

Looking for a Reason to be Late? Grab a Cellphone

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New York—Restaurant owners, **hairstylists**, daycare workers and physicians agree: as more people use cellphones, more people are becoming late. Cellphones are helping more people **fall behind schedule**, and are giving users a new **crutch** for being **tardy**.

The new term is “soft time,” when 8:30 is still 8:00 **as long as** your voice arrives on time—or even a few minutes later.

Professor James Katz, of Rutgers University, studies human **behavior**. Dr. Katz says that cellphones are changing the way Americans think about time and **relationships**. “Just by calling and changing an appointment, people are going from being late to being on time,” he said.

Arriving late for a dinner reservation is only one small problem. Now professional **career coaches** are telling job **applicants** not to call ahead to say they will be late for an interview. Day care workers say that parents who **used to be** on time **regularly** phone ahead to say they will be late **picking up** their children. A New York **psychiatrist complains** about one late patient who calls from a cab 10 blocks away, wanting to start her **therapy** appointment on the phone.

Some people say that being late is about power. “**In reality**, you are saying that ‘I’m more important than you—my time is more important than yours,’” says Robbie Blinkoff, an **expert** on human relationships. “The idea is that if you are late, you must be really busy, and if you’re really busy, you must be a really important person.”

People are fighting against “soft time.” Some day care centers are beginning **to charge** extra money when parents arrive late. Restaurants are **refusing** to seat people who are waiting for **stragglers**.

Some people are even **throwing away** their phones. “It was an **excuse** for people to be late,” said Chris Ohanesian, a money broker in Manhattan, who **tossed** his cellphone out the window of his car six months ago. “After I threw it out, people started **showing up** on time. I started showing up on time. **Punctuality** all of a sudden **increased** in my life.”

Vocabulary

hairstylist	tardy	behavior	applicant	pick up	in reality	refuse
fall behind	schedule	relationship	used to be	psychiatrist	anthropologist	stragglers
crutch	toss	career coach	regularly	throw away	to charge	complain
excuse	increase	showing up	punctuality	as long as	broker	expert

Vocabulary Builder

Fill in the blanks in the sentences below with the correct word (1 point each):

1. Hurry up! You're making me late and I don't want to _____ schedule.
2. He was always _____ to class because he never got up on time.
3. I will have _____ you a late fee because your payment is late.
4. In America, _____ is very important—it's never a good idea to be late for an appointment.
5. _____ that sandwich in the trash—it's two weeks old!
6. My boss and I get along pretty well—we have a good _____.
7. She's using her illness as a _____—she could do the work if she wanted to.
8. I'll be late because I have to _____ the kids from day care.

to charge	punctuality	pick up	tardy
toss	fall behind	crutch	relationship

1. My _____ says that I need to re-write my resume.
2. _____ late all the time is a good way to get fired.
3. I attend class _____ because I do not want to fall behind in my studies.
4. We _____ friends, but now we're not.
5. I told him to _____ that old chair and get a new one.
6. In reality, his child's _____ in class is never very good.
7. I saw my _____ today, and she said I was crazy.

throw away	regularly	used to be	career coach
In reality	psychoanalyst	Showing up	behavior

1. An _____ is someone who studies human behavior.
2. It does not help to _____ about your neighbors—you need to call the police!

3. Look, there's Mary! She's an _____ for the _____ job downtown.
4. The _____ on our five-mile run arrived from two to five minutes late.
5. I _____ to help you _____ you play that music so loud!
6. Running out of gas is no _____ for being late to work

applicant	as long as	excuse	stragglers
refuse	complain	hairstylist	anthropologist

Read the following paragraph and answer the question in complete sentences (4 points):

Cellphones are popular around the world. Not everyone is happy with them, however. What complaints have you heard about cell phones and/or the people who use them? Share your thoughts with another student in class. Write your thoughts in complete sentences in the space below:

Answers

1. Hurry up! You're making me late and I don't want to fall behind schedule.
2. He was always tardy to class because he never got up on time.
3. I will have to charge you a late fee because your payment is late.
4. In America, punctuality is very important—it's never a good idea to be late for an appointment.
5. Toss that sandwich in the trash—it's two weeks old!
6. My boss and I get along pretty well—we have a good relationship.
7. She's using her illness as a crutch—she could do the work if she wanted to.
8. I'll be late because I have to pick up the kids from day care.

to charge	punctuality	pick up	tardy
toss	fall behind	crutch	relationship

1. My career coach says that I need to re-write my resume.
2. Showing up late all the time is a good way to get fired.
3. I attend class regularly because I do not want to fall behind in my studies.
4. We used to be friends, but now we're not.
5. I told him to throw away that old chair and get a new one.
6. In reality, his child's behavior in class is never very good.
7. I saw my psychoanalyst today, and she said I was crazy.

throw away	regularly	used to be	career coach
In reality	psychoanalyst	Showing up	behavior

1. An anthropologist is someone who studies human behavior.
2. It does not help to complain about your neighbors—you need to call the police!
3. Look, there's Mary! She's an applicant for the hairstylist job downtown.

4. The stragglers on our five-mile run arrived from two to five minutes late.

5. I refuse to help you as long as you play that music so loud!

6. Running out of gas is no excuse for being late to work

applicant	as long as	excuse	stragglers
refuse	complain	hairstylist	anthropologist