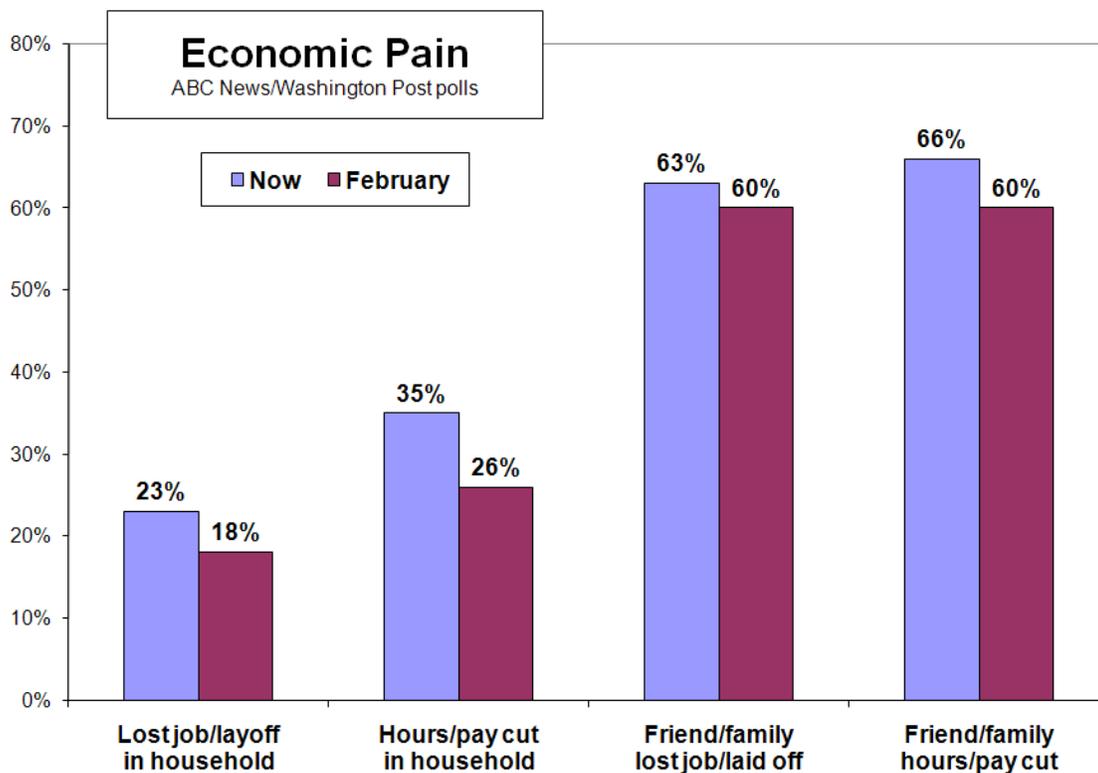


## Hopes for Economy's Future Don't Ease the Current Pain

Improved hopes for the economy's future haven't turned around the current pain: Rising numbers of Americans report a layoff or pay cut in their own household – and 56 percent say the recession has forced a significant change in their lifestyle.

Among those who've changed their way of living, moreover, nearly half in the latest ABC News/Washington Post poll say they're upset or even angry about it.

Personal impacts have grown: Nearly one in four Americans say someone in their home has been laid off or lost a job in recent months – 23 percent, up 5 points from February. And more than one in three, 35 percent, report a cut in work hours or pay, up 9 points.



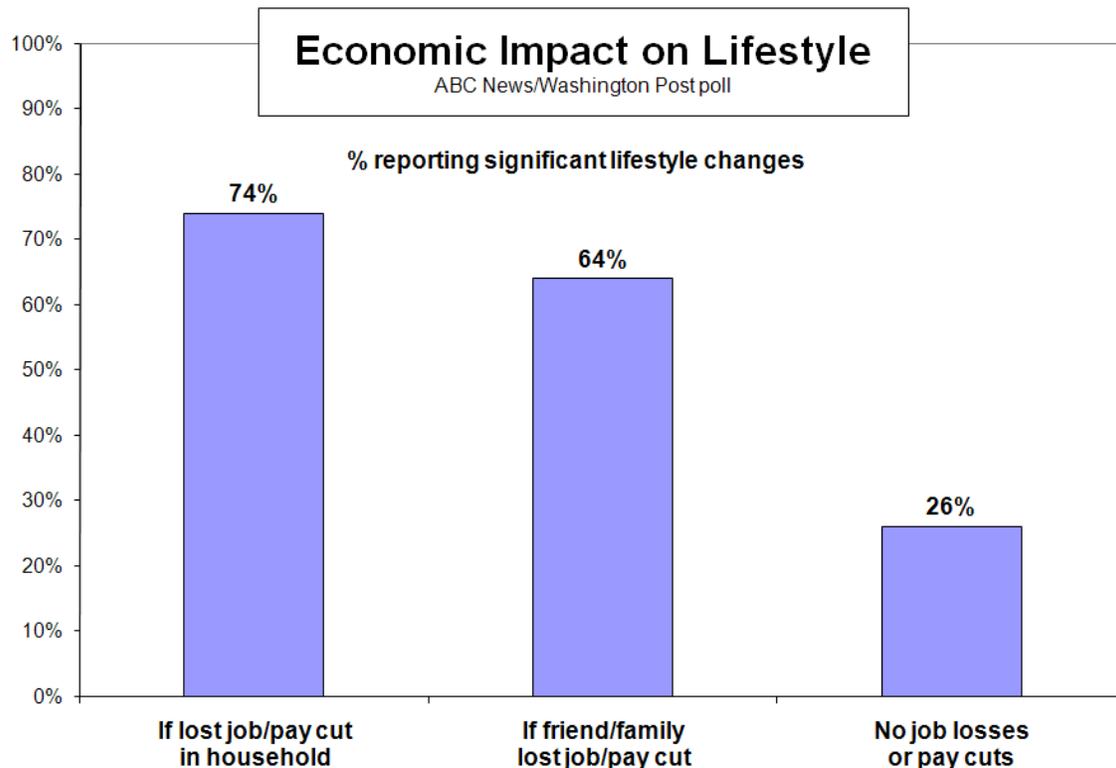
Second-hand experience, also a strong predictor of economic woe, is vast. Sixty-three percent say a close friend or immediate family member outside their household has lost a job. And 66 percent report a cut in pay or work hours among friends or family, up 6 points from February.

Differences in these experiences mark vulnerable groups. Better-off and better-educated Americans are much less likely than others to report a layoff in the household in the past few months. Layoffs are more common in the East, least so in the Midwest; and most common among young adults while lower among seniors, who are less likely to be working or to have workers in the household.

There's been an increase in hopes for the future – 55 percent are optimistic about the economy in the year ahead, up 7 points from February to the most since 2006, and the number who say the country's in a serious long-term decline has fallen by 10 points, to 46 percent. Sixty-six percent are optimistic about their own financial situation in the year ahead.

But in terms of current conditions, the pain's widespread.

**LIFESTYLE** – Proximity to layoffs or job losses relate strongly to lifestyle changes. Among people who've sustained a job loss or pay cut in their household, 74 percent say they've made significant changes to their lifestyle because of the economy. Among those who've had an immediate family member or close friend outside the household take a hit, it's 64 percent. That compares to just 26 percent among those who report no such personal experience of pay cuts or job losses.



Earlier ABC/Post polls have shown similar relationships – far higher levels of spending cutbacks, and of broader economic anxiety, among people with direct or close experience of pay or job cuts.

As noted, among the 56 percent of Americans who say they've made significant changes because of the economy, nearly half, 45 percent, say they're either upset or angry about it (32 percent and 13 percent, respectively). An additional 43 percent are not upset, but concerned about what they're going through. Just 11 percent are unconcerned.

Significant lifestyle changes because of the economy are higher among some groups – 60 percent of women, compared with 52 percent of men; more in the East and West than in the Midwest; and more among middle-aged Americans, subsiding among young adults and particularly among seniors.

Among those who report lifestyle changes, being upset or angry about it peaks in two groups – women, and adults age 50 and up.

**METHODOLOGY** – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone April 21-24, 2009, among a random national sample of 1,072 adults, including landline and cell-phone-only respondents and an oversample of African-Americans (weighted to their correct share of the national population). Results for the full sample have a 3-point error margin; click [here](#) for a detailed description of sampling error. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by TNS of Horsham, PA.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>

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Full results follow (\*= less than 0.5 percent).

1-16 previously released or held for release.

17. Thinking about the next 12 months, would you say you feel (optimistic) or (pessimistic) about [ITEM]?

4/24/09 - Summary Table

	Optimistic	Pessimistic	No opinion
a. the state of the national economy	55	42	3
b. your own family's financial situation	66	31	3

Trend:

a. the state of the national economy

	Optimistic	Pessimistic	No opinion
4/24/09	55	42	3
2/22/09	48	50	2
12/14/08	48	50	3

9/29/08	RV	43	53	4
4/13/08		40	58	2
2/1/08		45	51	4
12/9/07		45	52	3
12/11/06		64	33	3
5/15/06		52	46	1
12/18/05		55	44	1
9/11/05		51	46	2
6/5/05		59	40	1
12/19/04		58	40	2
6/20/04		64	34	2
1/18/04		63	35	2

b. your own family's financial situation

4/24/09		66	31	3
2/22/09		66	31	3
12/14/08		68	29	2
9/29/08	RV	61	34	5
4/13/08		66	31	3
2/1/08		67	30	3
12/9/07		72	25	3
12/11/06		82	16	2
5/15/06		79	20	1
12/18/05		73	26	1
12/19/04		75	23	2

18. In the last few months, have you or has anyone living in your household [ITEM]?

4/24/09 - Summary Table

	Yes	No	No opinion
a. been laid off or lost their job	23	77	0
b. had work hours or pay cut	35	65	1

Trend:

a. been laid off or lost their job

	Yes	No	No opinion
4/24/09	23	77	0
2/22/09	18	82	*
12/14/08	18	82	*

b. had work hours or pay cut

	Yes	No	No opinion
4/24/09	35	65	1
2/22/09	26	73	*
12/14/08	27	73	*

19. Thinking beyond your own household, do you have any close friends or immediate family members who have [ITEM]?

4/24/09 - Summary Table

	Yes	No	No opinion
a. been laid off or lost their job	63	36	*
b. had work hours or pay cut	66	33	1

Trend:

a. been laid off or lost their job

	Yes	No	No opinion
4/24/09	63	36	*
2/22/09	60	40	1

b. had work hours or pay cut

	Yes	No	No opinion
4/24/09	66	33	1
2/22/09	60	38	1

20. Has the economic situation caused you to change your personal lifestyle in a significant way, or not?

	Yes	No	No opinion
4/24/09	56	43	*

21. (IF YES) How would you describe your feelings about the changes you've had to make - are you angry about it, upset but not angry, not upset but concerned, or is it not a cause of concern?

	--- Angry/Upset ---			----- Not Angry/Upset -----			No	
	NET	Angry	Upset	NET	Cncd	Not cncd	Pos. (vol.)	opinion
4/24/09	45	13	32	55	43	11	*	*

20/21 NET

	----- Caused changes -----					
	NET	Angry/Upset	Not	Angry/Upset	No change	No opinion
4/24/09	56	25	31	43	43	*

22-46 previously released or held for release.

\*\*\*END\*\*\*