

Not on This Runway

Sometimes you can be tardy and get away with it; sometimes you can't. We've all been there – in either case.

According to the Associated Press, near midnight on the evening of June 30, 1997, United Airlines Flight 728 from Chicago was bound for Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and, as happens, it was behind schedule. Unfortunately, the Harrisburg airport had informed the airlines that the lone airport runway would be closed from 11:30 p.m. to 6:30 a.m. for construction.

The pilot of Flight 728 believed that he could land before the runway closed, but when he radioed the control tower, he was refused permission to do so.

Well, it's a big country. You would think he could land, say, in Baltimore or Pittsburgh. But no, the plane was ordered to fly all the way back to Chicago so as not to disrupt other flight schedules. The airline put the 101 passengers up in hotels and gave them \$25 travel certificates, and the next morning, the 101 passengers made the trip to Harrisburg one more time. Yes, they were angry.



A window of opportunity is just that. Never assume everything will be okay if you miss the cutoff time.

Sometimes, as in the case of Flight 728, it just makes life harder. At other times, we never get a second chance.

– Beecher Hunter