

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 you've ever found yourself running around like the proverbial chicken with its head cut off trying to make it to work on time, you're not alone. According to a recent CareerBuilder.com survey, 16 percent of workers say they arrive late to work at least once a week. One-in-four of all workers (25 percent) admit to making up fake excuses to explain their tardiness. The CareerBuilder.com survey, "Late to Work," was conducted from February 15 to March 6, 2007 of 6,823 workers and 2,591 hiring managers.

"The most important thing for employees to remember is that they should take the time to learn the company's culture and its policies," said Rosemary Haefner, vice president of Human Resources for CareerBuilder.com. "While 44 percent of hiring managers say they don't care if their employees are late as long as their work is completed on time with good quality, others are much stricter in their policies. In fact, one-in-five hiring managers say they would consider terminating an employee if he/she arrives late two or three times in a given year. The key is to know your individual manager's expectations."

When asked to identify the primary cause for coming in late, 31 percent of workers attributed it to traffic. Sixteen percent cited falling back asleep while 8 percent pointed to getting their kids ready for school or day care as the main culprit. Other popular reasons included a long commute, forgetting something at home and feeling sick.

Broken down by gender, males are less likely to be late with 41 percent saying they have never been late for work in their current position compared to 37 percent of females. Males are also less likely to lie about why they're late - 22 percent compared to 28 percent of women.

While the majority of hiring managers don't typically question the validity of the reasons provided, 27 percent say most of the time they don't believe the excuses.

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

1. Someone was following me, and I drove all around town trying to lose them.
2. My dog dialed 911, and the police wanted to question me about what "really" happened.
3. My girlfriend got mad and destroyed all of my undergarments.
4. I woke up and thought I was temporarily deaf.
5. I just wasn't "feelin' it" this morning.
6. I was up all night arguing with God.
7. A raccoon stole my work shoe off my porch.
8. I super-glued my eye thinking it was contact solution.
9. I was putting lotion on my face when my finger went up my nose causing a nose bleed.
10. A prostitute climbed into my car at a stop light, and I was afraid my wife would see her and think I was messing around ... so I got out of the car.

Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted online by Harris Interactive on behalf of CareerBuilder.com and USA TODAY among 6,823 private sector employees and 2,591 hiring managers and human resource professionals (employed full-time; not self-employed; with at least significant involvement in hiring decisions), ages 18 and over within the United States between February 15 and March 6, 2007. Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

With a pure probability sample of 6,823 or 2,591, one could say with a ninety-five percent probability that the overall results have a sampling error of +/- 1.2 and +/- 1.9 percentage points, respectively. Sampling error for data from sub-samples is higher and varies. However that does not take other sources of error into account.

This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

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