

Style for Success Career Tip Sheets

Top 10 Business Casual Tips and Advice

Since personal image can be touchy subject, your company will probably never tell you if they have a problem with your dress, instead they will simply pass you over for promotions and opportunities.

We don't want you to make business casual mistakes that might undermine your credibility or your career. So we have put together a list of Top 10 Casual/Friday Wear Tips for Success

1. Take a good look around you

What type of business or industry are you in? A corporate, communicator or creative environment? What do clients expect? What do the movers and shakers dress like? Dress in the top 25% of your industry peers (people at your job level) or better yet, dress for the job you want.

2. Consistency

Business casual wear should only be one step down from your standard business wear. Not suits one day then jeans the next. Your Monday to Thursday look should not vary drastically on a casual Friday.

3. Caution for women

Women have a tougher time with credibility when dressed in a casual manner. This is especially true if you are younger, shorter or slighter. Stick to the more elegant end of casual attire by wearing a jacket or vest or cardigan with coordinating bottoms. That will give you more presence.

4. Casual not sloppy

Clothes should be well pressed, clean and wrinkle free. Repair or replace clothing that is showing signs of wear. This advice becomes more important the more casual your dress is.

5. Jeans - watch out

If jeans are part of your business casual options, select dark over light, and ensure they are in good shape. (Jean wear is a major concern with employers. People make so many poor jean choices that many dress codes forbid jeans) No sand washed, holes or fraying. The suggested fit is - see below.

6. Avoid anything too tight, too short, too bare

A no-brainer you say? Make sure you're not guilty, because this is the single most complained about item with employers who hire us to come in and work with their staff.

7. Appropriateness

Anything intended for the gym, the beach or a night club can make you a casual wear casualty.

8. Footwear

No flipflops, or strappy sandals. For men the bare feet with loafers look works better in Hollywood. White athletic shoes will show wear and tear fast. Plus they don't work well with dark pants, that's why we recommend darker shades for athletic shoes.

9. Invest in alterations

Poor fit makes any clothing look sloppy. Just like standard business attire, casual business clothing should be altered to fit.

10. Meet customer expectations

Your schedule should help you determine how to dress on any given day. If your position involves public contact, dress to generate client trust and credibility. If you are apologizing to visitors and clients about your dress, you've gone too casual.

Casual wear is just one part of your successful image.

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