workers are tempted to seek out new jobs, even though the competition for employment these days is stiff. The Labor Department reported a [national unemployment rate](#) of 9.1% in May.

Fifty-three percent of respondents said they were satisfied with their base pay, down from 58% in 2005, the last time this survey was conducted. Sixty-eight percent rated their overall benefits program as good or very good, down from 76% in 2005, while 59% say they are satisfied with their health care benefits, down from 66%.

But the survey also showed some areas of improvement. For example, 41% of respondents said they believe that their employers are doing enough to help them prepare for retirement, up from 38% in 2005. Forty-two percent of employees today agree that promotions go to the most qualified employees in their organization, up from 29% in 2005, and 46% agree that their organization does an adequate job of matching pay to performance, up from 33%.

"Employees see a 'disconnect' between what employers are promising and what they are delivering," said Mindy Fox, a senior partner at Mercer in a statement. "Organizations should re-examine their deals — both the traditional and non-traditional elements — then support them with effective administration and consistent, authentic communication that fosters a sense of belonging and helps employees make better rewards choices and career decisions."

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