

NEWS RELEASE

Talking about your 'X' in the workplace: GE2017

- 60% of people now think it's fine to talk about politics at work
 - For 1 in 5, politics forms part of daily conversation
- The majority of UK workers don't think you should ask who someone is voting for
- Over 10% of employers have tried to influence our political beliefs

Is politics best avoided in the workplace? With things heating up around the General Election, it seems that's a rule of the past. According to new research from leading job site, reed.co.uk, 60% of UK workers now think it's OK to talk about politics in the office.

However, the research also revealed that it's not just today's General Election that's got everyone talking about politics at work.

In fact, although 30% admitted they only talk about politics at work when approaching an election, almost 20% said it's become part of their daily conversations. And almost half of respondents said that politics forms part of their workplace chat at least once a month.

Martin Warnes, Managing Director of reed.co.uk comments:

"It's been said that there are three things you don't talk about at dinner parties: sex, religion and politics. The same used to go for the office.

But according to our latest research, that may no longer be the case. Almost two thirds of us now think it's acceptable to broach the topic of politics during work hours – indicating that the UK workforce may be more politically aware than ever before."

Despite this, just under half of those polled said they wouldn't share who they were voting for – indicating that there's still some resistance when it comes to mixing our political beliefs and our professional lives.

52% said that they were happy to talk to their colleagues about who they voted for, while 48% said they'd prefer to keep it to themselves – proving it isn't just Brexit that seems to split the country.

Of those who voted 'No', the main reason given was a preference to keep their own views private (58%), followed by wanting to avoid conflict with their co-workers (13%) and not wanting to get involved in politics at work (12%).

An overwhelming 77% of those we surveyed said they wouldn't dream of asking someone who they were voting for, with the majority stating that their colleagues' choices were none of their business.

Other reasons for not asking included worrying that it may offend, or just a general lack of interest in which way their political intentions lie.

Despite being relatively unwilling to ask about who our colleagues are voting for, that doesn't seem to deter some of us from attempting to sway their decision.

30% said that their co-workers have tried to influence their political beliefs in the workplace.

And, perhaps most surprisingly, 1 in 10 admitted that their own employer has also tried to influence their political beliefs at some point in time.

Martin Warnes continues:

“While it's great to see so many people getting passionate about politics, it's important not to let yourself get distracted.

When things start getting personal, political discussion can quickly turn into an argument. We need to be mindful not to let political chat impact negatively on productivity and working relationships.”

-ENDS-

Notes to editors:

Questions taken from a survey of 891 UK jobseekers

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