

35 Percent of Workers Called in Sick With Fake Excuses Over the Last Year Hiring Managers Share Top 15 Most Bizarre Reasons Workers Gave for Missing Work

PRNewswire
CHICAGO

More than one-third of U.S. workers say they played hooky from work over the last twelve months. Thirty-five percent of workers admit to calling in sick when they felt well at least once during the last year. One-in-ten state they did so three or more times. The top three motivators for faking include attending to personal errands and appointments, catching up on sleep, and simply relaxing. The CareerBuilder.com survey, "Out of the Office," was conducted from August 5 to August 24, 2004. It included more than 1,600 workers, 700 of which were hiring managers.

"With the cold and flu season kicking in, it's a popular time of year for employees to call in sick," said Rosemary Haefner, Senior Career Advisor for CareerBuilder.com. "However, the number of those who are actually feeling under the weather may not necessarily match up with unscheduled absences. Twenty percent of workers say they called into work because they just didn't feel like going into the office that day. One-in-four workers report they feel sick days are equivalent to extra vacation days and treat them as such."

When asked to share the most unusual excuses workers gave for missing work, hiring managers quoted the following examples:

- "I was sprayed by a skunk."
- "I tripped over my dog and was knocked unconscious."
- "My bus broke down and was held up by robbers."
- "I was arrested as a result of mistaken identity."
- "I forgot to come back to work after lunch."
- "I couldn't find my shoes."
- "I hurt myself bowling."
- "I was spit on by a venomous snake."
- "I totaled my wife's jeep in a collision with a cow."
- "A hitman was looking for me."
- "My curlers burned my hair and I had to go to the hairdresser."
- "I eloped."
- "My cat unplugged my alarm clock."
- "I had to be there for my husband's grand jury trial."
- "I had to ship my grandmother's bones to India." (note: she had passed away 20 years ago)

For more information on CareerBuilder.com's surveys, visit <http://www.careerbuilder.com/Share/AboutUs/pr/> .

About the Survey

The new CareerBuilder.com survey, "Out of the Office," was conducted from August 5 to August 24, 2004 of more than 1,600 workers. This included 700 hiring managers. To collect data for the survey, CareerBuilder.com commissioned SurveySite to use an e-mail methodology whereby individuals who are members of SurveySite Web Panel were randomly selected and approached by e-mail invitation to participate in the online survey. The results of this survey are accurate within +/-2.43 percentage points (19 times out of 20).

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