

Bulletin Board: Yawning and slump blamed on the workplace

by Amy_Winter

It's 3 p.m. and you have two more hours of work. As you stare at the computer, you begin to feel sluggish and want to take a nap. You start yawning and grab some caffeine to finish the day.

Thirty-one percent feel the workplace is to blame for increased feelings of tiredness, according to a survey by Diet Pepsi MAX that surveyed approximately 1,100 U.S. American adults. Could the workplace be causing respondents to feel more tired during the day?

Fifty percent of the respondents have caught someone falling asleep at work, and 28 percent admitted to taking a nap on the clock. The afternoon slump tends to hit workers at least three days a week. Sixty percent say they get tired in the afternoon, causing 80 percent to experience the slump at work.

"It's evident that Americans are tired and most hit a slump at some point in their day, usually while they're at work," said Russell Weiner, vice president, Colas, Pepsi-Cola North America.

What is to blame for this common occurring sluggish behavior? The biggest culprit was a lack of sleep due to a late night or an early wakeup. In order to gain more energy to finish the day, 58 percent walk around the office and 52 percent drink a caffeinated beverage.

"When developing Diet Pepsi MAX, we uncovered research that revealed that nearly 80 percent of consumers felt that maintaining energy was a top priority," said Michelle Naughton, a representative for Pepsi-Cola North America. "We wanted to dig a little deeper to understand what some of the common causes were for this lack of energy and at what times of day our consumers were most in need of a pick-me-up."

Tiredness and fatigue tend to cause an increased amount of yawning. Fifty-five percent of American workers say they yawn at least five times a day, while 28 percent admit to yawning 10 or more times a day. Half of those surveyed confess to having yawned during a meeting. Some feel excessive yawning shouldn't have professional consequences, while others find it rude to yawn during a meeting or conversation.

If a person has to yawn, are there proper ways to make it less offensive? Seventy-two percent say they cover their mouths, but one in 10 don't bother to practice yawning etiquette. Surprisingly, only 33 percent of workers say "excuse me" and just 29 percent try to stop their yawns before they happen.

LACK OF INTERVIEWS

Job-seekers may become frustrated and discouraged when they don't hear a reply from hiring managers about their resume and cover letter. Candidates can't land the new job unless they first obtain an interview.

Robert Half International, a staffing firm, offers tips for getting the interview:

- Don't just focus on applying to the big-name companies: Look at smaller companies because you may have more of an opportunity to gain a job. Large companies usually receive many applications.

- Follow the directions for the application process: Make sure you read the job listing and understand what the hiring manager wants in an employee.

- Rework your resume: Don't send the same cover letter and resume to all companies. If you want to grab an employer's attention, customize your resume in order to say why you are qualified for the position.

- Keywords are needed in your resume: Keywords, such as "Microsoft Office" and "accounts payable and receivable," help you stand out when employers are going through many resumes.

- Avoid spelling and grammar errors on your resume: Proofread your materials before sending them to the employer. In a Robert Half International survey, 85 percent of executives said it takes only one to two errors to eliminate a job-seeker from consideration.

- Follow-up is necessary. To improve your chances, contact the employer to make sure he or she received your resume and cover letter. Eighty-six percent of executives said candidates should get in touch with a hiring manager within two weeks of sending application materials.

For more information, visit www.rhi.com.

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