

Is Your Company Losing Money?

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

If casual dress were working in the business world no one would be talking about it. Goodness you cannot turn around and someone is complaining how others are dressed. You walk into a company and the first words are, "Please excuse our office, it's dress down day." **Stop** - stop right now. If casual was working no one would be apologizing .

Can business casual work if done appropriately? Yes, however most people do not know what casual attire is for the office. Why? First of all this is a learned skill we are not taught in school. How many of you have every taken a course for a whole semester on professional dress? None because there is no such course. Someday there will be.

If no one taught you how to do your job what would happen? You would muddle through. Umm, interesting because that is exactly what most people do when they stand in front of their closet each morning.

People do not intentionally dress inappropriately. It is because they do not know what to do. Employees need to be taught **how** just as they are taught how to do their job. **Stop** trying to bring in casual dress. Instead **teach** employees the three levels of dress: Power Professional, Professional and Business Casual. Then **let them choose** how they want to be perceived.

How much money is the company losing? How much more money could the company be making were all employees presenting themselves professional at all times? How much more money could you be making? Dressing professional never works against you. Dressing unprofessional does.

Think about how you feel when you walk into a medical facility and cannot figure out whom the nurse, doctor or patient is because they all look alike. We cannot tell the difference between the corporate executive and the office visitor. We cannot tell the difference between the customer and the sales clerk in the stores. To clients, there is a comfort in immediately recognizing the professional. Attire is that powerful communication tool.

Here are three tips for dressing business casual. The key word is business.

First Keep the business casual wardrobe a separate wardrobe. By keeping it a separate wardrobe the mind will be on the job. If clothes are worn on the weekend and then to work the mind is still on the weekend.

Second Clothes will stay neater and professional. Let's face it on the weekend we are not paying attention to keeping our clothes clean. By keeping business casual a 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 more wearing left then move it to the weekend attire.

Give serious consideration to how you want others to perceive you and the company. As human beings we get different energies from clothes. You feel different in a suit compared to a casual outfit. When you feel the difference so do the people around you.

Ask yourself this question before you leave for work everyday, "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.

Copy this article in its entirety & share with others. Dawn is a "leading expert on attire in the workplace" motivating professionals how to present their best image for financial success. She is author of *Best Impressions How To Gain Professionalism, Promotion and Profit*. Call for Keynote/Half/Full Day Programs/Executive One-on-One consulting.