

# Study: One-third of dating workers marry

43 percent have dated co-workers; 10 percent have their eye on one

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BY CHRISTINA MARIA PASCHYN

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Did Cupid's arrow shoot past you on Valentine's Day?

Don't drown your sorrow in chocolates just yet. Love may be waiting in a cubicle near you.

Forty-three percent of U.S. workers said they have dated a co-worker, according to an annual survey on office romance conducted by online job site CareerBuilder.com.

Thirty-four percent of those who did court a fellow employee said they ended up marrying their co-worker. And one-in-ten respondents said they currently have their eye on someone in the workplace.

"It makes work more fun," Kent Mathewson said. Mathewson is an attorney who met his wife while they were working at Baker & McKenzie LLC in Chicago.

"We were spending a lot of time together working on a litigation case. We were professional about it, and I don't think it affected our work."

The survey was conducted between Nov. 17 and Dec. 11, 2006 and included more than 6,000 workers.

Twelve percent of workers said they felt the spark when they ran into a colleague outside of work. Others said they knew love was in the air when they met up at lunch, at happy hour after work or while working the late-night shift.

This may be good news for lovelorn office rats, but Dr. Victoria McGrath of McGrath Consulting Group Inc, an Illinois-based human resources management group, cautioned that office romances sometimes prove problematic.

"If the romance goes bad then you have two folks who are still working together, which can cause tense relations and affect productivity," McGrath said.

According to CareerBuilder.com, 27 percent of those surveyed said they dated someone who held a higher position than they did in their organization. And 14 percent said they dated their own boss. Among men and women who dated a superior, women were 62 percent more likely than men to do so.

"If one person reports to their love interest, peers can be suspicious and resentful of any perceived influence on the boss and his/her decisions," said Murat Philippe, principal consultant for HR Solutions Inc., a Chicago-based employee survey and HR consulting firm. "Most employees that we surveyed were tolerant, as long as each member of the couple worked in different departments."