Increased Number of Workers Calling In Sick When They Aren't, Finds CareerBuilder's Annual Survey

- 40 percent of workers have called in sick in the last 12 months when they weren't, compared to 35 percent in 2016
- 28 percent of workers who have a paid time off program still feel the need to "make up" an excuse for taking a day off and their excuses are not always believable
- 38 percent of employers have checked up on a sick worker and 26 percent have fired someone for using a fake excuse
- 43 percent have caught an employee lying about being sick by checking out their social media posts, up from 34 percent last year
- Over a third of workers have come to the office sick instead of staying home, so they can save sick days for when they're feeling well

CHICAGO and ATLANTA, Nov. 16, 2017 /PRNewswire/ -- Just don't feel like going into work today? You're not alone, but be careful what you tell your boss - it could cost you your job. According to new CareerBuilder data, 40 percent of workers have called in sick in the last 12 months when they weren't, compared to 35 percent in 2016 and 38 percent in 2015. Female workers were more likely than their male counterparts to take sick days when they were well – 43 percent to 35 percent respectively.

While they may not necessarily be sick, 30 percent of workers who have called in sick cite having a doctor's appointment as the top reason to take a sick day, followed by just didn't feel like going to work (23 percent), needing to relax (20 percent), and needing to catch up on sleep (15 percent). Running errands (14 percent), catching up on housework (8 percent), and plans with family and friends (8 percent) also appeared on the list.

The survey was conducted online by Harris Poll from August 16 to September 15, 2017 and included a representative sample of 2,257 full-time hiring managers and human resource professionals and 3,697 full-time workers across industries and company sizes in the U.S. private sector.

"Life is busy – and occasionally taking time off is necessary in order to show up to work mentally and physically prepared to have a positive impact on productivity," said Rosemary Haefner, CHRO of CareerBuilder. "Your reputation is very important and you should always be upfront and honest with your boss about the time you need off. Outlandish excuses for calling off work can raise red flags and can lead to trust issues, so avoid them at all costs."

The Most Unbelievable Excuses for Calling In Sick
Nearly three in five workers who have a paid time off program (28 percent) say they feel obligated to make up an excuse for taking a day off, even though the majority of employees (54 percent) work for companies with a paid time off (PTO) program which rolls sick, vacation and personal days together.

When asked to share the most dubious excuses workers have given for calling in sick, employers reported hearing the following:

- A bear was in employee's yard and they were afraid to come out.
- Employee's phone exploded and it hurt their hand.
- Employee ate a toothpick in his food at restaurant.
- Employee broke his arm wrestling a female bodybuilder.
- Employee called in "fat" because uniform didn't fit.
- Dog swallowed employee's car keys so she was waiting until it came out.
- Employee left his clothes at the laundry mat.
- Employee did not have enough gas to get to work.
- Employee had to re-schedule a new manicure because some of their artificial nails fell off.
- Employee were not sure how the solar eclipse would affect them so it would be safer to stay at home.

Caught in the Act
Over a third of employers (38 percent) have checked up on a worker who called in sick to make sure he or she was actually sick, and 26 percent have fired a worker for calling in sick with a fake excuse (up from 22 percent last year). Forty-three percent have caught an employee lying about being sick by checking out their social media posts, up from 34 percent last year.

When checking up on an employee who called in sick, 64 percent of employers required a doctor's note, 46 percent called the employee, 25 percent had another worker call the employee, and 22 percent drove by their house or apartment.

Sick? Stay Home!
Even though it can be tempting to go to work while you're sick, you (and your co-workers) are better off keeping your germs at home. Still, over a third of workers (37 percent) come into the office when they are under the weather so they can save their sick days for when they are feeling well. Fifty-eight percent say they come into work when they're sick because otherwise the work won't get done, and 48 percent come into work because they can't afford to miss a day of pay.

Survey Methodology
This survey was conducted online within the U.S. by Harris Poll on behalf of CareerBuilder among 2,257 hiring and human resource managers ages 18 and over (employed full-time, not self-employed, non-government) and 3,697 employees ages 18 and over (employed full-time, not self-employed, non-government) between August 16 and September 15, 2017 (percentages for some questions are based on a subset, based on their responses to certain questions). With a pure probability sample of 2,257 and 3,697, one could say with a 95 percent probability that the overall results have a sampling error of +/- 2.06 and +/- 1.61 percentage points, respectively. Sampling error for data from sub-samples is higher and varies.

About CareerBuilder®: CareerBuilder is a global, end-to-end human capital solutions company focused on helping employers find, hire and manage great talent. Combining advertising, software and services, CareerBuilder leads the industry in recruiting solutions, employment screening and human capital management. CareerBuilder is majority-owned by Apollo Global Management (NYSE: APO) and operates in the United States, Canada, Europe and Asia. For more information, visit www.careerbuilder.com.

Media Contact
Rachel Nauen
773-353-3803
Rachel.nauen@careerbuilder.com
http://www.twitter.com/CareerBuilderPR

SOURCE CareerBuilder

Additional assets available online: Photos (1)

https://stage.mediaroom.com/careerbuilder/2017-11-16-Increased-Number-of-Workers-Calling-In-Sick-When-They-Arent-Finds-CareerBuilders-Annual-Survey