

'Coldplay Couple' Exit from Astronomer Spurs Look at US Attitudes on Office Romances

42% Americans have had a workplace relationship – with one in four of those doing so while they or their partner were already in a relationship.

NEW YORK CITY, NY, UNITED STATES, July 30, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- New polling - Astronomer parts company with 'Coldplay couple' but are US employees more relaxed than we think about workplace romances?

- 42% have had a workplace relationship – with one in four of those doing so while they or their partner were already in a relationship
- Just 23% say they have never seen anything they consider 'romantically' inappropriate in the office
- Americans agreed - sexual or romantic overtures have consequences for the whole office

New consumer polling by decision-making platform Milieu Insight reveals that if you're an American who hasn't heard about Astronomer CEO Andy Byron and his Coldplay clinch with Chief People Officer, Kristin Cabot, you're now in the minority. Awareness of the episode is running at 66% of all Americans, rising to 73% of Gen Z.

Perhaps that's because two in five respondents (42%) say that they themselves have had a workplace relationship – with one in four of those (24%) saying that they or their partner were in a relationship with someone else at the time.

So given that workplace relationships are relatively commonplace, what do Americans make of them?

Just over a third (35%) of Americans still think that workplace romances are a problem - something that suggests a substantial minority see an issue, as well as evidence of why companies need to be thoughtful of how to strike the right balance.

Only around a quarter (23%) told us they have NEVER seen anything they consider 'romantically' inappropriate in the workplace. The most commonly-cited behavior was inappropriate comments or jokes with sexual or romantic undertones (31% said they had witnessed this in a workplace).

Other common behaviors witnessed were a manager showing favoritism to someone they were

involved with (27%), a senior colleague pursuing a junior (20%) and consensual relationships which caused tension in the team (19%). But more than a quarter (28%) say that have seen a relationship that was openly known but handled professionally, while the same proportion say they were aware of an affair or relationship that was hidden but later became known.

And what is Americans' experience of what happens when something like this occurs in the workplace?

Well, just over a quarter (28%) say that HR or management took action. But here is one of the biggest differences between the sexes we found in our research. Just 21% of women said this was the case, compared to 35% of men. Either men and women are witnessing different incidents or their perceptions of the consequences are significantly different.

Women were also much more likely to say the issue was brushed aside or ignored (32% vs. 24%). Overall, 16% say the issue was discussed but that nothing changed.

Regardless of how actions were treated, the consensus is that incidents linked to romantic or sexual overtures have consequences for the workplace. Only 18% of respondents said that situations like these had 'no real effect' on the wider team or culture.

People were most likely to tell us that that they created gossip, distractions or tension (45%), that they made others feel uncomfortable or unsure of boundaries (30%) and that they damaged team morale (23%).

But navigating relationships in the office isn't straightforward.

Americans are divided on when it's appropriate to disclose a relationship to an employer. Fifteen percent say you should go early – as soon as feelings develop. Nearly three in ten (29%) say that the relationship becoming romantic is the trigger, while one in four (25%) say once it becomes serious or long term.

But the most popular option here was if company policy explicitly states it should be disclosed – 37% of respondents agreed with this option.

When it comes to the experiences of people who have had (or are having) a workplace relationship, 65% told us that theirs wasn't a conflict of interest or against company policy. The rest said that it was, with around two thirds of those choosing to keep it private and a third saying they declared it appropriately.

Ted Marzilli, President of Milieu in the US, says that data reveals a complex picture:

"The data shows that romances in the American workplace are alive and well – whether we like it or not. Perhaps that's why this footage has spread like wildfire – because so many of us have seen instances like this before.

"Lots of companies are still reluctant to police relationships between staff but plenty of people have told us that the fallout from inappropriate sexual or romantic episodes can be pretty serious. Very few office relationships are going to end up as a globally famous meme but that doesn't mean companies don't have a responsibility to their staff to make sure that intra-company romance doesn't come at the expense of other team members.

"At Milieu Insight, our vision is to make public sentiment accessible, actionable, and human — helping organisations make better decisions through data. This is certainly an area where many organizations could use help."

About Milieu Insight

Milieu Insight is a global market research and data analytics company, headquartered in Singapore, dedicated to helping brands and businesses build consumer engagement ecosystems that deliver agile and actionable business insights. The company has garnered accolades such as Campaign Asia's Tech MVP and Market Research Agency of the Year (GOLD) and is renowned for its award-winning research expertise. At the core of its offerings is its powerful survey and data analytics software platform, Canvas, which provides intuitive tools for survey design and distribution, data analysis, visualisation, and reporting business insights across various topics and sectors - This empowers businesses to make informed, impactful decisions and develop effective strategies.

For more information, visit our website at <https://www.mili.eu/sg>.

About the research

Fieldwork took place 23-25 July. Sample size was 1,000.

Contact

marketing@mili.eu

Juda Kanaprach

Milieu Insight

marketing@mili.eu

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