

The Recession Appears to Have Improved Punctuality in the Workplace, Finds New CareerBuilder Survey

-- Hiring Managers Share Most Outrageous Tardiness Excuses --

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CHICAGO, Feb. 23, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- Since the recession began, more workers are starting their work day on time. A new CareerBuilder survey reveals that 15 percent of workers said they arrive late to work once a week or more, down from 16 percent in 2009 and 20 percent in 2008. This national survey was conducted among 2,482 U.S. employers and 3,910 U.S. employees between November 15 and December 2, 2010.

Workers shared a variety of reasons for being tardy, with the top excuse being traffic-related (30 percent), followed by lack of sleep (19 percent). Nine percent blamed the bad weather for their tardiness, while eight percent indicated a delay in getting their kids to daycare or school. Other common reasons included public transportation, wardrobe issues or dealing with pets.

"Whether it is a result of fear associated with the economy or just a shift in attitude, workers over the last few years are doing a better job of managing their schedules and getting into the office at the designated time," said Rosemary Haefner, vice president of human resources for CareerBuilder. "While workers will sometimes be late due to circumstances out of their control, they need to be aware of their companies' tardiness policies. Regardless of the reason, workers who are running late should always be honest with their managers."

While some employers are more lenient with worker tardiness, others have stricter policies. One-third (32 percent) of employers said they have terminated an employee for being late.

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

- Employee claimed his car was inhabited by a hive of bees and he couldn't use the car for two hours until bees left.
- Employee claimed her cat attacked her.
- Employee claimed there was a delay with public transportation and produced a note signed by "The Bus Driver."
- Employee claimed his Botox appointment took longer than he expected.
- Employee claimed his hair was hurting his head.
- Employee claimed he knew he was already going to be late, so he figured he would go ahead and stop to get donuts for everyone.
- Employee claimed her karma was not in sync that day.
- Employee claimed he got hurt taking a fork out of the dishwasher.
- Employee claimed he wasn't late ... the company clock was wrong.

Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the U.S. by Harris Interactive© on behalf of CareerBuilder.com among 2,482 U.S. employers and 3,910 U.S. employees (employed full-time; not self-employed; non-government) ages 18 and over between November 15 and December 2, 2010 (percentages for some questions are based on a subset, based on their responses to certain questions). With pure probability samples of 2,482 and 3,910 one could say with a 95 percent probability that the overall results have a sampling error of +/- 1.97 and +/- 1.57 percentage points, respectively. Sampling error for data from sub-samples is higher and varies.

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Media Contact:

CareerBuilder

Michael Erwin

773-527-3637

michael.erwin@careerbuilder.com

<http://www.twitter.com/CareerBuilderPR>

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