



## IS THE AMERICAN DREAM ON STEROIDS?

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Work for many has become the ultimate extreme sport—high level, high impact workers pushing themselves beyond their limits; working around the clock and around the globe. The Center for Work-Life Policy’s groundbreaking new study “**Extreme Jobs: The Dangerous Allure of the 70-Hour Workweek**” (in the December issue of *Harvard Business Review*) examines this alarming trend and describes the new American nightmare in all of its sexless, vacationless, eating-at-your-desk glory.

Highlights of the study:

- **What are extreme jobs?** Definition includes long hours plus five key performance pressures. 1.7 million Americans hold extreme jobs.
- **What are the causes of extreme jobs?** How globalization, BlackBerries and Type A personalities conspire to produce overload.
- **Where are extreme jobs?** All over the economy—in retail and the media as well as on Wall Street.
- **The personal costs:** Nearly 60% of extreme workers believe that their career undermines their relationship with their children, 50% say their work interferes with their sex life.
- **Why do so many high achievers still love their extreme jobs?** They’re “hooked” on the adrenaline rush and gargantuan rewards.
- **Women are being left behind in new ways:** Few women hold extreme jobs; they’re not afraid of the pressure or responsibility but can’t pony up the 70-hour weeks.
- **Why companies should care:** The threat to the bottom line is real. Fifty percent of top talent is heading for the door and replacement costs can run into six figures.

\* Data from new national survey of 1,564 respondents.

### ABOUT THE STUDY:

The Hidden Brain Drain Task Force, under the auspices of the Center for Work-Life Policy, will publish the third of its groundbreaking workplace studies in the December issue of the *Harvard Business Review*. Sponsored by American Express, BP, ProLogis, and UBS, “Extreme Jobs: The Dangerous Allure of the 70-Hour Workweek,” takes a hard look at “the American Dream on steroids.” Despite the seduction of these jobs, they wreak havoc in private lives and create “flight risk” for employers.

*“How long can we sustain this souped-up version of the American Dream,” asks Sylvia Ann Hewlett, President of the Center for Work-Life Policy. “Our research captures the allure of these jobs, many of which are to die for. But extreme jobs come with extreme risk to individuals and corporations.”*

The Center for Work-Life Policy (CWLP) works with employers to create workplace policies that enhance personal/family well-being, increase productivity, and reach across the divides of gender, race and class. For more information, please visit: <http://www.worklifepolicy.org/>.