



National Small Business Poll

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Small Business Poll

Alcohol, Drugs, Violence and Obesity in the Workplace

NFIB National Small Business Poll

The *National Small Business Poll* is a series of regularly published survey reports based on data collected from national samples of small-business employers. Eight reports are produced annually with the initial volume published in 2001. The *Poll* is designed to address small-business-oriented topics about which little is known but interest is high. Each survey report treats different subject matter.

The survey reports in this series generally contain three sections. The first section is a brief Executive Summary outlining a small number of themes or salient points from the survey. The second is a longer, generally descriptive, exposition of results. This section is not intended to be a thorough analysis of the data collected nor to explore a group of formal hypotheses. Rather, it is intended to textually describe that which appears subsequently in tabular form. The third section consists of a single series of tables. The tables display each question posed in the survey broken-out by employee size of firm.

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NFIB National
Small Business
Poll



*Alcohol, Drugs, Violence and
Obesity in the Workplace*

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Executive Summary

- More than three in four small-business owners have a drug and alcohol policy. Those employing 20 or more people are substantially more likely to have one (92%) than are those who employ fewer than 10 (73%).
- About 35 percent of small employers say that they typically check a potential employee's background for drug and/or alcohol abuse prior to employment.
- Drug testing occurs infrequently in small enterprises. Eight percent of small employers have required one or more employees to take a drug/alcohol test in the last three years. The most frequent triggers for tests are random checks (76% of those testing) and a new hire (70%).
- The preponderance of drug/alcohol testing occurs because small employers find it advisable or necessary to do (59%). However, 28 percent say government effectively forces them to conduct tests through such mechanisms as regulations and contract compliance. Another 15 percent claim that insurers either require them or provide financial incentives to test.
- Comparatively few small employers express serious concern over drug, including marijuana, and/or alcohol abuse among their employees. Substantially fewer than one in 10 say either is a constant concern. Another 11-15 percent say that it is an occasional concern. Almost six in 10 say that they are never a concern.
- Fourteen (14) percent of small employers report one or more incidents in the last three years where they were required to warn, counsel, discipline or fire at least one employee for drug and/or alcohol-related incidents. The incidents were split almost equally between drugs and alcohol. Forty-one (41) percent of the time, it was the third (or more) instance that the small employer had addressed the situation. The ultimate resolution of the issue saw the employee get fired in 58 percent of cases.
- Violence is rare in small businesses. In the last three years, 2 percent have had an employee physically accosted on the job. Less than 1 percent have had one of their employees, while on the job, physically accost someone else.
- By more than a 2 - 1 margin, small employers believe that obesity, or an excessively overweight condition, among employees is a personal matter that employers should dismiss rather than a business matter requiring their active involvement.
- Small employers attribute only about 6 percent of recent workers' compensation or disability claims to obesity and/or conditions related to excess weight. Few indicate that they have been forced to rearrange or lighten duties for one or more employees due to employee weight-related conditions.
- Just 7 percent say that they are very concerned that obesity or excess weight among employees is driving up their insurance costs. Another 15 percent are somewhat concerned, though the majority are not. Meanwhile, 5 percent indicate that an insurer has provided them information about what small employers can do to minimize employee weight-related health problems.

Alcohol, Drugs, Violence and Obesity in the Workplace

Of the primary management functions, the least favorite of more small employers than any other is personnel or human resources. One of the reasons for their aversion to the personnel function is that many people, employees, have personal social problems that spill-over into their jobs and affect work performance. The consequences of these spill overs typically place small employers in difficult positions for which most of them are ill-prepared to handle. Among the most damaging of these personal social problems are drug and alcohol abuse, violence, and increasingly obesity. The National Survey on Drug Use and Health (2002) reports that over 12 million illicit drug users are employed, as are 12 million heavy drinkers and 40 million binge drinkers. A substantial percentage fall into more than one category, so the numbers are not additive. Still, the number is large and the resulting problems disproportionately impact small employers. The reason for the relatively greater consequences is that younger people are considerably more likely to abuse drugs and alcohol than are older people, and small businesses rely to much greater extent on young people for their employees than larger ones. Workplace acts of violence are much less frequent than drug- or alcohol-related incidents. Yet, when violence occurs, it can have severe repercussions. The same younger/older employee relationships appear with violence as with drug and alcohol abuse, again making smaller businesses particularly vulnerable. Obesity is somewhat different than the traditional personal social problems, but is drawing increased attention from public health officials and many employers. The National Institutes of Health reports almost two-thirds of adult Americans are overweight and nearly one-third are obese. The trend is alarming. Obesity rose from 13 percent in 1960 to 31 percent in 2000 with most occurring in the last 20 years. The prevalence of these conditions among employees in small businesses and the magnitude of their consequences leads this issue of the *National Small Business Poll* to focus on personal social problems in the workplace. These problems are defined for present purposes as alcohol and drug abuse, violence, and obesity.

Alcohol and Drugs in the Workplace

Forty-five (45) percent of small employers have a written policy regarding employee use of drugs and alcohol (Q#1). The larger the firm, the more likely the owner is to have such a policy. Almost 82 percent of firms employing 20 or more people have one compared to just 38 percent among those employing fewer than 10.

Though not necessarily written, over three in four have a drug and alcohol policy that they publicly maintain. Of those who do not have a written policy, 57 percent say that they verbally advise employees of their policy at the time of hire (Q#1a). Adding written policies and verbal advisories, 73 percent of the smallest and 92 percent of the largest have an articulated policy for their employees. The remainder appear to have no policy. Small employers without a policy are less concerned about alcohol and drug-related problems than those who have one.

a. Screening for Alcohol and Drugs

The first step chronologically to determine potential employee problems with alcohol or drugs is to check for prior abuse before hiring. Just over one-third (35%) report that they typically check an employee's background for drug and/or alcohol abuse (Q#2). This procedure is somewhat more likely to occur in firms with 20 or more employees. However, it is not clear that the primary reason owners of larger firms more frequently screen for alcohol and/or drugs is that they typically have a more formalized hiring process. They are more likely to check many more aspects of an applicant's background, including alcohol and drugs than are owners of smaller businesses.

Once a potential employee's background has been checked, the chance that he or she will undergo a drug (or breathalyzer) test is minimal. Just 8 percent of owners say that in the last three years they required one or more employees to take such a test (Q#3). Even among those employing more than 20 people, only 29 percent say that they compelled at least one employee to be tested.

The circumstance most likely to trigger alcohol and/or drug tests when they are given is a random check. Of those who test, 76 percent say that they test randomly

(Q#4D). Seventy (70) percent indicate that they do so at the time of hiring (Q#4C). Half that number (35%) test when there is reasonable suspicion of use (Q#4B). Finally, 32 percent tested in the last three years following a serious work-related accident (Q#4A). The latter amounts to somewhat less than 1 percent of firms per year.

These circumstances tend to overlap, particularly initial testing and random screening. Small employers who use one are likely to use the other.

Most testing originates with an employer's decision to conduct them. Fifty-nine (59) percent report that they typically conduct tests because they believe it is necessary or advisable to do so (Q#4). However, 28 percent say that the government forces them to conduct the tests. About 15 percent claim that insurers either directed them to test or offered financial incentives if they did so.

b. Concern over Alcohol and Drugs

Comparatively few small-business owners are concerned over alcohol and/or drug abuse and its consequences for their businesses. Alcohol appears a marginally more frequent/larger issue than drugs. But the level of concern they express is difficult to interpret. What level of concern shows a generally positive situation and what level a fundamentally unhealthy situation?

Seven percent characterize their concern over alcohol abuse and its consequences in the business as "constant" (Q#5). Another 15 percent say that they are occasionally concerned. Twenty (20) percent claim it is an unusual concern while 58 percent say that they are never concerned. Collapsing the levels, 22 percent express concern while 78 percent do not.

Concern over drug use, including marijuana, and its consequences parallels concern over alcohol. Six percent say employee drug use is a constant concern and 11 percent say it is an occasional concern (Q#6). In contrast, 16 percent report it an unusual concern and 66 percent never a concern. The resulting balance is 16 percent concerned and 82 percent not.

Most have the same level of concern about one as the other. Seventy-seven (77) percent answered both questions identically. Less than 2 percent are constantly concerned about one, but never concerned about the other.

c. Handling Alcohol/Drug Problems

Fourteen (14) percent of small employers (or a supervisor) have warned, counseled, disciplined or fired one or more employees for unauthorized use or abuse of alcohol and/or drugs over the last three years (Q#7). The proportion of firms affected rises as their size rises. Incidents occurred in 45 percent of firms employing 20 or more people compared to 8 percent among those employing fewer than 10. Since comparatively larger firms have more employees and hence more potential opportunities for such problems, the data are not surprising.

About 40 percent of the most recent incidents involved alcohol, about 40 percent drugs, and 19 percent both alcohol and drugs (Q#7a). The employees in question had a mixed history of prior problems. The incident was the first time that the employer had to take up the situation with the employee in 40 percent of cases (Q#7b); it was the second time in 19 percent of cases. However, in 41 percent of cases, the incident marked the third (or more) time that the small employer felt obligated to address the problem with the employee in question.

The incidents typically result in the employee getting fired. The current disposition of the most recent incident shows that 58 percent of affected employees were discharged (Q#7c). Owners of the smallest firms were notably more likely to pursue this course, in all likelihood because they do not have the resources and/or options to undertake lesser penalties. The second most likely step is a simple warning with no further action, but it was the path in only 13 percent of incidents. About one in 10 provided counseling, and somewhat fewer disciplined or suspended the employee. These data are not totally satisfactory because they could not follow an employee's history from the employee's first incident (when involved in more than one). Still, they strongly suggest the distribution of likely outcomes.

The disposition of incidents is related to the number of times an employee has been involved in drug- or alcohol-related problems. The more often involved, the more likely they are to be fired. Still, almost half with a first-time offense are let go.

Violence

Violence in small businesses is unusual. Small-business owners report that in the last three years just 2 percent have experienced one or more employees assaulted or physically accosted while on the job (Q#8). However, the figure rises to 7 percent among those with 20 or more employees. More employees in a firm mean a greater potential for multiple incidents. Therefore, measuring violence by the number of firms experiencing it as done here could unfairly minimize the problem. Further, the infrequency of phenomenon makes it difficult to provide good estimates given sampling error. Despite these data liabilities, there is little doubt that workplace violence represents isolated problems particularly compared to drug and alcohol abuse.

Less than one percent report that they experienced one or more of their employees assault or physically accost someone else while on the job (Q#9). The figure rises to 4 percent among the largest.

There were so few cases in the survey that it is not useful to report the circumstances of relevant incidents.

Obesity

Obesity, or excessively overweight, is not traditionally considered a business problem as alcohol, drugs, and violence are. But recent media exposure has drawn attention to obesity as a national health problem, and by implication a business problem. The business concern is not only that excess weight and weight-related problems are direct cost increases through relatively higher workers' compensation and health insurance premiums and increased absenteeism, but also because of the reduced ability (in many cases) to perform job-related tasks involving physical exertion or stamina. Yet, it is not known whether small-business owners view obesity in the same light as health professionals and insurers.

Small-business owners believe that substantially excess weight, or obesity, among employees is a personal matter. The implication is that employers should disregard possible employee weight problems. Fifty-five (55) percent of small employers adopt this view of obesity, 39 percentage points hold it strongly (Q#10). In contrast, 26 percent adopt the view that employee obe-

sity is a business issue requiring the active involvement of employers. Nineteen (19) percentage points believe that strongly. Eleven (11) percent take a neutral view and 7 percent did not answer.

A potential adverse impact that employees might experience from excessively overweight employees is relatively more workers' compensation and disability claims than employers with a workforce in better physical condition. Small employers report an average of 0.5 workers' comp or disability claims per firm over the last three years (Q#11). However, they attribute only about 6 percent of those claims to substantially-overweight employees or weight-related conditions.

The cost of workers' compensation insurance is a major business problem for most small-businessmen and women; so, is the cost of health insurance. Yet, relatively few small employers appear concerned that substantially excess weight and weight-related health conditions among employees are driving up insurance costs. Just 7 percent say that they are very concerned about it and another 15 percent are somewhat concerned (Q#14). Fifty-nine (59) percent are not at all concerned. There are two possible reasons for this perspective. Either owners do not tie excess weight to adverse health and subsequently higher insurance premiums, or they do not believe their employees (or even a few of them) have excess weight problems.

One credible, outside influence that could alert small-business owners to the tie between employee weight and employer insurance costs is the insurance industry. Yet, the insurance industry seems nearly invisible on the issue. Just 5 percent of small employers indicate that an insurer has provided them with information about what they, as small-business owners, can do to help employees minimize weight problems (Q#15).

A second potential adverse effect of excess weight is an inability to continue performing all aspects of the job. However, small employers report that an average of only 0.2 employees per firm have had their job performance adversely affected by excess weight (Q#12). That amounts to just one employee in every five small businesses.

A related question involves changing job requirements or duties due to employee weight-related conditions. Yet, small-busi-

ness owners say that such changes are not common. Only 3 percent have made such an adjustment, though almost one in 10 of those employing 20 or more have done so (Q#13). One explanation for that result is the decline in manual labor or physical exertion in the modern workforce. People do not have to be in the same physical condition to work today as they did years ago. Another explanation is that affected employees are not doing tasks requiring physical exertion or stamina as well, as often, or as quickly as in the past.

Final Comments

Employee personal problems that spill over into the workplace are a distraction for small employers and keep owners from engaging in activities that advance the business. Still, employee personal problems are a fact of modern life and are a part of managing any firm. Careful screening prior to hiring may reduce their incidence, but at some point every small-business owner will encounter them. The focus of employee personal problems here has been on alcohol, drugs, violence and obesity. Unfortunately, they are not the only ones employees bring to the workplace. But they are the high profile problems and ones that cause serious disruptions to many small firms.

A positive aspect of this report's data is that most employers do not encounter alcohol, drug, and/or violence problems in their workplaces, at least not regularly. Fourteen (14) percent indicate that they faced at least one incident in the last three years. That averages 5 percent of firms per year or about one in 20. The figure rises to 45 percent over three years among those employing 20 or more people. Still, that is an average of 15 percent in larger small businesses per year. The good news is buttressed by the relative lack of concern over the problem and the perceived lack of need to test for drugs and alcohol. The negative aspect is the potential of multiple problem employees in the same firm with drug and alcohol difficulties. That is likely to occur, particularly in larger small businesses, though the survey did not collect data on the matter. The second negative aspect is that few small employers are in a position to offer multiple chances for those with problems or to find mid-steps between warnings and termination.

Violence in small businesses is rare, though its extent could be concealed to some degree by examining firms – many of which have few employees – rather than employees. Further, sampling error could have resulted in higher (or lower) true numbers than the figures obtained. Still, small employers report an average one or more incidents in fewer than one per 100 firms annually.

The lack of concern over employee obesity is consistent with the modest concern exhibited for other employee personal problems. The difference between it and the alcohol, drugs, and violence problems discussed is that the incidence of obesity is substantially higher than illicit drug use, violence, and heavy drinking (though not binge drinking). Therefore, obesity is almost certainly a more common condition in workplaces than the other problems examined here. The question is whether small employers tie obesity to adverse business consequences. The answer is that they appear not to associate them as comparatively few believe obesity is driving up insurance costs, a problem that is currently their most critical. The reasons for their failure to associate the two are not necessarily obvious. One likely reason is that the adverse consequences arising from obesity are more likely to develop over much longer periods of time than an act of violence, for example, and their costs will be less apparent. A second is that little public attention has been focused on the issue until recently, particularly compared to other personal problems discussed here. Whether increased attention will change the collective mind of small employers about obesity merits watching.

Small-business owners would like nothing better than to just see these problems go away and get on with the activities for which they went into business in the first place. Unfortunately, that is not possible. Dealing with employee social problems is as much an activity that must be addressed as the more pleasant aspects of business ownership.

Alcohol, Drugs, Violence and Obesity in the Workplace

(Please review notes at the table's end.)

Employee Size of Firm
1-9 emp 10-19 emp 20-249 emp All Firms

1. Do you have a written policy, available to employees, regarding employee use of drugs and alcohol?

1. Yes	38.9%	55.2%	81.8%	44.7%
2. No	61.1	43.7	16.9	55.1
3. (DK/Refuse)	—	1.1	1.3	0.2
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753

1a. If not written, do you have a policy regarding the use of drugs and alcohol by employees that you verbally tell them about when they are hired? (If “No” or “DK/Refuse” in Q#1.)

1. Yes	55.7%	69.2%	—%	57.2%
2. No	42.3	30.8	—	41.0
3. (DK/Refuse)	2.1	—	—	1.8
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	214	85	33	332

2. Do you typically check a potential employee’s background for drug or alcohol abuse prior to hiring him or her?

1. Yes	33.0%	34.5%	47.4%	34.5%
2. No	64.6	64.4	51.3	63.3
3. (DK/Refuse)	2.5	1.1	1.3	2.2
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753

3. In the last three years, have you EVER required one or more employees to take a drug test or a breathalyzer to detect alcohol?

1. Yes	4.3%	15.1%	28.9%	7.8%
2. No	95.7	84.9	71.1	92.2
3. (DK/Refuse)	—	—	—	—
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753

Employee Size of Firm
1-9 emp 10-19 emp 20-249 emp All Firms

4. Under what circumstances did you require such tests? Did you require such tests? (If “Yes” in Q#3.)

A. Following a serious work-related accident

1. Yes	—%	—%	47.8%	31.7%
2. No	—	—	52.2	68.3
3. (DK/Refuse)	—	—	—	—
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	16	29	57	102

B. When there was a reasonable suspicion of use

1. Yes	—%	—%	40.9%	34.9%
2. No	—	—	59.1	65.1
3. (DK/Refuse)	—	—	—	—
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	16	29	57	102

C. At the time of hiring

1. Yes	—%	—%	77.3%	69.8%
2. No	—	—	22.7	30.2
3. (DK/Refuse)	—	—	—	—
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	16	29	57	102

D. Random checks

1. Yes	—%	—%	63.6%	76.2%
2. No	—	—	36.4	23.8
3. (DK/Refuse)	—	—	—	—
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	16	29	57	102

5. Do you typically conduct these tests because government requires you to do so, your insurer requires or gives you incentives to do so, or because you believe it is necessary?

1. Government requires	—%	—%	27.3%	27.9%
2. Insurer requires/incentives	—	—	13.6	14.8
3. My decision/Believe necessary	—	—	59.1	59.1
4. (DK/Refuse)	—	—	—	—
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	16	29	57	102

Employee Size of Firm
1-9 emp 10-19 emp 20-249 emp All Firms

6. In your business, is employee abuse of alcohol and its consequences a constant concern, an occasional concern, an unusual concern, or never a concern?

1. Constant	6.0%	12.5%	6.6%	6.8%
2. Occasional	11.5	20.5	34.2	14.6
3. Unusual	17.8	28.4	32.9	20.4
4. Never	64.1	38.6	26.3	57.8
5. (DK/Refuse)	0.6	—	—	0.4
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753

7. In your business, is employee abuse of drugs, including marijuana, and its consequences a constant concern, an occasional concern, an unusual concern, or never a concern?

1. Constant	5.3%	11.5%	9.2%	6.3%
2. Occasional	9.1	11.5	25.0	10.9
3. Unusual	12.4	25.3	36.8	16.1
4. Never	72.4	51.7	28.9	66.1
5. (DK/Refuse)	0.8	—	—	0.6
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753

8. During the last three years, have you or a supervisor needed to counsel, warn, discipline or fire one or more employees for the unauthorized use or abuse of drugs or alcohol?

1. Yes	8.1%	29.9%	44.9%	14.0%
2. No	91.8	70.1	53.8	85.8
3. (DK/Refuse)	0.2	—	1.3	0.2
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753

8a. Think of the last time it occurred. Was the problem with alcohol, drugs, or both? (If “Yes” in Q#7.)

1. Alcohol	—%	36.0%	44.1%	39.6%
2. Drugs	—	48.0	44.1	39.6
3. Both	—	16.0	11.8	18.9
4. (DK/Refuse)	—	—	—	1.8
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	27	56	89	172

Employee Size of Firm
1-9 emp 10-19 emp 20-249 emp All Firms

8b. Was it the first time you took up the problem with the employee, the second time, or more than the second time?

1. First time	—%	48.0%	41.2%	39.6%
2. Second time	—	20.8	26.5	18.9
3. More than the second time	—	32.0	29.4	40.5
4. (DK/Refuse)	—	—	2.9	0.9
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	27	56	89	172

8c. What best describes the current disposition of the problem. Has the employee been:

1. Warned with no further action	—%	16.7%	14.7%	12.8%
2. Provided counseling	—	4.2	11.8	10.1
3. Disciplined or suspended	—	8.3	14.7	8.3
4. Fired	—	54.2	47.1	57.8
5. (Combination, e.g. counseling/suspension)	—	4.2	8.8	3.7
6. (DK/Refuse)	—	12.5	2.9	7.4
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	27	56	89	172

9. In the last three years, have one or more of your employees been assaulted or physically accosted while on the job?

1. Yes	2.0%	1.1%	6.5%	2.3%
2. No	98.0	98.9	93.5	97.7
3. (DK/Refuse)	—	—	—	—
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753

10. In the last three years, has one or more of your employees assaulted or physically accosted someone else while on the job?

1. Yes	—%	—%	3.9%	0.4%
2. No	100.0	100.0	96.1	99.6
3. (DK/Refuse)	—	—	—	—
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753

Employee Size of Firm
1-9 emp 10-19 emp 20-249 emp All Firms

11. Do you believe that substantial excess weight, or obesity, among employees is a business issue requiring the active interest of employers, or a personal issue requiring employers to disregard possible employee weight problems? Do you believe that strongly or not so strongly?

1. Business issue, strongly	20.1%	16.1 %	12.8%	18.9%
2. Business issue, not so strongly	6.8	6.9	8.0	7.1
3. (Some of both; equally)	11.8	8.0	11.5	11.3
4. Personal issue, not so strongly	15.9	16.1	23.1	16.6
5. Personal issue, strongly	37.8	46.0	37.2	38.6
6. (DK/Refuse)	7.6	6.9	6.4	7.4
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753

12. During the last three years, how many of your employees in total have filed a disability or workers' compensation claim?

1. None	82.5%	62.8%	33.3%	75.8%
2. One	13.0	20.9	16.0	14.1
3. Two	2.8	8.1	10.7	4.1
4. Three	0.6	4.7	10.7	2.0
5. 4 - 9	0.5	2.3	17.3	2.2
6. 10 or more	—	—	6.7	0.6
7. (DK/Refuse)	0.6	1.2	5.3	1.1
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753
Ave. claims per firm	0.2	0.6	2.8	0.5

12a. How many of those claims were related to an employee's substantial excess weight or weight-related condition? (If at least one claim in Q#12.)

1. None	90.9%	93.8%	87.5%	90.5%
2. One or more	9.1	6.2	12.5	9.5
3. (DK/Refuse)	—	—	—	—
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	95	95	116	306
Weight-related claims as a percent of all claims	6.9%	5.8%	4.5%	5.6%

Employee Size of Firm
1-9 emp 10-19 emp 20-249 emp All Firms

13. How many of your current employees do you believe have had their job performance adversely affected by substantial excess weight and weight-related conditions?

1. None	92.2%	83.7%	71.1%	89.3%
2. One	4.7	10.5	10.5	5.8
3. Two	2.9	3.5	10.5	3.7
4. Three or more	0.2	2.3	5.3	0.9
5. (DK/Refuse)	—	—	2.6	0.2
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	95	95	116	306
Employees per firm	0.1	0.5	0.5	0.2

14. During the last three years, have you changed or reduced job duties for one or more employees due to an employee's substantial excess weight or weight-related condition?

1. Yes	2.0%	3.5%	9.1%	2.8%
2. No	98.0	96.5	90.9	97.2
3. (DK/Refuse)	—	—	—	—
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753

15. Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned that substantially excess weight and weight-related health conditions among your employees are driving up your insurance costs?

1. Very	7.1%	6.9%	9.1%	7.3%
2. Somewhat	14.0	14.9	27.3	15.3
3. Not too	14.7	20.7	22.1	16.1
4. Not at all	61.4	56.3	41.6	59.0
5. (DK/Refuse)	2.8	1.1	—	2.4
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753

16. Has an insurer talked to you or provided you information about what you as a small employer can do to help your employees minimize weight problems?

1. Yes	4.5 %	7.0%	6.5%	5.0%
2. No	94.3	91.9	92.2	93.8
3. (DK/Refuse)	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.2
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753

Demographics

D1. Which best describes your position in the business?

1. Owner/manager	85.4%	82.8%	71.4%	83.8%
2. Owner but NOT manager	7.1	5.7	10.4	7.3
3. Manager but NOT owner	7.4	11.5	18.2	8.9
4. (DK/Refuse)	—	—	—	—
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753

D2. Is your primary business activity: (NAICs code)

1. Agriculture, forestry, fishing	3.0%	2.4%	1.3%	2.7%
2. Construction	9.3	10.7	14.3	9.9
3. Manufacturing, mining	8.5	15.5	18.2	10.2
4. Wholesale trade	5.3	3.6	7.8	5.3
5. Retail trade	17.2	17.9	16.9	17.3
6. Transportation and warehousing	3.0	3.6	2.6	3.0
7. Information	1.7	1.2	1.3	1.6
8. Finance and insurance	2.6	3.6	1.3	2.6
9. Real estate and rental leasing	5.3	2.4	1.3	4.6
10. Professional/scientific/ technical services	19.6	15.5	6.5	17.9
11. Adm. support/waste management services	2.0	—	2.6	1.9
12. Educational services	0.9	1.2	—	0.9
13. Health care and social assistance	3.1	2.4	5.2	3.2
14. Arts, entertainment, or recreation	2.2	2.4	2.6	2.2
15. Accommodations or food service	4.7	10.7	13.0	6.1
16. Other service, incl. repair, personal care	8.5	6.0	5.2	8.0
17. (Other)	2.5	1.2	—	2.1
18. (DK/Refuse)	0.6	—	—	0.4
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753

D3. Over the last two years, have your real volume sales?:

1. Increased by 30 percent or more	14.7%	11.5%	11.5%	14.1%
2. Increased by 20 to 29 percent	9.0	14.9	12.8	10.0
3. Increased by 10 to 19 percent	22.5	26.4	24.4	23.1
4. Changed less than 10 percent one way or the other	26.4	27.6	30.8	26.9
5. Decreased by 10 percent or more	23.9	16.1	16.7	22.3
6. (DK/Refuse)	3.5	3.4	3.9	3.6
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753

D4. Is this business operated primarily from the home, including any associated structures such as a garage or a barn?

1. Yes	23.1%	8.0%	2.6%	19.5%
2. No	76.6	92.0	97.4	80.2
3. (DK/Refuse)	0.3	—	—	0.2
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753

D5. How long have you owned or operated this business?

1. < 6 years	28.2%	22.1%	18.2%	26.6%
2. 6-10 years	21.4	18.6	22.1	21.2
3. 11-20 years	26.7	26.7	26.0	26.6
4. 21-30 years	14.7	20.9	20.8	16.0
5. 31 years+	8.7	11.6	13.0	9.4
6. (DK/Refuse)	0.3	—	—	0.2
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753

D6. What is your highest level of formal education?

1. Did not complete high school	1.1%	2.3%	—%	1.1%
2. High school diploma/GED	20.0	12.8	17.9	19.1
3. Some college or an associates degree	24.2	29.1	21.8	24.5
4. Vocational or technical school degree	3.9	3.5	2.6	3.7
5. College diploma	33.4	34.9	44.9	34.7
6. Advanced or professional degree	16.8	17.4	12.8	16.5
7. (DK/Refuse)	0.6	—	—	0.4
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753

Employee Size of Firm
1-9 emp 10-19 emp 20-249 emp All Firms

D7. Please tell me your age.

1. <25	0.6%	—%	—%	0.5%
2. 25-34	5.4	5.8	7.8	5.7
3. 35-44	21.1	22.1	15.6	20.7
4. 45-54	37.2	37.2	39.0	37.4
5. 55-64	25.7	23.3	28.6	25.7
6. 65+	8.1	10.5	6.5	8.2
7. (DK/Refuse)	1.9	1.2	2.6	1.9
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753

D8. What is the zip code of your business?

1. East (zips 010-219)	15.5%	15.1%	16.7%	15.6%
2. South (zips 220-427)	20.9	14.0	21.8	20.2
3. Mid-West (zips 430-567, 600-658)	23.2	27.9	29.5	24.3
4. Central (zips 570-599, 660-898)	22.0	26.7	15.4	21.9
5. West (zips 900-999)	18.1	16.3	16.7	17.8
6. (DK/Refuse)	0.3	—	—	0.2
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753

D9. Urbanization/Population density (derived from the zip code)

1. Highly urban	11.0%	11.9%	11.7%	11.1%
2. Urban	21.3	16.7	19.5	20.7
3. Fringe Urban	16.1	14.3	23.4	16.6
4. Small Cities/Towns	17.9	26.2	20.8	19.1
5. Rural	27.7	27.4	18.2	26.7
6. (DK/Refuse)	6.0	3.6	6.5	5.8
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753

D10. Sex

Male	83.7%	85.1%	84.4%	83.9%
Female	16.3	14.9	15.6	16.1
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	351	200	202	753

Data Collection Methods

The data for this survey report were collected for the NFIB Research Foundation by the executive interviewing group of The Gallup Organization. The interviews for this edition of the *Poll* were conducted between April 23 - May 22, 2004 from a sample of small employers. "Small employer" was defined for purposes of this survey as a business owner employing no fewer than one individual in addition to the owner(s) and no more than 249.

The sampling frame used for the survey was drawn at the Foundation's direction from the files of the Dun & Bradstreet Corporation, an imperfect file but the best currently available for public use. A random stratified sample design was employed to compensate

for the highly skewed distribution of small-business owners by employee size of firm (Table A1). Almost 60 percent of employers in the United States employ just one to four people meaning that a random sample would yield comparatively few larger small employers to interview. Since size within the small-business population is often an important differentiating variable, it is important that an adequate number of interviews be conducted among those employing more than 10 people. The interview quotas established to achieve these added interviews from larger, small-business owners were arbitrary but adequate to allow independent examination of the 10-19 and 20-249 employee size classes as well as the 1-9 employee size group.

Table A1

Sample Composition Under Varying Scenarios

Employee Size of Firm	Expected from Random Sample*		Obtained from Stratified Random			
	Interviews Expected	Percent Distribution	Interview Quotas	Percent Distribution	Completed Interviews	Percent Distribution
1-9	593	79	350	47	351	47
10-19	82	11	200	27	200	27
20-249	75	10	200	27	202	27
All Firms	750	100	750	101	753	101

*Sample universe developed from special runs supplied to the NFIB Research Foundation by the Bureau of the Census (1997 data).

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Table Notes

1. All percentages appearing are based on **weighted** data.
2. All "Ns" appearing are based on **unweighted** data.
3. Data are not presented where there are fewer than 50 unweighted cases.
4. ()s around an answer indicate a volunteered response.

WARNING – When reviewing the table, care should be taken to distinguish between the percentage of the population and the percentage of those asked a particular question. Not every respondent was asked every question. All percentages appearing on the table use the number asked the question as the denominator.

The Sponsor

The **NFIB Research Foundation** is a small-business-oriented research and information organization affiliated with the National Federation of Independent Business, the nation's largest small and independent business advocacy organization. Located in Washington, DC, the Foundation's primary purpose is to explore the policy related problems small-business owners encounter. Its periodic reports include *Small Business Economic Trends*, *Small Business Problems and Priorities*, and now the *National Small Business Poll*. The Foundation also publishes ad hoc reports on issues of concern to small-business owners. Included are analyses of selected proposed regulations using its Regulatory Impact Model (RIM). The Foundation's functions were recently transferred from the NFIB Education Foundation.



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