

Dress down Fridays



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Dress down Fridays, also known as Casual Fridays, is said to have originated in the 1950s. This practice was originally seen as an attempt by business leaders to improve the morale of staff and provide a more relaxed setting for many offices. The view then was to enable workers to wear more casual attire that was different from regular formal dress or uniform in order to create a relaxing atmosphere on Fridays and hopefully boost the staff's spirits. Since then, dress down Fridays has gone global and the practice can be found in many countries across the world.

In fact, dress down Fridays has morphed into a culture that supports casual dress on all weekdays and this has been welcomed by the new dot. com firms. The subsequent dramatic bursting of the Dot. com bubble has seen many companies retreating from the previous stance of supporting casual dress. For companies such as Starbucks, the policy is to have a casual dress down day on Fridays in the form of a T-shirt in lieu of the regular attire, in this case, Starbucks Polo Shirt.

The Company may have made this decision to assist a generally younger staff to relax on Fridays and use this to build camaraderie and an atmosphere of relaxation and comfort. In many companies, this trend is acceptable and staff members look forward to this day. Many organizations have not reported a change in productivity or professionalism when staff dresses down on Fridays. Contrastingly, the Disney Corporation is noticeably different and consistent in its stance on dress down Fridays. The company's philosophy is that staff should be dressed attractively, in the same manner all week: No dress down days.

I am in favor of the policy to have staff being dressed in the same manner all week without the inclusion of a casual day and there are several very important reasons for my decision. Appropriate dress for work connotes professionalism and in many instances, staff interacts directly with customers who will often make a decision about the company based on the attire of general staff. Casual dress is most inappropriate under some circumstances. For example, if a new client walks into an investment bank on Wall Street and sees everyone in faded jeans and slippers, he or she might pause to make a decision if the staff is indeed competent.

A Nurse or Doctor in casual jeans at a hospital will not be easily identified and so patients may complain that there is no one available to look after them when a medical practitioner may be feet away! Like the Disney rule, many clients prefer to deal with a clean, approachable and easily identifiable staff and a dress code that mandates staff to be similarly professionally dressed all week can help clients to form a favorable image of the organization.

For many businesses that do not adopt a dress down Friday policy, the aim is to provide a consistent image of having a cadre of competent professionals who will consistently deliver quality service. A harassed visitor to a Disney site can be comforted by the easily identified presence of staff who can attend to a concern. For those visitors, it helps to ease any anxieties about going in search of help and probably not be able to easily identify a Disney staff.

Staff are also not always consistent in following organizational guidelines in terms of what is acceptable casual dress on Fridays and in many instances, the company has to create definitive dress codes for casual days and then

enforce the rules. Companies with dress down Fridays sometimes have staff reporting to work in dress that is too revealing, dresses too short, having inappropriate words written on T-shirts and in some cases staff report to work with flip-flops in a setting that clearly require other types of shoes.

In closing, there is an acceptable dress code for all types of organization and the decision to have a dress down Friday must be done after due consideration concerning the impact on staff moral, how the organization will be perceived by staff and clients, how will rules be enforced and whether the organization will mandate staff to use a particular type of clothing or let the staff decide what to wear. In my view, keeping dress consistent and professional reduces a plethora of headaches and potential problematic issues of what constitutes acceptable and professional attire.

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