

Nearly One-in-Four Workers Admit to Making Up Fake Excuses for Arriving Late to Work, CareerBuilder.com Survey Finds

Hiring Managers Share Top Ten Most Outrageous Excuses

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If the minutes on the clock seem to fly by in the morning as you frantically run around collecting your keys, getting your kids out the door and grabbing your bills to make it to work on time, you're not alone. According to a recent CareerBuilder.com survey, 15 percent of workers say they arrive late to work at least once a week, while nearly one-in-four of all workers (24 percent) admit to making up fake excuses to explain their tardiness. The CareerBuilder.com survey, "Late to Work," was conducted from February 11 through March 13, 2008 among 2,757 employers and 6,987 workers.

"Although flexible schedules are more common in the workplace these days, it is still important for employees to be mindful of their arrival times," said Rosemary Haefner, vice president of Human Resources for CareerBuilder.com. "Consistently showing up late can affect how others in the company view your work ethic and discipline, as well as affect your productivity."

While 43 percent of hiring managers say they don't mind if their employees are late as long as their work is completed on time with good quality, others are much stricter, and would consider terminating an employee if he or she arrives late several times a year.

When asked to identify the primary cause for coming in late, more than 32 percent of workers claimed traffic was the culprit. Falling back asleep was the reason cited by 17 percent, while 7 percent pointed to a long commute as the main cause. Other popular reasons included getting kids ready for school and daycare, forgetting something at home and feeling sick.

While the majority of hiring managers believe their employees' reasons for being late to work, more than 27 percent say they are skeptical of the excuses.

Hiring managers provided the following top ten examples of the most unusual excuses employees offered for arriving late to work:

1. While rowing across the river to work, I got lost in the fog.
2. Someone stole all my daffodils.
3. I had to go audition for American Idol.
4. My ex-husband stole my car so I couldn't drive to work.
5. My route to work was shut down by a Presidential motorcade.
6. I wasn't thinking and accidentally went to my old job.
7. I was indicted for securities fraud this morning.
8. The line was too long at Starbucks.
9. I was trying to get my gun back from the police.
10. I didn't have money for gas because all of the pawn shops were closed.

Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the U.S. by Harris Interactive on behalf of CareerBuilder.com among 2,757 hiring managers and human resource professionals (employed full-time; not self-employed; with at least significant involvement in hiring decisions); and 6,987 U.S. employees (employed full-time; not self-employed) ages 18 and over between February 11, and March 13, 2008, respectively (percentages for some questions are based on a subset U.S. employers, based on their responses to certain questions). With a pure probability sample of 2,757 and 6,987, one could say with a 95 percent probability that the overall results have a sampling error of +/- 1.9 percentage points and +/- 1.2 percentage points, respectively. Sampling error for data from sub-samples is higher and varies. A full methodology is available upon request.

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