



Instructor's Guide

CASUAL SUCCESS: Clothing for Work and Leisure

Objectives

1. Identify what clothes could qualify as "corporate casual":
 - a. In an existing wardrobe
 - b. For potential clothing purchases
2. Define corporate casual, particularly as it applies to the individual's work environment
3. Identify some advantages of the corporate casual environment for the employees, as well as the employers.
4. Reinforce the idea that although a place may be casual, it is still a professional environment.

Discussion Questions

1. What are some advantages of corporate casual for the employee?
2. What are some advantages of a corporate casual policy for employers?
3. Name some specific items of clothing in your existing wardrobe that could be worn in a corporate casual setting.
4. What are some guidelines for dressing appropriately in the absence of a formal dress policy?
5. What is appropriate for the interview?
6. How can you tell what is appropriate dress, particularly if you are just starting someplace?
7. When is corporate casual not appropriate, even if it is the rule of your organization?
8. Do you see a corporate casual policy as a benefit or as a new standard?
9. What are some resources for how-to-dress guidelines?

Answers

- 1. What are some advantages of corporate casual for the employee?**
Some advantages include saving money on dry cleaning bills, the flexibility of having a multi-purpose wardrobe, time-saving advantage of not having to change clothes in between work and other activities, and the advantage of not having to spend more money on (generally) costlier suits means being able to divert some of those funds to better quality casual pieces.
- 2. What are some advantages of a corporate casual policy for employers?**
Some advantages include the notion that a more comfortable workforce means a more productive workforce, sue of the policy as a benefit to attract and retain quality recruits, and the lack of an overt corporate hierarchy.
- 3. Name some specific items of clothing in your existing wardrobe that could be worn in a corporate casual setting.**
Khaki or corduroy pants; sweaters and sweater sets; blazers; loafers, etc.
- 4. What are some guidelines for dressing in the absence of a formal dress policy?**
One step down from the industrial standard; follow the lead of higher ranking executives; determine the level of formality by the amount of contact you have with business associates outside of your own company, particularly on the international level
- 5. What is appropriate for the interview?**
Although many companies are adopting corporate casual policies, many human resource people still expect suits at interviews. This is more of an implied guideline than a rule. Good grooming is essential. When in doubt, ask before the interview.
- 6. How can you tell what is appropriate dress?**
Several ways to determine what is appropriate dress include careful observation during the interview process, including observing other employees, not just the people involved in the interview process; ask appropriate people, whether it be the human resource contact or your supervisor; and again, the one step down rule applies as well.
- 7. When is corporate casual not appropriate, even if it is the rule of your organization?**
Important presentations; in situations that involve contact with business associates or clients outside of your organization.
- 8. Do you see a corporate casual policy as a benefit or as a new standard?**
Although this should be open to discussion, the statistics in the program cite a near 50-50 mix among various companies surveyed. Corporate casual policies are often seen as a benefit that can be revoked if abused.
- 9. What are some resources for how-to-dress guidelines?**
Resources include human resource departments and their dress code policies, fashion magazines, business periodicals, department and clothing stores (particularly those that offer personal shopping services), and of course, there are numerous websites offering advice and articles (try searching on business casual, corporate casual, etc).