**Excuses**

**An alibi is a reason with a bad reputation. *(Doug Larson, United Feature Syndicate)***

**A mayor in Russia's Siberia region has banned municipal employees from making excuses. Alexander Kuzmin, mayor of Megion, says he lost patience with underlings coming to him with problems rather than solutions, and so has issued a list of 27 forbidden phrases including, "I don't know," "It's lunchtime!," and "I was on sick leave at the time." Underlings who use any of the banned expressions, said Kuzmin, "will speed their departure." *(The Week magazine, December 28, 2007 - January 11, 2008)***

**Fly Way: When my husband gets into the mood to buy a new car, he always likes to have an excuse. This time he came up with a remarkable one. After a windstorm I had found an injured baby robin, and I tried to raise it. Two months later, the bird was prospering, but he seemed to have a weak wing. Then, one day toward the end of summer, my husband came home with a new car. “Here it is almost September, and that bird isn’t flying,” he said. "We’ll probably have to take him south, and since I don’t know how far south robins go, I figured we’d better start out with a new car.” *(Carol R. Evans, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Ninety-nine percent of the failures come from people who have the habit of making excuses. *(George Washington Carver, American botanist)***

**When the Chips Are Down; With the popularity of home computers increasing, more students are noticing the computerization of familiar excuses for assignments not handed in. Last year my high-school English students offered these transformations: "My little brother scribbled all over it with his crayons" because "My little brother played Pac-Man on it and erased it." "My father was using the typewriter" was upgraded to "my mother was using the peripherals." "I left it on my desk at home" was now "I left it on my disc at home." The favorite alibi of business firms became a student favorite: "Our computer was down." I never heard a microchip substitute for the perennial "It was in my jeans' pocket, and my mother washed them." But the old joke:**

**"The dog chewed it up," became a tragic reality: "My computer ate it." *(Pat Parnell, in Reader's Digest)***

**He that is good for making excuses is seldom good for anything else. *(Benjamin Franklin)***

**Helga: “Mother says every time she visits you make some stupid excuse just to get out of the house!” Hagar: “Nonsense! But, if you’ll excuse me, I must leave now to take my ballet lesson.” *(Dik Browne, in Hagar the Horrible comic strip)***

***“*So you want another day off,” snorted the office manager to his clerk. “I'm anxious to hear what excuse you have this time. You've been off for your grandfather's funeral four times already.” Replied the clerk, “Today my grandma is getting married again.” (Joe Lanser, in Elkhorn, Wis., Independent)**

**I'm in charge of a medical office, and I've heard every excuse in the book about why patients are overdue with their payments. One of the best came from a woman who explained, "I'm sorry I'm late, but everything we had was destroyed in a tornado." I asked if the number I was calling was her home phone. There was a moment's hesitation before she replied. "Yes -- and the phone is all we have left!" *(Tim McBride, in Medical Economics)***

**Able Fable: When I asked one of my students where his homework paper was, he said, "On the way to school I made an airplane out of it, and someone hijacked it." (Alex Decuir, in Reader's Digest)**

**Don't make excuses; make good! (Elbert Hubbard)**

**Whoever wants to be a judge of human nature should study people's excuses. (Hebbel)**

**We have forty million reasons for failure, but not a single excuse. (Rudyard Kipling)**

**Concocting excuses for missing work is a time-honored tradition. And the folks at CareerBuilder.com have collected some beauts:**

**\* “My boyfriend’s snake got loose, and I’m afraid to leave the bedroom until he gets home.”**

**\* “I’m too drunk to drive.”**

**\* “I forgot I was getting married today.”**

**\* “My cow bit me.”**

**\* “I was watching a guy fixing the septic pump, fell in the hole and hurt myself.” *(Reader’s Digest)***

**Ten Most Used Excuses:**

**1. I forgot.**

**2. No one told me to go ahead.**

**3. I didn’t think it was that important.**

**4. Wait until the boss comes back and ask him.**

**5. I didn’t know you were in a hurry for it.**

**6. That’s the way we’ve always done it.**

**7. That’s not in my department.**

**8. How was I to know this was different?**

**9. I’m waiting for an O. K.**

**10. That’s his job – not mine. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**Difficulty is the excuse history never accepts. *(Edward R. Murrow)***

**I used to use the old "My date ran out of gas" excuse. My daughter is doing the same, except with her it's the truth. (Millie Wertheim, in Quote magazine)**

**Need an excuse for coming to work late? Don’t try these, which various bosses say failed the first time they were used:**

**\* “My wife put all my underwear in the washer.”**

**\* “I dreamt that I wass already at work.”**

**\* My fake eyelashes were stuck together.”**

**\* I had morning sickness.” (It was a man).**

**\* I was stuck under my bed.” (Careerbuilder.com, as it appeared in Reader’s Digest)**

**For years the No. 1 excuse was “The check is in the mail.” This has given way to “The Computer is down.” (Les Bostic)**

**But You Must Pay the Rent: No one likes coughing up rent. But at least these tenants gave landlords creative reasons for avoiding it.**

**\* “With my daughter’s graduation, our new boat, and our trip to Europe this year, we’re a little strapped.”**

**\* “I’m getting real tired of paying this rent every month! You’ll have to wait a few more days.”**

**\* We’re a little short right now. But don’t worry – we’re getting a refund on my wife’s tattoo. The artist messed it up, and we’re getting back most of the bucks!”**

**\* “I didn’t pay the rent because I’m saving up to move.”**

**\* “It’s your fault the check bounced. Why didn’t you tell me you were going to run to the bank the very same day!” *(From the Landlord Protection Agency, thelpa.com, as it appeared in Reader’s Digest)***

**On Location: When we moved to a small Arkansas town, we rented a post-office box. Soon we began getting other people's mail mixed in with ours. Finally I confronted the postmaster about the problem. "Oh," he said with an innocent look, "I just wanted to give y'all a chance to meet your neighbors." *(C. H., in Reader's Digest)***

**A whopping 83.5 percent of the 1,000 Rome police officers who were scheduled to work on New Year's Eve ended up calling in sick that night, Some officers used the excuse that they had donated blood, while others said they were suffering from "disabilities." *(DailyMail.co.uk, as it appeared in The Week magazine, January 16, 2015)***

**Dennis says to his friend: "My room is a mess because my Mom only has two hands." *((Hank Ketcham, in Dennis the Menace comic strip)***

**A Colorado schoolgirl was able to give her teacher the oldest excuse in the book when her dog actually ate her homework. Payton Moody, 13, had just finished building her science class project -- a candy-covered volcano held together by 50 metal pins -- when her yellow Lab, Reggie, found it and scarfed down the whole thing. The dog had to undergo surgery to have the pins removed from his stomach. Moody remade her science project, using glue this time. "I got an A," she said. *(The Week magazine, December 6, 2013)***

**Yeah, Right: We know you’d never do it, but some people concoct crazy stories for skipping work. Here are a few, collected by hiring managers:**

**\* Employee didn’t want to lose his parking space in front of his house.**

**\* Employee said he had a heart attack that morning but that he was “all better now.”**

**\* Employee’s dog was stressed-out after family reunion.**

**\* Employee contracted mono after kissing a mailroom intern at the company holiday party. *(CareerBuilder.com, as it appeared in Reader’s Digest)***

**Stupidity is its own excuse. *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)***

**I had a friend who became my hero because he was a Sudden Leaver. He could be at a party and decide it was time for him to go home. "Well, g'night!" he'd say. "Thanks. Swell time." Then he'd leave. Everybody would be stunned. "What was the matter with Gordon?" people said "Sick? Mad? What?" A lot of us would like to be Sudden Leavers. "Guess it's about time we started thinking about considering getting ready to talk about going." "Nonsense!" shrieks somebody. "We're just putting the ecology record on the stereo!" We feel we must apologize for leaving, knowing, as we do, that the assembly will be lost without our presence. "Really hate to go," we say, "but I do have to get up thirty-five minutes to go to work. Also my dog is afraid of the sunrise." Actually, nine times out of ten nobody gives a hoot if we leave or not. But we make excuses. "Really must rush home before the battery goes dead. Afraid I left my digitalis in my other pants, and Clara has just remembered she smelled smoke coming out of the hall closet when we left the house." Not old Gordon! "Swell time," he would say, standing up, waving and walking . . . out . . . the . . . door! Nobody but Gordon knew how to say good-by. (*John Keasler, McNaught Syndicate)***

**Willy says to his friend: “Ethel's got a point. If I'd spend half the time working that I do making up excuses to get out of work, I'd already be retired.” *(Joe Martin, in Willy ‘N' Ethel comic strip)***

**Two wrongs don't make a right, but they make a good excuse. *(Thomas Szasz, psychiatrist)***

**No Excuse for Excuses: I once heard this interesting definition of excuses: "Excuses are the tools with which persons with no purpose in view hold for themselves great monuments of nothing." Perhaps you have heard -- or used -- one or more of these excuses: "I'm too old." -- "I'm too young." -- "I'm handicapped." -- "I'm in poor health." -- "I don't have enough education." -- "I don't have enough time." -- "I'm just not lucky." -- "I'm too short." -- "I'm too tall." -- "My parents didn't love me." -- "I'm not the right color." -- "I was born on the wrong side of the tracks." Have you ever known a truly successful person who was adept at making excuses? Have you ever known a failure who was not an expert excuse maker? The successful person is too busy to make excuses. The failure uses excuses for crutches, as coverups for lack of effort, for shortage of persistence, and for an absence of enthusiasm. Helen Keller had many reasons to make excuses, but she was too busy for such exercises in self-pity. Abraham Lincoln could have excused himself because of his ungainly appearance, poor background and seeming lack of opportunities, but he was too wise for that kind of nonsense. Lincoln's self-respect left no room for excuses. Refuse to build for yourself great monuments of nothing; rather, use the tools at hand and build for yourself -- and for posterity -- lasting monuments of achievement, service and success. *(William Arthur Ward)***

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**WHY BUSINESS IS BAD:**

**\* January -- people spent all their cash for the holidays.**

**\* February -- all the best customers have gone South.**

**\* March -- unseasonably cold, and too rainy.**

**\* April -- everybody's preoccupied with income taxes.**

**\* May -- too much rain, farmers distressed.**

**\* June -- too little rain, farmers distressed.**

**\* July -- heat has everyone down.**

**\* August -- everybody away on vacation.**

**\* September -- everybody back, broke.**

**\* October -- customers waiting to see how fall clearance sales turn out.**

**\* November -- people too upset over elections.**

**\* December -- customers need their money for the holiday. *(Bits & Pieces) 179316***

**In our parish the pastor, apparently fed up with all the excuses given over the years as to why people don't go to church, included “Ten Reasons Why I Never Wash” in the Sunday bulletin:**

**1. I was forced to wash as a child.**

**2. People who wash are hypocrites--they think they are cleaner than everybody else.**

**3. There are so many different kinds of soap, I can't decide which one is right.**

**4. I used to wash, but I got bored and stopped.**

**5. I wash on special occasions, like Christmas and Easter.**

**6. None of my friends wash.**

**7. I'll start washing when I get older and dirtier.**

**8. I don't have time.**

**9. The bathroon is never warm enough in winter or cool enough in summer.**

**10. People who make soap are only after your money. *(Mary O'Connor, in Catholic Digest)***

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**If you really want to do something, you’ll find a way; if you don’t, you’ll find an excuse. *(Bits & Pieces)***

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