

Why Are Your Employees Absent?

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Can you list the 8 main causes of employee absence?

An important step in managing workplace absence is understanding why employees are absent.

It's not surprising that illness or medical issues are the top reasons for employees being absent from work. However, 52% of U.S. employees admit they call in sick when they are not actually ill – and it's not because they want a day at the beach.



1. Illness/Injuries/ Doctor's Appointments

This includes time off to deal with chronic injuries such as neck and back problems, asthma.



2. Childcare or Eldercare Issues

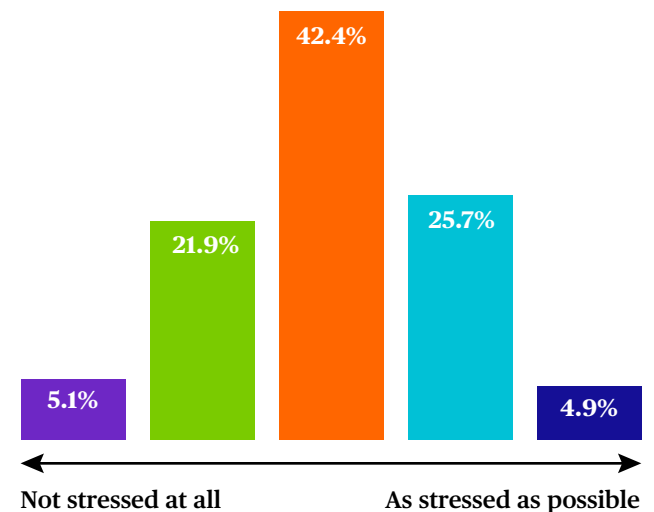
Even the best childcare or eldercare arrangements can fall through occasionally. The child or parent may be sick and can't attend day care. The babysitter or home health aide may be sick. A family member can't step in to provide assistance. In such instances, employees may have to miss work to provide care.



3. Stress/ Burnout

Almost two-thirds of Americans cite overwhelming pressure as a reason for taking time off from work.¹ To look at this another way, employees who feel highly stressed take an average of 4.6 sick days per year. Employees who report low stress levels take an average of 2.6 days.² Stress can come from inside or outside of work. Frequent causes of work-related stress include heavy workloads, long hours, tight deadlines and feeling unappreciated.

Average On-the-Job Stress Levels



Source: Paychex.com 2017 Survey

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4. Personal Issues

“Personal issues” is a vague category that can include everything from medical conditions an employee is not comfortable discussing with a manager, things the employee does not want to share in the workplace, such as divorce or a child’s problems at school, or even behaviors the employee knows would not be acceptable, such as being too inebriated to come to work.



5. Issues at Work

Issues at work can range from difficulties with their job performance to feeling bullied or harassed by co-workers or a manager. In such cases, employees are more likely to be absent.



6. Low Morale

If employees are disengaged, they are not committed to the company or their colleagues. Disengagement can occur for many reasons, from dissatisfaction with a manager to feeling like they have limited opportunities for advancement. Employees may also see their job as temporary – something they are doing to pay the bills until a better opportunity comes along. In cases where there is low morale or disengagement, employees have little motivation to go to work, and may take excessive time off – for example, turning a minor illness into a reason to be out for several days.



7. Job Hunting

Employees searching for other job opportunities may need time off to go on interviews.



8. Partial Shifts

Chronic patterns of arriving late, leaving early and taking longer breaks or more breaks than are allowed should be viewed as types of absenteeism.

1. Kronos Global Absence Survey
2. Towers Watson’s Global Benefits Attitudes Survey “Workplace Stress Leads to Less Productive Employees.”

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If you would like to meet with one of ESIS' team of leave management experts to discuss how we can partner with you to build an effective, integrated leave management solution for your organization, please contact:

Sonja Teague
Vice President
Integrated Absence Management
O 678.795.4534
E Sonja.teague@esis.com

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5/2019