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## “I AM LATE, LATE, FOR A VERY IMPORTANT DATE”

by Breanna Leuze

Are you the person that rolled their eyes when the kid in school would have excuses that their dog ate their homework because you were always prepared? Into adulthood, you continued to be the type A personality that was always ahead of the game, finished everything well in advance, and always early? Until, that one time you were late. Late for an interview for the dream job, with the employer, you always wanted to work for? You spiral out of control in an absolute panic. How could this happen, and to you, of all people?

99.99% of people interviewing, prepare for the unexpected for an interview and plan accordingly. They map their routes, prepare their clothing options well in advance, and have their resume printed and in a portfolio ready to go. The said person leaves their house, and the unexpected happens; a flat tire, a deadly car accident, or, the coconut truck lost its coconuts in the middle of the road. There are many things that are out of your control once you venture into the great wide open.

No time to say hello, or goodbye, as you rush out the door, like the white rabbit?

Did you know the reason you did not get the job was that you were late for the interview? Alas, not all is lost. It is how you handle the recovery.

The absolute very first thing you need to do if you are running late for whatever reason to the interview is call your contact and let them know. If you are not able to reach them via phone, leave them a voicemail. Be professional, be relaxed as possible, and for all that is good, do not start to cry. If you have their email address, send them an email as well, explaining what happened.

Stick to the facts, keep the emotion out of it, if at all possible. This could be a time you save yourself for the interview, but you need to focus on how you handle the situation. This could also be a time to demonstrate how you handle under pressure and times of crisis.



Once you arrive at your interview, you need to offer a heartfelt apology. Again, explain what happened. Now, if it is indeed your poor planning, admit it. There is no reason to lie and say there was an accident as the interviewer could very well look that information up along with any traffic jams. Your conversation should start with, “I deeply apologize for being late. Your time is very valuable. Typically, I am well prepared and early. Please let me explain what happened to cause my delay.”

After the white rabbit sees Alice on the pathway, he frantically runs down the trail to meet with the Queen as he is indeed late and, in fear of losing his head. Figuratively speaking, do not lose yours. Be relaxed as possible, even though you may be panicking on the inside, watch your body language and keep it in. Take some deep breaths to clear your head and center yourself.

Do not go down the rabbit hole when things happen, as they inevitably do. How you react, and how you come back from the situation at hand, is going to steer the outcome. If you are not able to recover and the interviewer does not move you on to the next round or does not offer you the job, there is always something on the horizon.