

Getting to Work on Time

Tardiness causes similar problems for an employer as absenteeism. There are reasonable causes for being late; however, more than once a month, or four or five times a year is considered excessive by some employers. You need to plan ahead to be on time. Here are some suggestions to help you accomplish this.

- ◆ **A Reliable Alarm Clock.** You must have a reliable alarm clock. If you have an electric clock, make sure it has a back-up power source (battery). If you use your cell phone alarm, make sure the volume is turned up loudly enough to wake you and make sure it is not set to silence mode. You can't afford to lose a job because you don't get to work on time. Don't rely on someone else to get you up in time to get to work.
- ◆ **Get up Early.** Allow yourself enough time to get ready and get to work. Plan enough time to eat breakfast and for transportation delays. You should also plan to arrive at work eight to ten minutes early. This cushion will help you mentally prepare for work and reduce stress. It also shows your supervisor you are eager to work.
- ◆ **Plan for Special Conditions.** There will be times when you can anticipate special conditions in which you'll need more time to get to work. For example, poor weather conditions mean traffic will be slower. Also, during the winter, ice on windshields may cause delays. Get up earlier so you arrive on time.
- ◆ **Notify Your Supervisor if You Are Delayed.** Unless you will be less than 15 minutes late, notify your supervisor. You should give the following information.

- _____ Tell why you are going to be late.
- _____ Explain what you are doing to get to work as soon as possible.
- _____ Estimate when you will arrive.
- _____ Assure your supervisor you will make up the time.

Soft Skills @ Work



Getting to Work on Time - Case Study

Case Study 1

What Do You Think?

Read the two situations described below. Explain how you would improve each.

Mark was absent for two days from his job as a production worker at a shoe factory. When he returned, his supervisor, Mr. Brown, was angry. "Why didn't you call to let me know you weren't coming in to work?" Mark was surprised and answered. "My father-in-law died, and we had to attend the funeral." Mr. Brown replied, "I'm sorry about your father-in-law, but I'm going to issue you a written warning. If this ever happens again, you'll be fired."

1. Why do you think Mr. Brown reacted this way?
2. How could Mark have avoided this problem?

Case Study 2

Susan went to a party on Thursday night even though she had to go to work at 7:30 a.m. the following morning. She overslept on Friday morning and got to work 45 minutes late. Two weeks earlier she had gone to a party on Sunday and stayed up too late, so she skipped work the next day. One week ago she was 20 minutes late because she had to pick up a friend and take her to work. Her supervisor warned her then not to be late for work. When Susan got in the office on Friday, the receptionist told her that her supervisor wanted to see her immediately.

1. What do you think her supervisor will say?
2. What should Susan do to keep her job and avoid this situation in the future?

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