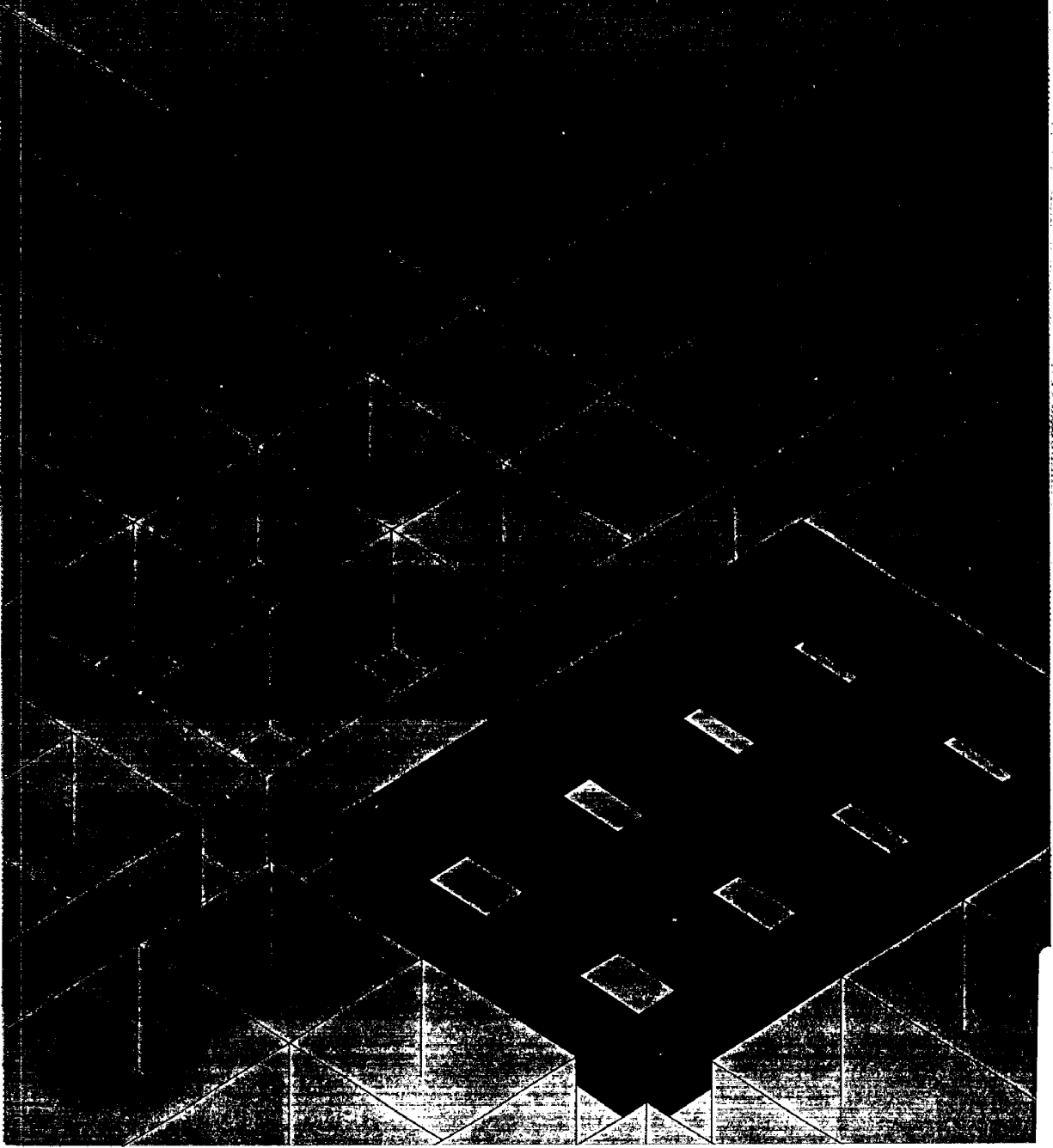


Executive Summary

# Smoking Policies in Large Corporations



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# Executive Summary

In late 1984, the Human Resources Policy Corporation, Los Angeles, Calif., surveyed 1100 of the nation's largest and fastest growing companies to determine the nature and extent of their workplace smoking policies. Results of this survey, completed in May 1985, challenge the widely reported trend toward restrictive workplace smoking policies in major corporations.

The Human Resources Policy Corporation sent an eight-page questionnaire to *Fortune* 1000 service and industrial companies, and to *Inc.* magazine's 100 fastest growing companies. Surveys were sent to the chief executive officer or the vice president for human resources.

The survey questioned respondents on the existence of corporate smoking policies and reasons for implementation. Results are based on responses from 445 companies. The 40 percent response rate is acceptable, given the sensitive nature of the data. The responses are representative of the full population when analyzed by region and industry type. Among the results:

## Workplace smoking policies are not a trend among major companies.

Most respondents (63.8 percent) do **not** have a formal smoking policy, but rather encourage their employees to use common sense and courtesy to solve problems among themselves.

Companies in the north central region (28.1 percent) and the south (22.1 percent) are less likely to have a smoking policy than those in the west (44.7 percent).

## Employees can work problems out for themselves.

Of the 63.8 percent of companies without smoking policies, 35 percent reported considering and rejecting one.

Of the companies that considered but rejected a smoking policy, most (59.3 percent) said they did not believe a policy would be accepted well by employees. When a smoking problem arises, 70.8 percent of all respondents said they encourage employees to work problems out for themselves. Fewer than one percent said the supervisor orders the employee to stop smoking.

**Most workplace smoking policies that are in place apply only to certain employees.**

The general company workplace policy prohibits *some* employees from smoking while working. This occurs most frequently with employees who deal with hazardous substances, sensitive machinery and equipment, or food. Few companies prohibit all employees from smoking while on company premises (2.5 percent) nor do they prohibit all employees from smoking while working (2.9 percent).

**The majority of workplace smoking policies have not been established because of increased public pressures or legislation.**

Since public pressure for restrictive workplace smoking legislation has come about in the past three to five years, most company smoking policies cannot be attributed to this factor because most have been in effect for longer than five years.

Only nine percent of respondents said they had implemented a policy within the last year. Companies in the west (22.4 percent), followed by the northeast (10.4 percent) were most likely to have implemented policies within the past year. These regions of the country are facing the greatest number of legislative workplace restriction proposals.

**Most companies do not consider smoking to be a factor in hiring.**

Eighty-five point four percent of companies said they **never** consider whether a job applicant smokes and 81.1 percent never ask about an applicant's smoking habits. Only four percent always ask.

Ninety-nine point one percent said they hire smokers. Only four of the 445 respondents said they refused to hire smokers.

**Most policies are initiated by management for safety reasons.**

Virtually no companies reported implementing smoking policies to increase productivity or reduce costs.

**Companies do not want to segregate their workers or make major changes in the workplace.**

Most (87.4 percent) do not assign employees to work areas or offices according to whether they smoke and 40.7 percent said they do not modify the work environment to accommodate non-smokers.

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Human Resources Policy Corporation is a social science and economic research organization located in Los Angeles, California. Lewis C. Solmon, economist, dean of the graduate school of education at UCLA, and president of Human Resources Policy Corporation, developed and supervised the survey. This survey of smoking policies in large corporations was sponsored by The Tobacco Institute.

For additional information on this and other workplace smoking issues write:



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