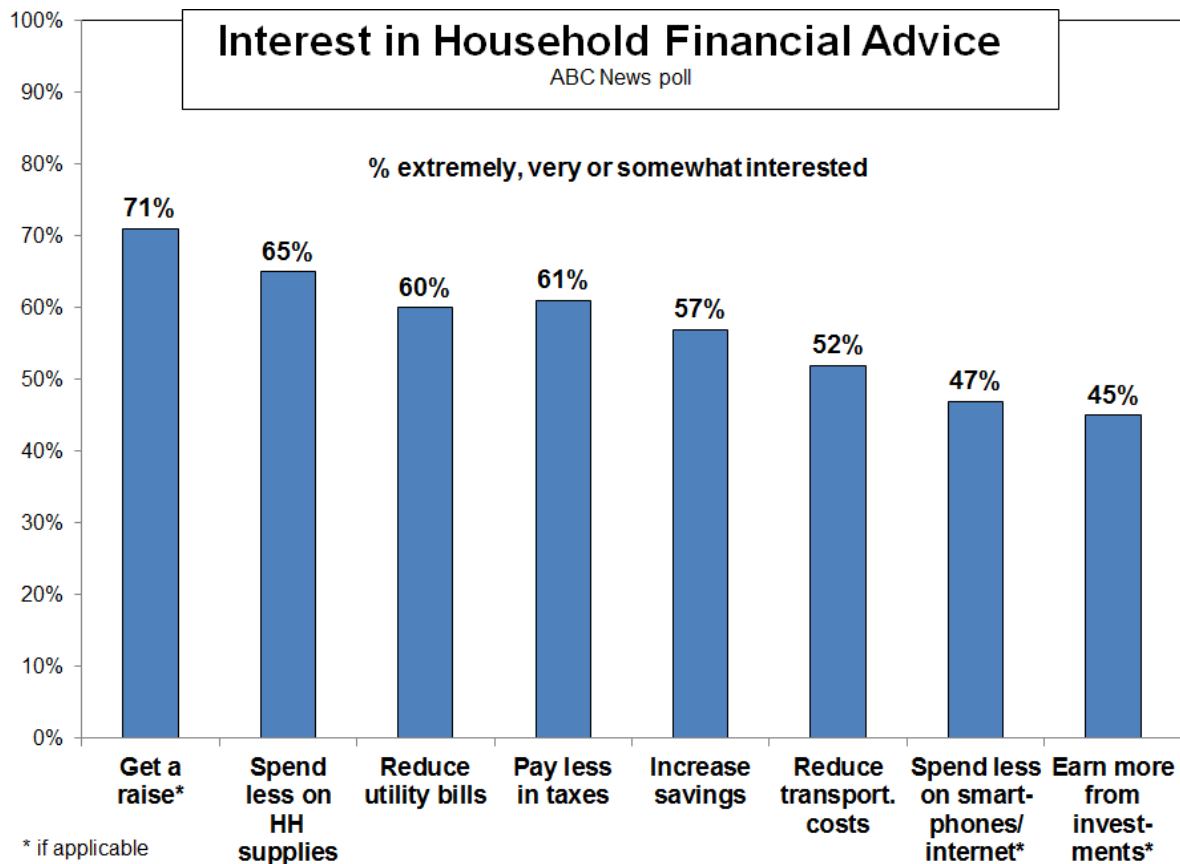


From Getting a Raise to Spending Less, Many Americans Say: Bring on the Advice

When it comes to financial advice, working Americans, above all, would appreciate this: tips on how to talk to the boss.

Among those who are employed, getting a pay raise is the single most desired piece of financial advice out of a baker's dozen tested in this new ABC News survey. Other items hold substantial appeal to all adults, including finding ways to spend less on groceries and household supplies, cut taxes, trim utility and transportation bills and boost savings.

The survey, produced for ABC World News with Diane Sawyer by [Langer Research Associates](#), is part of this week's "Real Money" series starting tonight on ABC.



Another result checks what Americans would do with the extra cash if they were able to cut expenses or raise their incomes. While the range is wide, vacations and travel lead the wish list, cited by 18 percent. Thirteen percent would pay down their debts; as many would spend fresh

cash on entertainment, clothes, dining, hobbies and gifts. About one in 10 apiece say they'd pony up for a new car, home improvements or major appliances, or would increase their savings.

Some results are unexpected: Sixty-four percent aren't so interested in learning how to cut their credit card debt, and that excludes those – nearly half of Americans – who say they have no such debt. Reducing fitness or health club expenses (again, where applicable) is even lower on the list.

And there are differences across groups. A striking one reflects the high cost of parenthood: Adults with minor children at home are vastly more interested in cost-saving strategies on several topics. Fifty-six percent of parents, for example, are extremely or very interested in learning about ways to spend less on groceries and household supplies. That drops nearly to half as many of those who don't have kids at home, 31 percent. (Interest in these kinds of savings also peaks, by age, among 30- to 49-year-olds, who are more apt than others to be in the midst of child-rearing.)

In another example, parents are nearly twice as likely as non-parents to express especially high interest in maximizing earnings from their investments.

Income and education (which are closely related) also come into the mix, as does marital status (which also often relates to household income, boosted by dual earners). Perhaps not surprisingly, those in less well-off groups are more interested in many cost-cutting strategies.

One example: Among working adults with household incomes less than \$50,000 a year, 63 percent are extremely or very interested in finding out about ways to boost their pay; among those with incomes of \$50,000 or more that declines sharply, to 41 percent. Similarly, those in the lower- to middle-income group are 17 percentage points more apt to be keen to spend less on groceries and household supplies, compared with better-off Americans.

Several strategies also are of particular interest to adults younger than 50, compared with those 50 and older. These include getting a pay raise and trimming transportation or entertainment expenses. Adults under 30 are especially interested in increasing their savings; and under 40s are notably eager to cut back their smartphone or internet fees. Overall, and perhaps surprisingly, reducing health care expenses don't come in particularly high on the list; while speculative, it's possible that many people see spending less as a path to less care or lower quality care, an unappealing tradeoff.

A list of overall interest levels in the 13 subject areas tested follows. The first column sums those who are somewhat, very or extremely interested in each topic; the second narrows to those who are very or extremely interested. ("Not so" or "not at all" interested were the other choices.)

	Somewhat/very/ extremely interested	Very/extremely interested
Information about how to:		
Get a pay raise*	71%	51%
Spend less on groceries/ household supplies	65	38
Reduce your utility bills	60	35
Pay less in taxes	61	38
Increase your savings	57	32

Reduce transportation costs	52	34
Spend less on smartphones/internet*	47	25
Earn more from investments*	45	23
Reduce your health care expenses	42	20
Reduce entertainment expenses	40	16
Reduce mortgage payments*	40	25
Reduce credit card debt*	36	23
Reduce spending on fitness/health clubs*	27	13

*If applicable

Here are a few standout differences among groups:

- Cutting spending on groceries and household supplies is of high-level interest to nearly half of 30- to 49-year olds, 48 percent vs. 34 percent of all other age groups (either younger or older). Also nearly half of those with incomes less than \$50,000 are extremely or very interested in cutting these expenses, vs. 30 percent of those who are better off. High interest hits 42 percent among those who haven't gotten a college degree (generally, lower earners) vs. 30 percent of college graduates. And as noted, in the sharpest difference, it's 56 percent among parents with kids under 18 at home, vs. 31 percent among others.
- Fifty-five percent of adults younger than 50 are extremely or very interested in getting a pay raise; that drops to 43 percent of those 50 and older. (This question was asked only of people who said they're employed.) High-level interest in a pay raise is 21 points lower among married or partnered Americans than others, 42 percent vs. 63 percent, and, as noted, 22 points lower among \$50,000-plus earners vs. their less well-off counterparts.
- While not a top-priority item, high interest in finding ways to trim entertainment expenses is 8 points higher among adults younger than 50 vs. those 50 and up (and that rises to a 17-point margin when expanded to include those who are "somewhat" interested). It's also higher among parents than non-parents (again, especially when those "somewhat" interested are included – by a 21-point margin); and higher among never-married adults vs. those who are either currently or formerly married.
- Trimming utility bills is another item of particular interest to two groups – those with incomes less than \$50,000 and parents, by 15- and 14-point margins, respectively.
- Spending less on transportation matters the least to seniors, with 21 percent extremely or very interested, vs. 38 percent of those 18 to 64. It also draws more high-level interest from less-than \$50,000 earners (41 vs. 29 percent of those with higher incomes), never-marrieds (48 vs. 31 percent of others) and, again, parents (43 vs. 31 percent of non-parents).
- Parents also are 10 points more apt than non-parents to be highly interested in cutting their health care expenses, and, as noted, in maximizing the return on their investments, 36 vs. 19 percent.

Finally, on the question of what people would do with extra money obtained through lower expense or higher income, there are differences across groups in their level of preference for the top item, vacations and travel. Interest in travel spending peaks among adults 50 and older, college graduates, and Americans who do not have kids at home – the latter, perhaps, a reflection on the travails of traveling with kids.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News poll was conducted by telephone Jan. 2-5, 2014, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,021 adults, including landline and cell-phone-only respondents. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 3.5 points, including design effect.

The survey was produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#) of New York, N.Y., with sampling, data collection and tabulation by SSRS/Social Science Research Solutions of Media, 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.

* in data columns = less than 0.5 percent

1. Thinking about your household expenses, how interested would you be in finding ways to [ITEM]?

1/5/14 - Summary Table*

	Extremely	Very	Somewhat	Not so	Not at all	No opinion
a. Reduce your credit card debt, if you have any**	9	14	13	10	54	1
b. Spend less on groceries and household supplies	17	21	27	12	23	1
c. (IF EMPLOYED) Get a pay raise	28	23	20	6	22	1
d. Reduce your entertainment expenses	6	11	24	16	42	2
e. Reduce your utility bills	16	19	25	10	28	2
f. Reduce your transportation costs, like car payments, gasoline, bus, taxi, or train fare	11	24	17	12	35	1
g. Pay less in taxes	16	22	22	8	31	1
h. Increase your savings	14	18	25	9	33	1
i. Reduce your health care expenses	9	11	21	14	42	2
j. Earn more from						

any investments you may have**	11	13	22	11	43	*
k. (IF HOMEOWNER) Reduce your mortgage payment, if you have a mortgage**	17	8	15	10	49	*
l. Spend less on smart- phone or internet access, if you have that**	10	15	22	11	41	1
m. Reduce your spending on health club fees or any other fitness expenses, if you have them**	4	9	15	12	61	*

*Half sample asked items a-f; other half sample asked items g-m.

**Results are among those who did not volunteer that the item did not apply.

2. If you were able to cut your expenses or raise your income and had extra money to spend, what's the main thing you'd be most likely to spend it on?

	1/5/14
Vacation/travel	18
Bills/HH-medical expenses NET	13
Pay bills or debts	8
Household expenses	4
Medical expenses	2
Clothes	4
Entertainment/dinners/shows	5
Hobbies	2
Gifts	1
Vehicles	10
Home improvement	8
Major appliances/furniture	1
Savings	9
Spend it on family	6
New home	6
Education	4
Charity	1
Computer/technology equipment	1
Other	2
No opinion	8

*** END ***