

One-in-Five Workers Are Late to Work at Least Once a Week, CareerBuilder.com Survey Finds

- Hiring Managers Share Most Outrageous Excuses -

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Does your morning routine typically include hitting the snooze button and scrambling to get out the door? A recent CareerBuilder.com survey found that 20 percent of workers said they arrive late to work at least once a week, up from 15 percent in last year's survey. One-in-ten (12 percent) said they are late at least twice a week. This survey was conducted among more than 8,000 workers between November 12 and December 1, 2008.

Actual reasons for coming in late vary from worker to worker, but traffic was the main culprit with one-third (33 percent) of workers claiming it caused their tardiness. Nearly a quarter (24 percent) said lack of sleep, while 10 percent said getting their kids ready for school or day care was the main reason. Other common reasons included public transportation, wardrobe issues or dealing with pets.

"While some employers tend to be more lenient with worker punctuality, 30 percent say they have terminated an employee for being late," said Rosemary Haefner, Vice President of Human Resources for CareerBuilder.com. "Workers need to understand their company's policies on tardiness and if they are late, make sure they openly communicate with their managers. Employers have heard every excuse in the book, so honesty is the best policy."

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

- My heat was shut off so I had to stay home to keep my snake warm.
- My husband thinks it's funny to hide my car keys before he goes to work.
- I walked into a spider web on the way out the door and couldn't find the spider, so I had to go inside and shower again.
- I got locked in my trunk by my son.
- My left turn signal was out so I had to make all right turns to get to work.
- A gurney fell out of an ambulance and delayed traffic.
- I was attacked by a raccoon and had to stop by the hospital to make sure it wasn't rabid.
- I feel like I'm in everyone's way if I show up on time.
- My father didn't wake me up.
- A groundhog bit my bike tire and made it flat.
- My driveway washed away in the rain last night.
- I had to go to bingo.

Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the U.S. by Harris Interactive on behalf of CareerBuilder.com among 3,259 hiring managers and human resource professionals (employed full-time; not self-employed; with at least significant involvement in hiring decisions; non government); and 8,038 U.S. employees (employed full-time; not self-employed; non government) ages 18 and over between November 12 and December 1, 2008

(percentages for some questions are based on a subset US Employers or Employees, based on their responses to certain questions). With a pure probability sample of 3,259 and 8,038 one could say with a 95 percent probability that the overall results have a sampling error of +/- 1.72 percentage points and +/- 1.09 percentage points, respectively. Sampling error for data from sub-samples is higher and varies.

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