



**Is Your Company Losing Money?
By Dawn E. Waldrop**

Scott Adam's cartoon on casual day sums it all up. The owner of the company is watching three employees come into work one day. One person is wearing a ballet outfit, the other is in a bathrobe and the last employee is naked. The caption reads: **Casual Day It seemed like a good idea.** This is the reality of casual dress in most offices—it is NOT working!

If casual dress were working no one would be talking about it. Everyday someone is complaining how others are dressed. You walk in a company and the first words are, "Please excuse our office, it's dress down day." **STOP If casual was working no one would be apologizing.**

Can business casual work if done appropriately? YES. The key word here is **business**. Most people do not know what business casual attire is because no one has taught them. If no one taught you how to do your job you would muddle through. That is exactly what most people do when they stand in front of their closet trying to figure out what is business casual attire.

People do not intentionally dress inappropriately. It is because they do not know what their choices are. Stop trying to bring in casual dress. Instead **teach** employees the three levels of dress: Power Professional, Professional and Business Casual. (see book Best Impressions How to Gain Professionalism, Promotion and Profit) Then let them choose. Now, no matter what they are choosing they look professional.

How much money is the company losing? How much more money could the company be making were all the employees presenting themselves professional at all times? Think about how you feel when you walk into a medical facility and cannot figure out who the nurse, doctor or patient is because they all look alike. You walk into a corporate office and cannot tell the difference between the president, executive or client. To clients there is a huge comfort in immediately recognizing the professional. Attire is that powerful communication tool.

Here are three tips for dressing BUSINESS casual.

ONE: Keep business casual wardrobe a separate wardrobe from weekend attire. When clothes are worn on the weekend and then on the job our mindset is still on the weekend.

SECOND: Clothes will stay neat and last longer. By keeping this separate wardrobe you never have to worry about wearing something to work to find it has a stain or tear.

THIRD: You will save MONEY. If an outfit starts to get worn but still has some life left then move it to the weekend side of the closet and buy a new piece for the work side of the closet.

You get different energies from your clothes. You feel different and act differently in a suit compared to a casual outfit. When you feel this difference so do the people around you. Ask yourself this question before you leave for work each day. "If a client or guest walked in the office today do I feel **totally** professional in what I am wearing?"

If everyone in the company cannot answer "yes" then your company is most likely losing money.

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