Americans Still Are Not Using Their Paid Time Off

COVID-19 affected all aspects of everyday life, compelling Americans to change their behavior, including around travel, to accommodate health and safety protocols and other restrictions in an effort slow the spread. However, one noticeable trend remains the same: Americans still are not using their vacation days.

33% American workers left an average of 33% of their paid time off on the table last year.

Traveling in 2020: A Semi-Navigable Challenge

Despite restrictions and new protocols, on average, nearly 60% of paid time off used in 2020 was for travel away from home.

Turning Dreams into Realities in 2021

- Many Americans have even more paid time off, due to changes in time off policy,— and are looking to spend it on vacation.
- Nearly 8 in 10 (77%) American workers are extremely or very happy while on vacation.
- 84% of American workers are excited to plan a vacation in the next six months.
- 97% of survey respondents say having a trip planned makes them happier*.
- How do they want to spend vacation time? Traveling.
  - More than 9 in 10 (93%) say it is important to use their paid time off to travel.

Travel Priorities in 2021 Will Focus On:

- Finding a change of scenery 69%
- Spending more time with family or friends 61%
- Visiting destinations on bucket lists 55%
- Exploring more of the U.S. 54%
- Reconnecting with significant others 52%

* Institute for Applied Positive Research, 2020
Planning: Key to Taking Time Off and Traveling

Americans who plan out their time off take more time off—but more than one-quarter (28%) of American households don’t do this simple step. As a result, they lose or have to forfeit these days.

Planners prioritize traveling with their paid time off, a trend that is expected to continue to rise in 2021 where 32% of planners anticipate traveling more than previous years versus 21% of non-planners.

Planning: A Key to Happiness

Planners are happier in general, with everything from their personal relationships to their health and wellbeing and their job.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extremely or Very Happy</th>
<th>Planners</th>
<th>Non-Planners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On vacation</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal relationships with family and friends</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much of paid time off used</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How paid time off is spent</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical health and well-being</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company where you work</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anticipating and planning vacations</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Destination Analysts, 2020

Methodology: This research is based on an online survey of employed Americans distributed to the Dynata Business Professionals Panel, one of the largest in the world. Survey respondents must have worked at least 20 hours a week at a company that employed at least two people and earned paid time off in 2020. The survey was fielded December 10th-24th, 2020. In total, 1,200 completed surveys were collected.