



Financial Cheaters: Who's Worse, Men or Women?

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If you've ever lied about your spending or pocketed change you didn't deserve, you're not alone. Two new surveys reveal that a surprisingly high percentage of people are willing to cheat financially, and that women tend to be more honest than men when it comes to money. Getty Images

According to a recent survey by Money-Rates.com, 37 percent of respondents say they've kept excess change handed to them by a cashier. And, 25 percent said that they would or might do it again in the future if the opportunity presented itself.

When the survey separates respondents by gender, women appear to be more honest than men. In fact, according to the survey, men are more likely than women to cheat on their taxes, pad an expense account, and fudge the truth to an insurance company.

The survey results suggest that women are more susceptible to guilt, since while 35 percent of women say they've kept extra change from a cashier, only 21 percent say they would do it again. Among men, 39 percent say they've pocketed extra cash and 31 percent say they would do it again.

Among both genders, 25 percent say they've taken company property home from their employer for their personal use; 23 percent say they've cheated the IRS by not declaring all of their income -- but 30 percent say they would cheat on their taxes if they didn't think they'd get caught.

Couples and Cheating Financially

While some financial cheaters lie year-round, be it to the IRS or on their expense accounts,

the holiday spending season can ratchet up tensions over money within families, and may lead to more incidences of financial infidelity.

A new survey by McGraw-Hill Federal Credit Union looked at couples and their holiday spending in three categories: heterosexual married couples, same-sex couples, and previously divorced people now in new marriages or relationships.

All of these couples said they disagreed over money sometimes. But according to survey results, straight married couples actually lie more to each other than the other types of couples.

Some of the survey findings include:

- While 34 percent of straight married couples have lied to their partners about holiday spending; just 25 percent of same-sex couples and previously divorced couples admit to lying to their partners.
- 48 percent of all straight couples disagree about how much to spend during the holidays.
- 43 percent of previously divorced couples disagree about holiday spending.
- 37 percent of same-sex couples argue about holiday spending.

Both straight married and previously divorced couples try to hide their overspending in various ways.

More than half of straight married people say they pay with cash to cover up large purchases, and more than 1 in 10 have taken out a credit card in their own name to conceal their spending. Among gay couples, only one-third say they cover up spending with cash purchases, but 15 percent say they're likely to grab a bill and pay it before their partner sees it, compared to 9 percent in heterosexual partnerships.

Lying and overspending are bad ways to enjoy the holiday spirit. Instead, try mutually setting a budget, using your credit card or debt card rewards points for gifts, and finding less costly ways to give gifts and share the season.

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