Conversation Topics That Should and Shouldn’t Be Discussed in the Office (Infographic)

Be careful what you say in the office, it could come back to haunt you. From relationships to politics to religion, there are some conversation topics that should stay at home. In a recent survey of 1,000 workers across the country, insurance website InsuranceQuotes.com uncovered what people believe are the most and least taboo conversation topics in the workplace.

Related: How Startups Are Building Strong Office Cultures

Turns out, your sex life should stay in the bedroom. According to the research, 71 percent of survey participants agreed that “sex life” was the most inappropriate thing to talk about at work. After sex life, “drug use” was voted the second most inappropriate workplace topic (69 percent) and “gossip about a co-worker” came in third.

So what are people comfortable discussing in the office? “Personal health concerns,” “family issues” and “relationship issues” were the top three topics a majority of participants gave the green light for.

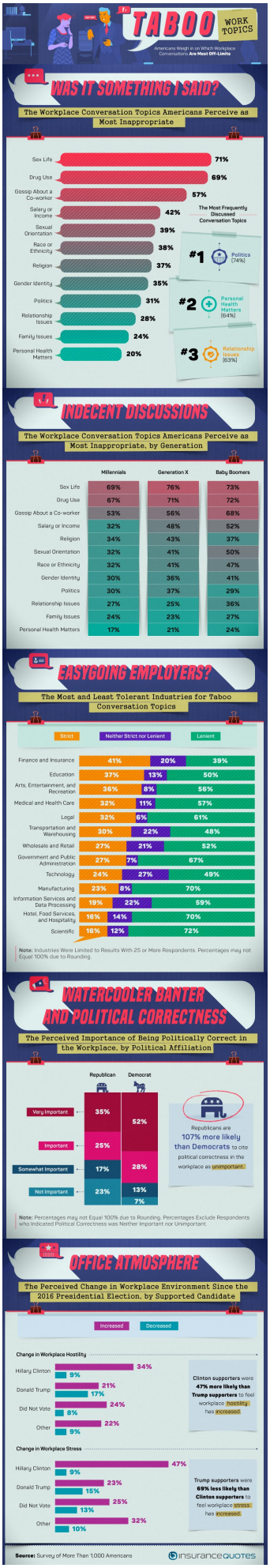
Related: The 6 Toxic Traits of Workplace Gossips

Of course, depending on the industry you’re in will also affect what’s appropriate conversation matter for work. Overall, the finance industry has the strictest feelings towards what can and can’t be said around the office. And on the other end of the spectrum, people in science could care less about what comes out of your mouth.

Despite the strict views that some people and industries have about what's appropriate office conversation, talk is talk and people are going to do it either way. So what's the hottest topic of conversation? *Politics*. Seventy-four percent of people agree that politics is the most common subject, and that's likely due to the rocky 2016 election and the current state of American politics right now.

Related: The 8 Essential Steps to Building a Winning Company Culture

To learn more about what should and shouldn't be said in the office, check out the infographic below.


TABOO WORK TOPICS
Americans Weigh in on Which Workplace Conversations Are Most Off-Limits
WAS IT SOMETHING I SAID?
The Workplace Conversation Topics Americans Perceive as Most Inappropriate
Sex Life 71%
Drug Use 69%
Gossip About a Co-worker 57%
Salary or Income 42%
Sexual Orientation 39%
Race or Ethnicity 38%
Religion 37%
Gender Identity 35%
Politics 31%
Relationship Issues 28%
Family Issues 24%
Personal Health Matters 20%
The Most Frequently Discussed Conversation Topics
#1 Politics (74%)
#2 Personal Health Matters (64%)
#3 Relationship Issues (63%)
INDECENT DISCUSSIONS
The Workplace Conversation Topics Americans Perceive as Most Inappropriate, by Generation
Millennials Generation X Baby Boomers
Sex Life 69% 76% 73%
Drug Use 67% 71% 72%
Gossip About a Co-worker 53% 56% 68%
Salary or Income 32% 48% 52%
Religion 34% 43% 37%
Sexual Orientation 32% 41% 50%
Race or Ethnicity 32% 41% 47%
Gender Identity 30% 36% 41%
Politics 30% 37% 29%
Relationship Issues 27% 25% 36%
Family Issues 24% 23% 27%
Personal Health Matters 17% 21% 24%
EASYGOING EMPLOYERS?
The Most and Least Tolerant Industries for Taboo Conversation Topics
Strict Neither Strict nor Lenient Lenient
Finance and Insurance 41% 20% 39%
Education 37% 13% 50%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation 36% 8% 56%
Medical and Health Care 32% 11% 57%
Legal 32% 6% 61%
Transportation and Warehousing 30% 22% 48%
Wholesale and Retail 27% 21% 52%
Government and Public Administration 27% 7% 67%
Technology 24% 27% 49%
Manufacturing 23% 8% 70%
Information Services and Data Processing 19% 22% 59%
Hotel, Food Services, and Hospitality 16% 14% 70%
Scientific 16% 12% 72%
Note: Industries Were Limited to Results With 25 or More Respondents. Percentages may not Equal 100% due to Rounding.
WATERCOOLER BANTER AND POLITICAL CORRECTNESS
The Perceived Importance of Being Politically Correct in the Workplace, by Political Affiliation
Republican Democrat
Very Important 35% 52%
Important 25%
Somewhat Important 17% 28%
Not Important 23% 13%
7%
Republicans are 107% more likely than Democrats to cite political correctness in the workplace as unimportant.
Note: Percentages may not Equal 100% due to Rounding. Percentages Exclude Respondents who Indicated Political Correctness was Neither Important nor Unimportant.
OFFICE ATMOSPHERE
The Perceived Change in Workplace Environment Since the 2016 Presidential Election, by Supported Candidate
Increased Decreased
Change in Workplace Hostility
Hillary Clinton 34% 9%
Donald Trump 21% 17%
Did Not Vote 24% 8%
Other 22% 9%
Clinton supporters were 47% more likely than Trump supporters to feel workplace hostility has increased.
Change in Workplace Stress
Hillary Clinton 47% 9%
Donald Trump 23% 15%
Did Not Vote 25% 13%
Other 32% 10%
Trump supporters were 68% less likely than Clinton supporters to feel workplace stress has increased.
Source: Survey of More Than 1,000 Americans
insurancequotes

https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/308815