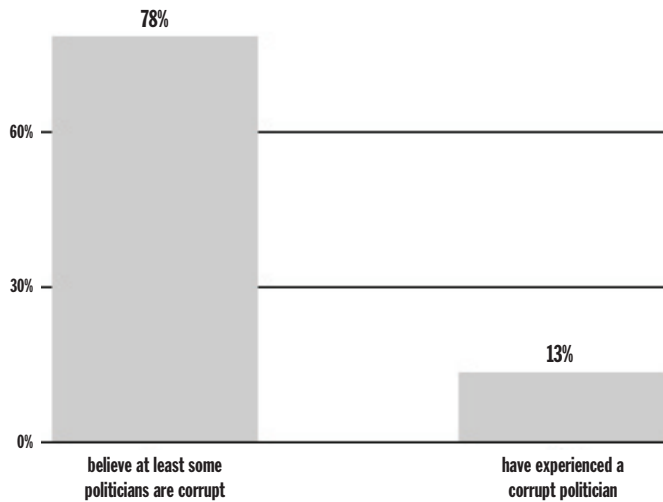


## Americans Are Cynical about Politicians

Given the negative attitude toward politicians, it is amazing anyone still goes to the polls. Sixty-five percent of Americans do not believe politicians care about the average person. Fifty-seven percent do not think politicians keep their promises. Most believe at least some politicians are corrupt, although few have personally experienced political corruption.

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*(percentage of people aged 18 or older by attitude toward and experience with political corruption, 2006)*



*Source: 2006 General Social Survey; calculations by New Strategist*

**Table 2.4 Public Officials Are Interested in Problems of Average Person, 2006**

“Most public officials (people in public office) are not really interested in the problems of the average man.”

(percent responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	agree	disagree
<b>Total people</b>	<b>65.4%</b>	<b>34.6%</b>
Men	66.2	33.8
Women	64.6	35.4
Black	73.4	26.6
Hispanic	62.3	37.7
White	63.9	36.1
Aged 18 to 44	65.5	34.5
Aged 45 to 64	64.7	35.3
Aged 65 or older	66.9	33.1
Not a college graduate	68.9	31.1
Bachelor’s degree or more	53.3	46.7

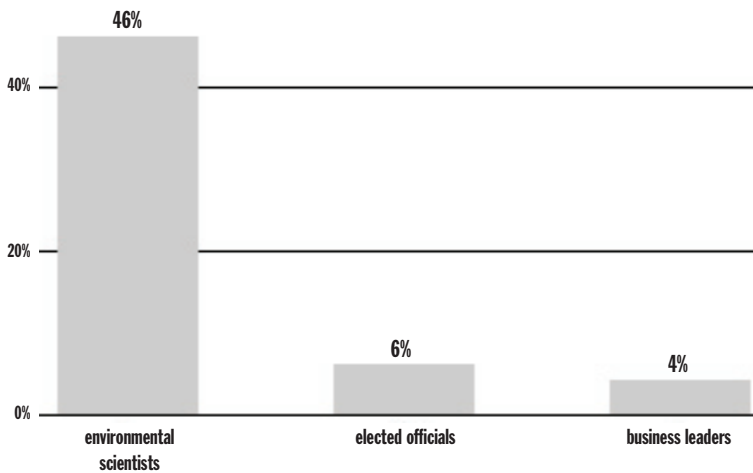
Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley, General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsda?harcsda+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist

## Scientists Know the Most about Global Warming

Although there has been a concerted effort by some politicians and industry leaders to cast doubt on the science of global warming, the public trusts scientists on the issue much more than politicians or business leaders. The 46 percent plurality of the public think environmental scientists understand the causes of global warming “very well.” In contrast, only 4 to 6 percent think politicians or business leaders understand the causes “very well.”

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(percent who think selected groups understand the causes of global warming “very well,” 2006)



Source: 2006 General Social Survey; calculations by New Strategist

**Table 4.24 Understanding of Global Warming by Environmental Scientists, 2006**

“On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means very well and 5 means not at all, how well do the following groups understand the causes of global warming? Environmental scientists.”

(percent responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	very well 1	2	3	4	not at all 5
<b>Total people</b>	<b>45.7%</b>	<b>22.9%</b>	<b>22.6%</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>4.2%</b>
Men	40.2	26.9	20.7	6.7	5.5
Women	50.2	19.7	24.1	2.8	3.2
Black	43.7	18.1	22.4	4.2	11.6
Hispanic	45.0	15.1	27.8	6.7	5.3
White	45.2	23.7	23.5	4.5	3.1
Aged 18 to 44	49.0	25.6	18.4	3.3	3.7
Aged 45 to 64	44.5	21.0	23.5	6.4	4.6
Aged 65 or older	36.2	18.8	35.0	4.5	5.5
Not a college graduate	43.7	20.9	25.6	4.9	4.9
Bachelor's degree or more	50.9	28.1	14.7	3.7	2.5

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley; General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsda?harcsda+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist

## Work and Money

Americans may fret about the economy at large, but they are upbeat about their own financial situation. They believe in the American Dream and see good times ahead for their children. Most of them even like their job. Attitudes toward work and money have not changed significantly during the past decade.

### Little or no change

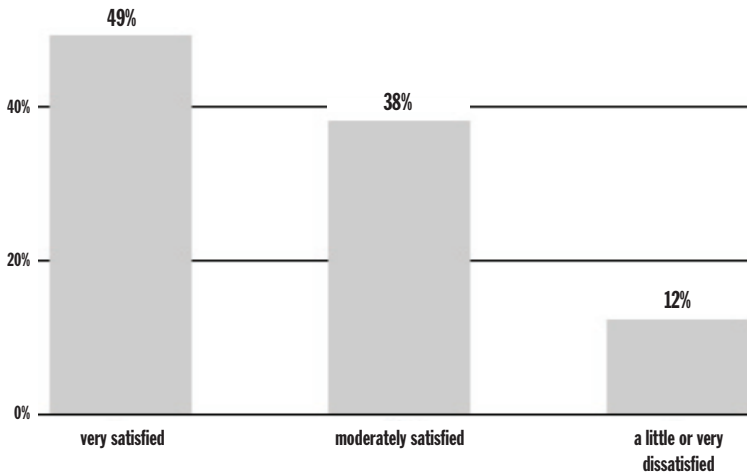
- **Job satisfaction.** If anything, Americans were even more satisfied with their job in 2006 than in 1996. The proportion of people who say they are “very satisfied” with their work rose modestly from 45 to 49 percent. A slightly larger proportion said it would be “very easy” to find an equally good job with another employer.
- **Satisfaction with finances.** The plurality of Americans is more or less satisfied with their present financial situation, a figure that has barely budged over the past decade. Only about one in four is “not at all” satisfied with his or her finances.
- **Class identification.** Americans strongly identify with the working or middle classes—the proportions were almost identical in 1996 and 2006. In both years, half of the public said its family income is average relative to other families.
- **Belief in the American Dream.** The American Dream is alive and well. In both 1996 and 2006, the 69 percent majority of the public said hard work was the way to get ahead. In both years, the great majority agreed that in the United States people like them could improve their standard of living. Most think their children’s standard of living will be even better.

## Most Are Satisfied with Their Work

Nearly half of Americans are very satisfied with the work they do (including both workers and those not in the labor force). Workers are split on how easy it would be for them to find an equally good job, about one-third each saying it would be very easy, somewhat easy, and not easy. Many have experienced unemployment, with one-third of the public saying they have been unemployed for at least one month during the past ten years.

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*(percent distribution of people aged 18 or older by satisfaction with the work they do, 2006)*



*Source: 2006 General Social Survey; calculations by New Strategist*

**Table 6.1 Satisfaction with Work, 1996 and 2006**

“On the whole, how satisfied are you with the work you do?”

(percent responding, 1996 and 2006; and percent responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	very satisfied	moderately satisfied	a little dissatisfied	very dissatisfied
<b>Ten-year trend</b>				
2006	49.4%	38.3%	8.2%	4.0%
1996	44.9	40.4	10.6	4.1
<b>2006 profile</b>				
Total people	49.4	38.3	8.2	4.0
Men	47.8	40.2	8.3	3.7
Women	50.7	36.8	8.2	4.3
Black	43.7	39.4	9.7	7.2
Hispanic	45.1	40.2	10.3	4.4
White	52.3	36.2	7.9	3.6
Aged 18 to 44	46.3	39.4	9.0	5.2
Aged 45 to 64	51.0	38.8	7.7	2.5
Aged 65 or older	72.5	23.4	3.0	1.2
Not a college graduate	47.3	39.3	8.8	4.6
Bachelor's degree or more	54.7	35.9	6.7	2.6

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley, General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsda?harcsda+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist

**Table 6.2 Ease of Finding Equally Good Job, 1996 and 2006**

“About how easy would it be for you to find a job with another employer with approximately the same income and fringe benefits you now have?”

(percent of workers responding, 1996 and 2006; and percent responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	<b>very easy</b>	<b>somewhat easy</b>	<b>not easy</b>
<b>Ten-year trend</b>			
2006	31.8%	36.6%	31.6%
1996	27.8	32.7	39.6
<b>2006 profile</b>			
Total people	31.8	36.6	31.6
Men	28.8	38.2	33.0
Women	35.0	34.8	30.2
Black	30.0	33.0	37.1
Hispanic	26.1	34.6	39.4
White	33.1	36.8	30.1
Aged 18 to 44	33.7	37.8	28.4
Aged 45 to 64	28.9	36.0	35.1
Aged 65 or older	30.9	20.7	48.4
Not a college graduate	32.2	33.8	34.0
Bachelor's degree or more	31.0	43.0	26.0

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley; General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site [http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsda?harc\\_sda+gss06](http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsda?harc_sda+gss06); calculations by New Strategist

**Table 6.3 Unemployed in Last Ten Years, 1996 and 2006**

“At any time during the last 10 years, have you been unemployed and looking for work for as long as a month?”

(percent responding, 1996 and 2006; and percent responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	yes	no
<b>Ten-year trend</b>		
2006	32.2%	67.8%
1996	34.3	65.7
<b>2006 profile</b>		
Total people	32.2	67.8
Men	34.7	65.3
Women	30.2	69.8
Black	33.1	66.9
Hispanic	41.4	58.6
White	30.5	69.5
Aged 18 to 44	38.3	61.7
Aged 45 to 64	31.5	68.5
Aged 65 or older	11.1	88.9
Not a college graduate	34.6	65.4
Bachelor’s degree or more	25.5	74.5

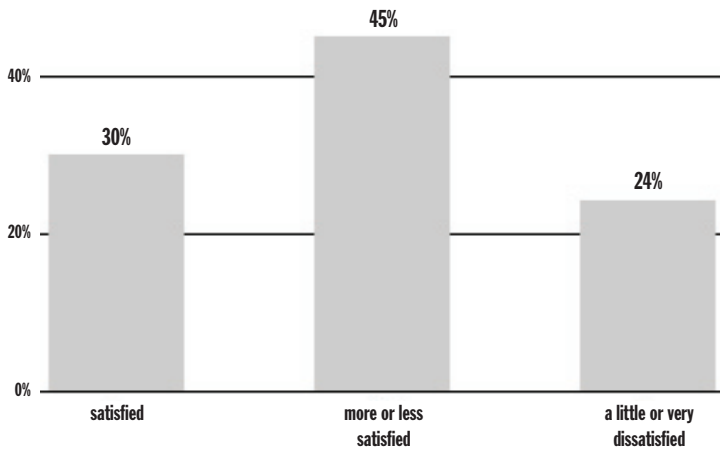
Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley, General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsda?harcsda+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist

## Most Are Satisfied with Their Finances

In good times and bad, Americans tend to be upbeat about their work and their money. Most would continue to work even if they were rich. Most think people get ahead through hard work rather than luck. Three out of four are at least “more or less” satisfied with their financial situation, and the percentage of Americans who say their financial situation has improved over the past five years is nearly twice as large as the percentage of those who say their situation has gotten worse.

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*(percent distribution of people aged 18 or older by satisfaction with their financial situation, 2006)*



*Source: 2006 General Social Survey; calculations by New Strategist*

**Table 6.4 Would Continue to Work if Rich, 1996 and 2006**

“If you were to get enough money to live as comfortably as you would like for the rest of your life, would you continue to work or would you stop working?”

(percent of workers responding, 1996 and 2006; and percent responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	continue working	stop working
<b>Ten-year trend</b>		
2006	70.3%	29.7%
1996	68.3	31.7
<b>2006 profile</b>		
Total people	70.3	29.7
Men	74.3	25.7
Women	66.1	33.9
Black	63.9	36.1
Hispanic	74.4	25.6
White	69.6	30.4
Aged 18 to 44	73.9	26.1
Aged 45 to 64	64.2	35.8
Aged 65 or older	73.5	26.5
Not a college graduate	70.9	29.1
Bachelor's degree or more	68.9	31.1

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley; General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site [http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsda?harc\\_sda+gss06](http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsda?harc_sda+gss06); calculations by New Strategist

**Table 6.5 How People Get Ahead, 1996 and 2006**

“Some people say that people get ahead by their own hard work; others say that lucky breaks or help from other people are more important. Which do you think is most important?”

(percent responding, 1996 and 2006; and percent responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	hard work	both equally	luck or help
<b>Ten-year trend</b>			
2006	68.8%	19.9%	11.3%
1996	69.3	18.8	11.9
<b>2006 profile</b>			
Total people	68.8	19.9	11.3
Men	66.7	20.3	12.9
Women	70.4	19.5	10.0
Black	63.0	21.9	15.1
Hispanic	68.9	22.3	8.8
White	69.4	19.5	11.1
Aged 18 to 44	68.0	20.5	11.5
Aged 45 to 64	70.7	18.7	10.6
Aged 65 or older	67.2	20.6	12.2
Not a college graduate	70.4	18.2	11.4
Bachelor's degree or more	63.7	25.0	11.3

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley, General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hstda?harcsda+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist

**Table 6.6 Satisfaction with Financial Situation, 1996 and 2006**

“We are interested in how people are getting along financially these days. So far as you and your family are concerned, would you say that you are pretty well satisfied with your present financial situation, more or less satisfied, or not satisfied at all?”

(percent responding, 1996 and 2006; and percent responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	satisfied	more or less satisfied	not at all satisfied
<b>Ten-year trend</b>			
2006	30.1%	45.5%	24.5%
1996	27.9	44.6	27.5
<b>2006 profile</b>			
Total people	30.1	45.5	24.5
Men	31.3	45.7	23.0
Women	29.1	45.3	25.6
Black	19.6	35.3	45.1
Hispanic	18.2	60.8	21.1
White	33.4	44.3	22.3
Aged 18 to 44	25.9	48.4	25.6
Aged 45 to 64	30.3	43.2	26.5
Aged 65 or older	44.4	40.5	15.1
Not a college graduate	26.4	45.2	28.4
Bachelor's degree or more	40.5	46.3	13.3

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley, General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsda?harcsda+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist

**Table 6.7 Change in Financial Situation, 1996 and 2006**

“During the last few years, has your financial situation been getting better, worse, or has it stayed the same?”

(percent responding, 1996 and 2006; and percent responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

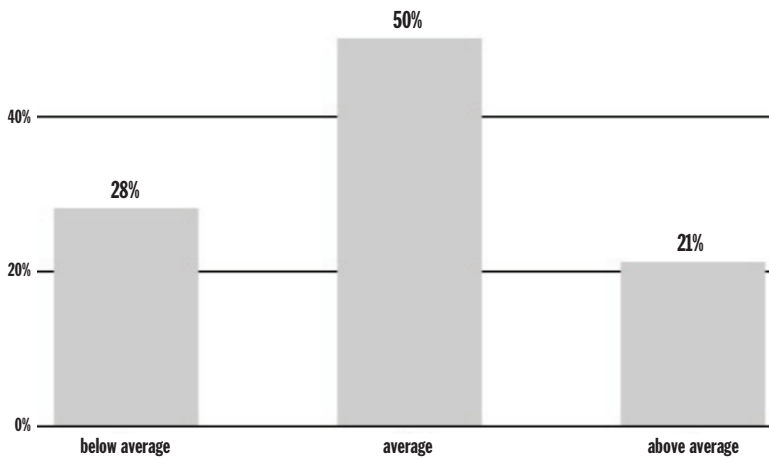
	<b>better</b>	<b>worse</b>	<b>stayed same</b>
<b>Ten-year trend</b>			
2006	40.2%	20.7%	39.0%
1996	39.8	20.9	39.4
<b>2006 profile</b>			
Total people	40.2	20.7	39.0
Men	42.3	19.1	38.5
Women	38.5	22.1	39.4
Black	35.9	23.8	40.3
Hispanic	44.8	17.2	38.0
White	39.9	21.2	38.9
Aged 18 to 44	50.3	15.8	33.9
Aged 45 to 64	34.3	26.6	39.1
Aged 65 or older	18.6	24.3	57.0
Not a college graduate	37.6	22.5	39.9
Bachelor's degree or more	47.8	15.6	36.6

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley, General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsgda?harsda+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist

## Americans See Themselves as Average

When asked to identify their social class, 46 percent of Americans say they are “working class” and another 46 percent say they are “middle class.” Only 3 percent are willing to identify themselves as upper class. When asked how their family income ranks relative to others, fully half say it is “average.” The percentage of Americans who say their family income is below average (28 percent) exceeds the percentage of those who say their income is above average (21 percent).

*(percent distribution of people aged 18 or older by their estimate of how their family income ranks relative to other families, 2006)*



*Source: 2006 General Social Survey; calculations by New Strategist*

**Table 6.8 Class Identification, 1996 and 2006**

“If you were asked to use one of four names for your social class, which would you say you belong in: the lower class, the working class, the middle class, or the upper class?”

(percent responding, 1996 and 2006; and percent responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	lower class	working class	middle class	upper class
<b>Ten-year trend</b>				
2006	5.4%	45.6%	46.2%	2.8%
1996	5.4	46.3	44.3	4.0
<b>2006 profile</b>				
Total people	5.4	45.6	46.2	2.8
Men	5.1	46.6	45.2	3.0
Women	5.6	44.7	47.0	2.6
Black	9.6	53.9	31.8	4.7
Hispanic	4.6	68.3	26.3	0.8
White	4.8	41.2	51.1	2.9
Aged 18 to 44	5.0	51.8	40.9	2.3
Aged 45 to 64	6.3	42.4	48.4	2.9
Aged 65 or older	5.0	30.9	60.3	3.7
Not a college graduate	6.9	52.6	38.8	1.6
Bachelor's degree or more	1.2	24.7	67.0	6.1

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley, General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsda?harcsda+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist

**Table 6.9 Family Income Relative to Others, 1996 and 2006**

“Compared with American families in general, would you say your family income is far below average, below average, average, above average, or far above average?”

(percent responding, 1996 and 2006; and percent responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	far below average	below average	average	above average	far above average
<b>Ten-year trend</b>					
2006	5.2%	23.1%	50.2%	19.8%	1.6%
1996	5.6	23.2	49.3	19.3	2.5
<b>2006 profile</b>					
Total people	5.2	23.1	50.2	19.8	1.6
Men	5.8	21.1	49.2	21.4	2.5
Women	4.8	24.8	51.0	18.5	0.9
Black	7.6	28.1	54.1	9.9	0.2
Hispanic	8.0	32.8	49.5	9.5	0.3
White	4.6	21.5	48.5	23.2	2.1
Aged 18 to 44	4.9	23.2	54.2	16.3	1.3
Aged 45 to 64	5.9	22.0	45.1	25.0	2.1
Aged 65 or older	4.9	25.7	47.9	20.2	1.3
Not a college graduate	6.2	27.2	52.5	13.6	0.5
Bachelor's degree or more	2.5	11.7	43.8	37.2	4.7

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley, General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsgda?harsda+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist

**Table 6.10 Estimate of Wealth, 1996 and 2006**

“Please estimate your total wealth. Wealth means the value of your house plus the value of your vehicles, stocks and mutual funds, cash, checking accounts, retirement accounts including 401(K) and pension assets, and any other assets minus what you owe for your mortgage and your debts.”

(percent responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	less than \$5,000	\$5,000– \$20,000	\$20,000– \$40,000	\$40,000– \$75,000	\$75,000– \$100,000	\$100,000– \$150,000	\$150,000– \$250,000	\$250,000– \$500,000	\$500,000– \$1 million	\$1 million– \$2 million	\$2 million or more
<b>Total people</b>	<b>12.0%</b>	<b>12.5%</b>	<b>8.6%</b>	<b>8.8%</b>	<b>6.9%</b>	<b>7.6%</b>	<b>12.3%</b>	<b>16.9%</b>	<b>10.6%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>1.0%</b>
Men	11.9	12.2	8.6	8.8	7.3	8.0	10.9	15.3	11.6	4.0	1.2
Women	12.2	12.7	8.5	8.9	6.5	7.2	13.7	18.5	9.4	1.6	0.9
Black	19.0	14.2	12.6	12.4	6.7	6.7	9.2	9.2	7.1	0.0	2.8
Hispanic	16.2	13.8	16.9	16.2	8.9	5.1	7.4	11.3	3.5	0.6	0.0
White	10.2	11.7	7.3	7.4	7.0	7.9	13.2	19.3	11.6	3.6	0.7
Aged 18 to 44	16.2	17.9	11.1	11.0	7.0	7.9	9.8	11.8	4.8	1.7	0.9
Aged 45 to 64	6.0	4.7	5.1	5.5	7.0	7.2	15.2	24.6	19.7	3.8	1.0
Aged 65 or older	1.8	1.8	0.9	6.8	4.5	7.2	24.5	22.5	14.0	14.2	1.8
Not a college graduate	14.4	14.4	10.4	9.1	6.6	8.2	12.8	14.3	7.3	1.8	0.7
Bachelor’s degree or more	6.9	8.4	4.5	8.4	7.5	6.4	11.2	22.3	17.6	5.1	1.8

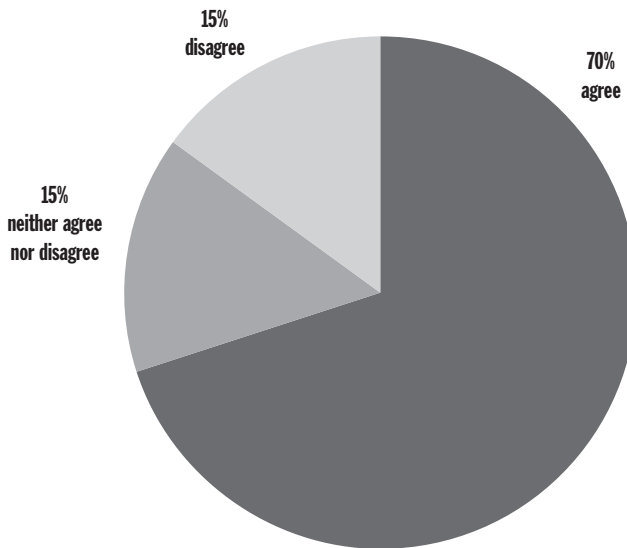
Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley, General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsda?harcsda+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist

## Most Believe in the American Dream

The great majority of Americans say their standard of living is better than their parents' was at the same age. Similarly, most parents think their children's standard of living will be even better. The public is deeply invested in the American Dream, and 70 percent believe that the United States provides opportunities for people like them to improve their standard of living.

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*(percent distribution of people aged 18 or older by attitude toward statement, "The way things are in America, people like me and my family have a good chance of improving our standard of living," 2006)*



*Source: 2006 General Social Survey; calculations by New Strategist*

**Table 6.11 Parents' Standard of Living, 1996 and 2006**

“Compared with your parents when they were the age you are now, do you think your own standard of living now is much better, somewhat better, about the same, somewhat worse, or much worse than theirs was?”

(percent responding, 1996 and 2006; and percent responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	<b>much better</b>	<b>somewhat better</b>	<b>about the same</b>	<b>somewhat worse</b>	<b>much worse</b>
<b>Ten-year trend</b>					
2006	35.4%	31.7%	20.9%	9.3%	2.6%
1996	33.9	29.3	21.4	12.2	3.3
<b>2006 profile</b>					
Total people	35.4	31.7	20.9	9.3	2.6
Men	33.0	31.7	22.7	11.1	1.6
Women	37.4	31.7	19.5	8.0	3.5
Black	38.2	30.0	15.0	13.5	3.4
Hispanic	44.7	29.8	11.8	10.0	3.7
White	32.6	32.7	23.1	9.1	2.6
Aged 18 to 44	34.8	32.1	20.5	9.8	2.8
Aged 45 to 64	33.7	30.5	21.8	10.9	3.1
Aged 65 or older	42.4	32.8	20.1	4.0	0.7
Not a college graduate	35.8	30.6	20.3	10.5	2.7
Bachelor's degree or more	34.5	34.8	22.4	6.0	2.3

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley; General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site [http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsda?harc\\_sda+gss06](http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsda?harc_sda+gss06); calculations by New Strategist

**Table 6.12 Children's Standard of Living, 1996 and 2006**

"When your children are at the age you are now, do you think their standard of living will be much better, somewhat better, about the same, somewhat worse, or much worse than yours is now?"

(percent of people with children responding, 1996 and 2006; and percent responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	<b>much better</b>	<b>somewhat better</b>	<b>about the same</b>	<b>somewhat worse</b>	<b>much worse</b>
<b>Ten-year trend</b>					
2006	31.6%	32.6%	20.6%	12.2%	3.0%
1996	21.9	30.5	22.8	19.5	5.3
<b>2006 profile</b>					
Total people	31.6	32.6	20.6	12.2	3.0
Men	31.8	30.6	21.8	12.6	3.2
Women	31.5	34.1	19.7	11.8	2.9
Black	54.6	27.1	8.8	6.8	2.7
Hispanic	57.9	22.5	9.9	6.9	2.8
White	22.3	35.4	24.1	14.6	3.5
Aged 18 to 44	37.2	31.9	19.0	9.7	2.1
Aged 45 to 64	26.0	33.4	20.7	15.3	4.6
Aged 65 or older	24.5	32.3	26.7	13.8	2.7
Not a college graduate	35.4	30.7	18.3	12.0	3.6
Bachelor's degree or more	20.4	38.0	27.9	12.6	1.2

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley; General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsda?harsda+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist

**Table 6.13 Standard of Living Will Improve, 1996 and 2006**

“The way things are in America, people like me and my family have a good chance of improving our standard of living. Do you agree or disagree?”

(percent responding, 1996 and 2006; and percent responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	strongly agree	agree	neither	disagree	strongly disagree
<b>Ten-year trend</b>					
2006	21.6%	48.2%	14.9%	12.8%	2.4%
1996	13.5	51.2	11.3	20.0	4.0
<b>2006 profile</b>					
Total people	21.6	48.2	14.9	12.8	2.4
Men	20.6	52.5	13.3	11.8	1.9
Women	22.4	44.9	16.2	13.7	2.8
Black	22.9	47.7	14.2	12.8	2.4
Hispanic	34.5	45.2	7.1	9.5	3.8
White	18.9	48.1	16.6	13.9	2.4
Aged 18 to 44	24.4	51.3	12.1	10.5	1.8
Aged 45 to 64	19.1	45.9	17.3	14.8	3.0
Aged 65 or older	16.9	43.4	20.0	16.5	3.3
Not a college graduate	21.4	47.1	15.6	13.2	2.7
Bachelor's degree or more	22.3	51.3	13.1	11.8	1.5

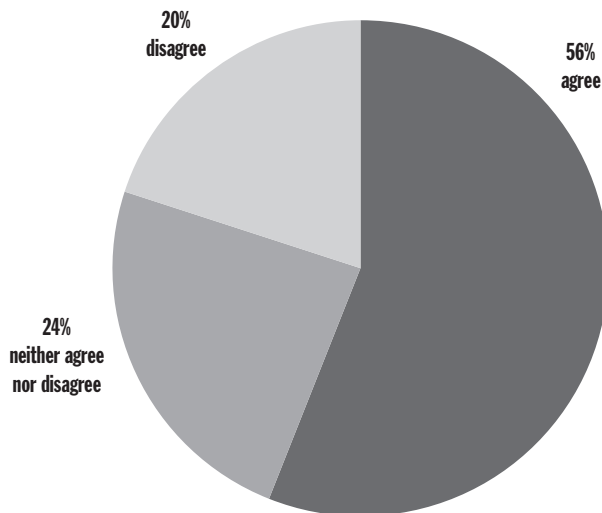
Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley; General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site [http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsda?harc\\_sda+gss06](http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsda?harc_sda+gss06); calculations by New Strategist

## The Public Supports Unions

Although union membership has been declining for years and politicians often use unions as a target of resentment, in fact most Americans support unions. The 55 percent majority agrees that unions are important for job security, and 56 percent say working conditions would be worse without them. There is more enthusiasm for unions than for self-employment, in fact. Most Americans think the self-employed have less job security than employees.

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*(percent distribution of people aged 18 or older by whether they agree with the statement, "Without trade unions the working conditions of employees would be much worse," 2006)*



*Source: 2006 General Social Survey; calculations by New Strategist*

**Table 6.14 Wages Relative to Same Job in Other Companies, 2006**

“On a scale of 1 (lower) to 5 (higher), do you believe your fixed annual wages in calendar year 2005 were higher or lower than those of employees with similar experience and job descriptions in other companies in your region?”

(percent of workers responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	lower 1	2	3	4	higher 5
<b>Total people</b>	<b>19.1%</b>	<b>13.0%</b>	<b>46.3%</b>	<b>11.9%</b>	<b>9.7%</b>
Men	16.4	12.9	47.1	11.6	12.1
Women	21.8	13.1	45.5	12.3	7.3
Black	29.2	10.7	43.7	10.3	6.1
Hispanic	19.1	10.1	51.3	8.3	11.2
White	17.3	13.6	45.9	12.7	10.5
Aged 18 to 44	19.9	13.9	44.1	12.6	9.5
Aged 45 to 64	18.0	11.7	49.4	11.2	9.6
Aged 65 or older	14.5	14.0	50.1	9.5	12.0
Not a college graduate	20.1	12.7	47.9	10.1	9.2
Bachelor's degree or more	16.8	13.7	42.9	15.9	10.8

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley, General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site [http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsda?harc\\_sda+gss06](http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsda?harc_sda+gss06); calculations by New Strategist

**Table 6.15 Employees Have More Job Security than the Self-Employed, 2006**

“To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:  
Employees have more job security than the self-employed.”

(percent responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	strongly agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
<b>Total people</b>	<b>16.8%</b>	<b>36.2%</b>	<b>23.3%</b>	<b>20.0%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>
Men	15.9	34.6	22.6	21.4	5.6
Women	17.6	37.6	24.0	18.9	2.0
Black	17.5	39.8	20.0	17.8	4.9
Hispanic	23.0	38.9	19.0	16.7	2.4
White	15.8	35.0	24.6	21.2	3.5
Aged 18 to 44	15.4	38.8	25.4	17.9	2.4
Aged 45 to 64	17.9	30.9	21.8	23.4	5.9
Aged 65 or older	19.0	40.9	19.5	18.8	1.7
Not a college graduate	18.0	36.5	21.9	20.5	3.1
Bachelor's degree or more	12.4	35.4	28.1	18.6	5.6

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley; General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hdda?harcgsda+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist

**Table 6.16 Being an Employee Interferes More with Family Life, 2006**

“To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:  
Being an employee interferes more with family life than self-employment.”

(percent responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	strongly agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
<b>Total people</b>	<b>12.4%</b>	<b>30.9%</b>	<b>20.7%</b>	<b>30.4%</b>	<b>5.6%</b>
Men	13.1	27.2	21.3	31.8	6.5
Women	11.8	34.1	20.1	29.1	4.8
Black	16.6	29.8	25.6	25.1	2.9
Hispanic	18.4	41.5	18.6	16.9	4.6
White	9.6	36.8	19.8	30.3	3.5
Aged 18 to 44	13.8	31.2	22.5	27.5	5.0
Aged 45 to 64	11.6	28.2	18.5	34.7	7.0
Aged 65 or older	9.6	36.8	19.8	30.3	3.5
Not a college graduate	13.7	32.8	20.5	28.5	4.4
Bachelor's degree or more	7.5	24.8	21.4	36.8	9.5

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley; General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site [http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hdda?harc\\_sda+gss06](http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hdda?harc_sda+gss06); calculations by New Strategist

**Table 6.17 Unions Are Very Important for Job Security, 2006**

“To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:  
Trade unions are very important for the job security of employees.”

(percent responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	strongly agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
<b>Total people</b>	<b>14.5%</b>	<b>40.6%</b>	<b>24.5%</b>	<b>15.0%</b>	<b>5.4%</b>
Men	16.5	35.6	21.8	17.9	8.3
Women	12.7	45.1	27.0	12.3	2.9
Black	18.9	49.4	22.2	7.4	2.1
Hispanic	21.8	37.1	26.2	12.9	2.0
White	13.2	38.4	25.1	16.5	6.8
Aged 18 to 44	16.3	40.0	27.4	11.6	4.7
Aged 45 to 64	11.7	39.3	23.4	19.0	6.6
Aged 65 or older	14.7	48.0	16.2	16.6	4.6
Not a college graduate	16.0	41.5	25.6	12.3	4.6
Bachelor's degree or more	9.8	37.7	21.1	23.5	7.9

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley; General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site [http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hdda?harc\\_sda+gss06](http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hdda?harc_sda+gss06); calculations by New Strategist

**Table 6.18 Working Conditions Would Be Worse without Unions, 2006**

“To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Without trade unions the working conditions of employees would be much worse than they are.”

(percent responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	strongly agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
<b>Total people</b>	<b>16.8%</b>	<b>39.3%</b>	<b>23.8%</b>	<b>15.9%</b>	<b>4.3%</b>
Men	18.7	36.8	21.6	17.6	5.3
Women	15.1	41.5	25.7	14.4	3.3
Black	26.8	41.7	21.5	8.3	1.6
Hispanic	17.7	30.8	32.8	14.1	4.6
White	15.2	39.4	23.0	17.6	4.9
Aged 18 to 44	16.4	37.1	27.7	14.5	4.5
Aged 45 to 64	16.5	39.1	20.9	18.5	5.0
Aged 65 or older	19.6	49.9	15.6	13.6	1.2
Not a college graduate	18.1	39.9	24.2	14.1	3.7
Bachelor's degree or more	12.8	37.6	22.5	21.3	5.8

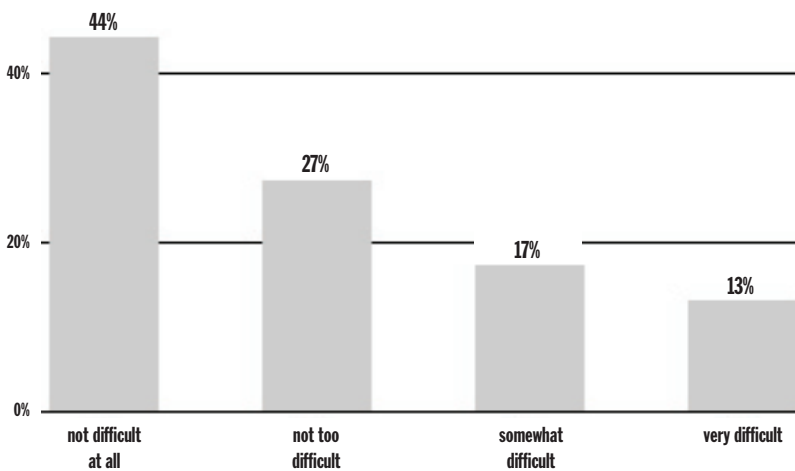
Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley; General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hlda?harcsda+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist

## Many Workers Are Free to Come and Go

More than 40 percent of American workers say it would not be difficult at all for them to take an hour or two off during working hours to attend to family matters. Only 13 percent say it would be very difficult. Nearly one-third of workers say they decide how their daily work is organized—greater than the 20 percent who have no say in organizing their work.

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*(percent distribution of workers aged 18 or older by how difficult it is for them to take an hour off during work hours, 2006)*



*Source: 2006 General Social Survey; calculations by New Strategist*

**Table 6.19 How Daily Work Is Organized, 2006**

“Which of the following statements best describes how your daily work is organized? 1) I am free to decide how my daily work is organized; 2) I can decide how my daily work is organized, within certain limits; 3) I am not free to decide how my daily work is organized.”

(percent of workers responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	free to decide how daily work is organized	can decide within certain limits	not free to decide how daily work is organized
<b>Total people</b>	<b>32.3%</b>	<b>48.2%</b>	<b>19.5%</b>
Men	33.8	44.2	22.0
Women	30.7	52.4	16.9
Black	32.7	39.3	28.0
Hispanic	28.4	42.2	29.5
White	33.5	50.3	16.2
Aged 18 to 44	27.6	52.9	19.4
Aged 45 to 64	36.9	43.1	20.0
Aged 65 or older	54.2	29.1	16.7
Not a college graduate	28.4	48.2	23.4
Bachelor's degree or more	42.8	48.5	8.7

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley, General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsda?harcsta+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist

**Table 6.20 Difficulty of Taking an Hour Off during Working Hours, 2006**

“How difficult would it be for you to take an hour or two off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters?”

(percent of workers responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	not difficult at all	not too difficult	somewhat difficult	very difficult
<b>Total people</b>	<b>44.0%</b>	<b>26.6%</b>	<b>16.8%</b>	<b>12.6%</b>
Men	47.0	25.3	14.3	13.4
Women	40.9	27.9	19.4	11.8
Black	35.4	29.8	20.6	14.2
Hispanic	35.5	25.0	20.9	18.6
White	47.5	26.5	14.4	11.5
Aged 18 to 44	40.2	29.9	19.0	10.9
Aged 45 to 64	47.9	22.9	13.6	15.6
Aged 65 or older	64.8	15.0	15.3	4.9
Not a college graduate	40.9	27.6	17.2	14.3
Bachelor's degree or more	52.6	23.9	15.4	8.0

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley; General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hdda?harsda+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist

**Table 6.21 Job Interferes with Family Life, 2006**

“How often do you feel that the demands of your job interfere with your family life?”

(percent of workers responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	always	often	sometimes	hardly ever	never
<b>Total people</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>10.3%</b>	<b>35.9%</b>	<b>29.0%</b>	<b>20.3%</b>
Men	6.1	13.1	36.4	26.7	17.8
Women	2.8	7.3	35.5	31.6	22.9
Black	3.9	6.6	34.5	24.6	30.5
Hispanic	7.5	8.0	27.7	29.8	27.0
White	4.1	10.7	38.4	29.1	17.7
Aged 18 to 44	5.0	11.1	35.6	26.7	21.5
Aged 45 to 64	3.8	9.6	36.6	32.6	17.5
Aged 65 or older	1.6	3.7	35.4	24.3	35.0
Not a college graduate	5.1	11.9	32.1	28.2	22.7
Bachelor's degree or more	2.7	5.8	46.5	31.5	13.6

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley; General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hdda?harcda+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist

**Table 6.22 Family Life Interferes with Job, 2006**

“How often do you feel that the demands of your  
family life interfere with your job?”

(percent of workers responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	always	often	sometimes	hardly ever	never
<b>Total people</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>25.6%</b>	<b>37.5%</b>	<b>31.1%</b>
Men	1.2	4.3	22.2	38.6	33.7
Women	1.3	5.0	29.2	36.4	28.2
Black	3.9	4.6	20.7	35.9	34.9
Hispanic	0.5	5.1	30.9	30.1	33.4
White	0.9	4.5	25.6	38.9	30.0
Aged 18 to 44	1.2	5.8	26.3	34.0	32.6
Aged 45 to 64	1.4	3.3	24.5	42.4	28.3
Aged 65 or older	0.0	0.0	30.8	29.3	40.0
Not a college graduate	1.4	5.4	24.1	36.2	32.9
Bachelor's degree or more	0.6	2.6	29.6	41.2	26.0

*Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley; General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hdda?harcda+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist*

**Table 6.23 How Easy to Replace on the Job, 2006**

“How difficult or easy do you think it would be for your firm or organization to replace you if you left?”

(percent of workers responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	<b>very easy</b>	<b>fairly easy</b>	<b>neither easy nor difficult</b>	<b>fairly difficult</b>	<b>very difficult</b>
<b>Total people</b>	<b>20.2%</b>	<b>26.3%</b>	<b>16.3%</b>	<b>25.1%</b>	<b>12.1%</b>
Men	20.0	22.1	15.6	26.8	15.4
Women	20.4	30.7	17.1	23.2	8.7
Black	29.4	24.4	18.8	19.4	8.1
Hispanic	28.9	28.6	14.8	21.5	6.2
White	17.0	25.9	16.1	26.5	14.5
Aged 18 to 44	21.7	26.3	17.6	23.7	10.6
Aged 45 to 64	18.8	26.9	14.4	25.3	14.5
Aged 65 or older	12.0	12.1	19.3	49.6	7.0
Not a college graduate	21.9	27.6	15.6	23.4	11.5
Bachelor's degree or more	15.5	23.0	18.3	29.6	13.6

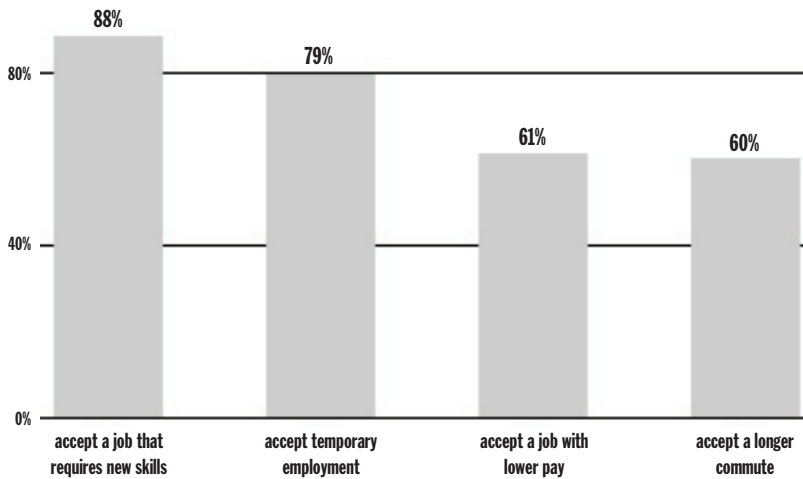
Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley; General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hdda?harcda+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist

## Most Would Accept Lower Pay to Avoid Unemployment

The great majority of workers would do just about anything to avoid being unemployed. Nearly nine of ten are willing to learn new skills. Eight of ten would take a temporary job. Six of ten would accept a job with lower pay or a longer commute.

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*(percent of workers who would accept selected conditions to avoid unemployment, 2006)*



*Source: 2006 General Social Survey; calculations by New Strategist*

**Table 6.24 Would Accept Job Requiring New Skills to Avoid Unemployment, 2006**

“To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: In order to avoid unemployment, I would be willing to accept a job that requires new skills.”

(percent of workers responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	strongly agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
<b>Total people</b>	<b>45.6%</b>	<b>42.2%</b>	<b>6.3%</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>
Men	46.1	41.0	6.3	4.7	1.8
Women	45.0	43.5	6.4	3.9	1.2
Black	51.1	38.6	5.0	3.2	2.1
Hispanic	39.2	41.8	13.2	4.2	1.7
White	46.5	42.0	5.1	4.6	1.7
Aged 18 to 44	48.6	42.1	6.1	2.4	0.8
Aged 45 to 64	42.4	43.7	6.1	6.0	1.8
Aged 65 or older	28.6	25.8	10.0	20.0	15.6
Not a college graduate	44.7	44.4	5.9	3.8	1.3
Bachelor’s degree or more	47.9	36.4	7.6	5.8	2.3

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley, General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsda?harcsda+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist

**Table 6.25 Would Accept Job with Lower Pay to Avoid Unemployment, 2006**

“To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I would be willing to accept a position with lower pay to avoid unemployment.”

(percent of workers responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	strongly agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
<b>Total people</b>	<b>21.1%</b>	<b>39.8%</b>	<b>12.2%</b>	<b>18.7%</b>	<b>8.3%</b>
Men	21.8	40.1	12.8	17.7	7.7
Women	20.3	39.5	11.5	19.7	8.9
Black	17.3	39.5	11.8	17.9	13.5
Hispanic	20.4	26.0	13.9	32.2	7.5
White	22.8	41.9	11.5	17.0	6.8
Aged 18 to 44	21.0	41.0	10.9	19.0	8.2
Aged 45 to 64	21.0	39.3	13.6	17.5	8.6
Aged 65 or older	23.6	25.8	11.6	33.9	5.1
Not a college graduate	19.3	39.2	12.8	19.9	8.8
Bachelor's degree or more	25.7	41.3	10.7	15.5	6.8

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley; General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsda?harcstda+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist

**Table 6.26 Would Accept Temporary Employment to Avoid Unemployment, 2006**

“To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I would be willing to accept temporary employment to avoid unemployment.”

(percent of workers responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	strongly agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
<b>Total people</b>	<b>24.7%</b>	<b>54.0%</b>	<b>8.6%</b>	<b>9.6%</b>	<b>3.1%</b>
Men	24.1	52.7	9.3	10.4	3.5
Women	25.3	55.5	7.8	8.7	2.7
Black	20.7	54.5	8.9	9.0	6.8
Hispanic	23.1	42.3	11.8	21.1	1.9
White	26.4	55.4	7.9	7.7	2.6
Aged 18 to 44	25.5	53.5	8.3	9.7	3.0
Aged 45 to 64	23.2	56.4	8.3	8.7	3.4
Aged 65 or older	28.5	32.5	14.0	23.3	1.6
Not a college graduate	23.3	54.1	9.0	10.3	3.3
Bachelor’s degree or more	28.3	53.8	7.5	7.7	2.6

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley; General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsgda?harsda+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist

**Table 6.27 Would Accept Longer Commute to Avoid Unemployment, 2006**

“To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I would be willing to travel longer to get to work to avoid unemployment.”

(percent of workers responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	strongly agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
<b>Total people</b>	<b>17.6%</b>	<b>42.3%</b>	<b>9.5%</b>	<b>23.1%</b>	<b>7.5%</b>
Men	19.2	46.1	9.2	18.9	6.6
Women	15.9	38.2	9.8	27.6	8.4
Black	8.0	50.0	10.0	22.0	10.0
Hispanic	18.7	27.8	8.5	40.3	4.7
White	19.9	42.8	9.9	20.0	7.5
Aged 18 to 44	17.4	43.2	10.9	22.5	5.9
Aged 45 to 64	18.1	42.2	7.7	23.0	9.0
Aged 65 or older	17.6	24.4	3.4	39.3	15.3
Not a college graduate	16.9	39.3	11.0	25.2	7.6
Bachelor's degree or more	19.6	50.3	5.4	17.4	7.3

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley; General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hsgda?harsda+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist

**Table 6.28 Second Jobs, 2006**

“In addition to your main job, do you do any other work for additional income?”

(percent of workers responding by demographic characteristic, 2006)

	no	yes, mostly as an employee	yes, mostly on a self- employed basis	yes, other
<b>Total people</b>	<b>75.5%</b>	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>15.0%</b>	<b>2.8%</b>
Men	71.8	5.5	18.9	3.8
Women	79.4	7.9	10.9	1.8
Black	84.4	7.6	7.7	0.3
Hispanic	78.6	6.4	13.1	1.9
White	73.4	6.5	17.0	3.1
Aged 18 to 44	72.5	8.4	16.5	2.6
Aged 45 to 64	78.4	4.7	13.5	3.4
Aged 65 or older	91.6	1.6	6.7	0.0
Not a college graduate	78.4	6.0	12.8	2.8
Bachelor's degree or more	67.3	8.6	21.2	3.0

Source: Survey Documentation and Analysis, Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley, General Social Surveys, 1972–2006 Cumulative Data Files, Internet site <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin32/hdda?harcda+gss06>; calculations by New Strategist