

Have you ever thought about...

... what to wear?

What Does Business Casual Really Mean?

There are many different versions of business casual, and it may vary depending on your office's style. There are some common factors which can be identified and make it easy for you to dress appropriately.

In many businesses and industries it is no longer necessary to wear a full business suit with formal shirt and tie every day. Some businesses reserve that look for formal meetings with clients or upper executives and some accept or encourage a permanent dress-down appearance. Employees should know what is acceptable and preferred in their own offices and industries.

Regardless of how formal or informal an outfit, clothes should be clean, fit well, and be appropriate to the occasion. It never hurts to have the outfit, regardless of how dress down, made of obviously good material. It is always safer to be a little dressier than less so. Many people take their cue from their supervisor or dress for the position they want.

In many work locations and cities there is a compromise between the formal business suit and the total dress down jean appearance. That is often referred to as "business casual."

Business casual can be just below the full formal business attire. This could include a well made but casual pair of pants with a sport coat or sweater and shirt. A tie may or may not be a part of the outfit. Often this type of business casual is the classic navy blue jacket with gray pants and a stripped or patterned shirt or turtleneck. Classic brown or camel hair jackets may also be paired with different colored pants.

Someone who is buying their first jacket, or is only planning on buying one jacket, may want to stay with the traditional navy. However, charcoal, dark brown or camel's hair are also good choices. A solid or very subtle pattern would be best if this jacket is going to be part of a limited business casual wardrobe. The pants may be in a different color but the same hue. This leaves a lot of choices for various shirts that can be used to dress up an outfit or dress it down. Or just be used to extend the wardrobe and give the illusion of many outfits.

Another option that may be acceptable in many work places or on casual Friday is the more informal business casual. This is usually some form of trouser and sport shirt or more formal shirt without tie. Pants can be a good wool or a cotton khaki or anywhere in between. Shirts can be the traditional button down the front with collar, turtle neck, open v-neck, sweater, or some combination. Textured shirt or one with a design can make the outfit more interesting or memorable. Dress down business casual is a good opportunity to show some individuality at work.

By Justin Lurie

BUSINESS

ALERT!

Hands-on help that works

Vol 11 No 4

Your Business Vision

Choosing Your Inspiration and Influence

by Donna L. Ward

I know nothing here is perfect - but, this is a grand start, that works.

I have always been impressed how inspiring people go against tough odds, keep going when the going gets tougher, and never give up. It is not enough to keep on going though... They are also very wise, very open-minded individuals.

Recognizing and wanting is part of the adventure. Transforming desires into movement, focus, and clear action steps towards your vision is why you will be on the path towards your success.

It is important to remember that the outcome of your life is not set in stone. You are free to create your businesses exactly the way you want.

Here's what to ask yourself:

1. Who am I when I'm doing my greatest work?
2. Who benefits the most from my work when I'm doing my greatest work? (hint: this will point you towards an ideal client)
3. What are the Amazing Results people get when they experience my greatest work?

As you really look inside, you may discover something about yourself that makes you sit up and take note.

For some of you, that may be all you need.

"We possess innumerable forces that lie hidden within ourselves, though it would be easy to lead them, as the waters of a canal are conducted, to make them serve for the conquest of good, spiritual as well as corporeal... It is wise to direct these efforts to a practical end." INFLUENCE - HOW TO EXERT IT - By Yorimoto Tashi "The great philosopher believed that the spirit of the individual continuously exerts influence, even as the flower also exerts influence by spreading its fragrance in the air. But just as the blossom cannot tell whither its fragrance spreads, so none of us can say how far our influence may reach. To an anonymous writer we owe the thought that "Influence never dies." B. DANGENNES



How do you get started? You need to first understand by answering the questions I posed for you earlier. Then, go out and explore, get your name, brand out there - learn and share. These are some of the key moves:

Join forums that inspire you and your work

Read books that help you with affirmative visions for your and your business

Get a mentor that helps you keep focused

Join a group that is working on something that you would like to learn and grow in

Explore new insights by fellow business leaders

Keep writing and submitting your articles - find your voice

Since I have your attention, I will play your business coach (mentor) and give you the points above as an assignment to start with immediately.

You will work really hard and also have some unexpected blessings along the way. You'll learn from many different mentors, collaborate with others, and apply your own talents and experiences to build your business. You'll take chances, make many mistakes and learn a lot of lessons along the way.

Be diligent in reading and learning what steps you need to take to move forward successfully.

Learning to connect with your target audience in meaningful ways, earning their trust and building your business all at the same time

Understand what your target audience wants and respond in a real way - "Seek FIRST to understand". Stephen Covey

Then you will be building trusting relationships, requiring that you demonstrate an authentic desire to listen and to interact with your audiences.

I want you to succeed with your business; rather it is on-line, off-line, or both. The best

Concluded on page 2

Clear concise truth on Internet marketing Leadership and how to cultivate the qualities one needs to get there. In your pursuit of self branding yourself to provide the value content so many new on-line business entrepreneurs need.

In the constant on-line home business buzz; currently the rage in the Web 2.0 Social Media sphere, Internet marketing Leadership is left out of the equation. Yet it is what most marketers will fail to tell you. Their marketing is more focused on helping people free themselves from the pain and financial hardships and embrace the freedom lifestyle of success.

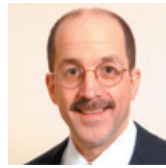
Well the key ingredient from getting to there is the seriously transformation quality of leadership, not just any leadership but the unstoppable Alpha leadership. To brand yourself as one who provides content of such value one wants to come back to time and again. Without this unmistakable leadership skill perspective clients and team building associates will see you as nothing too special to become a part of.

A sure place to go find and cultivate it is from the current leaders in the industry. The basic rule of do as successful people do and you will be successful as well works, it really does. Do not copy their content but rather subscribe to their value providing e-mail lists and learn for free since they freely share lots of prime information you can digest and rewrite and publish with "your take" on the topic.

It really is not stealing it is learning and inspiring oneself and others by going to the source of the go to people so you can contribute to this fast growing on-line business community which is so very much a part of this new "Here to Stay" social economic reality of self empowering entrepreneurs.

A phenomenon never seen before, but currently a daily part of world wide daily news, as the current artificially induced "bubbles" burst and crash worldwide. Resulting in the biggest transfer of wealth ever seen in the history of the world.

By Claude Edwin Theriault



Mark Desrosiers

The way I see it...

The Key to Building Wealth

Many people today believe in order to become wealthy they either have to be born into wealth or have a lot of money to make money. The fact is this just isn't true. Building wealth is a mechanical process and because it's so simple it's quite boring, therefore many people do not follow through with the formula.

The Problem

Too many people fall into a financial rut and it usually starts when we begin moving money from one credit card to another. Sure this works for a short while, but eventually it catches up with you and before you know it you have \$5000 maxed out on your VISA card and \$3000 maxed out on your Discover card.

The next genius move I consider was debt consolidation. While this does work and the phone calls will stop, it's not a solution for the problem at hand. Your monthly payments become lower and this provides the temptation to go out and accumulate even more debt, eventually taking you back to square one. Not to mention having a history with debt consolidation leads to higher rates on things that count later in life.

Back at square one, the next step I considered was debt counselling and the idea sounded great, they even promised to lower my monthly payments by \$300. I managed to avoid this one all together and now that I look back I am glad that I did. What I later found out is that debt counselling is viewed as bankruptcy.

By this time I decided to refinance my home with an equity line/2nd Mortgage loan on my home to get out of debt and it worked perfectly. However, let me tell you a little secret. When you take out a 120k loan on a home that is only worth 90k and the neighbourhood starts going downhill like ours did, you cannot sell your home for what its worth. Again, we were stuck in rut where we had to borrow money from family to sell our home. Other home owners in the area were not as fortunate.

At this point in time I was seriously considering bankruptcy. If you think that after seven years nobody will know about your bankruptcy, you are mistaken. In some cases jobs won't even higher you if you ever had a bankruptcy. Most loan applications ask if you have ever filed for bankruptcy and they do take that into account even if it has been 10 years since you filed for bankruptcy. This is when I became desperate and finally cracked the money making formula.

The Solution

In 2005 I made a new years resolution to stop spending money on things that required me to make a monthly payment. Instead, I would take my paycheck and spend it on assets, or things that put money into my pocket month after month. I like to call these assets investment vehicles. It does not matter which types of investments you choose, just as long as they are all leading to the same place financially.

By Tim Rohrer

Brain storming

Computer comfort.

Sitting at a computer for hours can create physical discomfort. To avoid problems: Avoid bending your wrists. Take a break every 30 minutes. Avoid using a laptop as your main machine—they're not designed for extended use. Position the screen 20 inches from your eyes at a 15-degree angle. Avoid bright lights in the room. Blink regularly. Do eye exercises when working extended periods. Example: Trace a figure eight with your eyes, first in one direction and then the other.

Ronald Harwin, DC, and Colin Haynes, coauthors of *Healthy Computing* quoted in *Let's Live*

Your Business Vision — Concluded

way to do this is to take the action steps to move you forward daily. And, learning what is behind the action steps, the why you are doing this, and then being able to tell others this, will help you outperform yourself! That after all is part of your journey in building your business.

It will be pretty awesome when you can wake up in the morning knowing that you have a business that is bringing money in and helping others.

-- A major action step to take on a daily basis is to make marketing a daily commitment; it has to be a priority for your long-term success. Taking care of the assignment that I

gave above, is getting to know your business and your potential clients and it is marketing.

-- Organize your day to succeed. This means that you make sure you are doing what must be done as efficiently as possible. So make a list and follow that list. This includes writing (which is a huge part of your marketing plan) - writing blogs, articles, posting in forums, comment on others' blogs and researching your competitors. All of this also keeps you up on what is happening in your business world.

Continue to grow and be successful.

So let's get started on those important action steps - why not?

Article Source: http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Donna_L_Ward

THOUSANDS OF UK workers are being forced to 'hot-desk' as businesses try to reduce overheads, but recruitment experts say the practice can lead to an unhappy work force.

'Hot-desking' is where workers do not have their own desk but are allocated space according to their needs on a particular day.

The rise in the popularity of laptops and wireless internet connection has fuelled the growth of hot-desking.

However, Jonny Cainer at marketing recruitment agency, Marketing Professionals UK, warns the trend can lead to an unproductive work force:

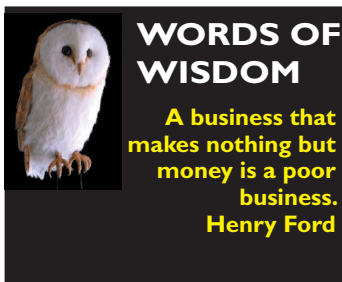
"Hot-desking has become very popular in recent years in both the public and private sector. Businesses in city centres have to pay huge premiums for state of the art offices in prime locations and often find that a number of desks are always empty when staff are out visiting clients. It makes sense for them to be allocated a desk when they touch base at the office.

"However, I've found that staff resent not knowing who they'll be sitting next to from one day to the next. It doesn't help to create a team spirit or corporate culture and makes many employees feel isolated and under-valued. This can lead to staff becoming de-motivated.

"Nobody wants to have to lug all their possessions to a different desk each day. Although hot-desking cuts costs in the short term, it can have a negative effect on staff morale. It's certainly not the answer for all businesses"

Hot-desking is most common in call centres and financial services which run 24 x 7 on shifts. British Airways, Easyjet and IBM have taken up the practice in recent years.

www.marketingprofessionals.co.uk



Hacking

Six Classic Mistakes... *E-mail Newsletters Make*

E-mail newsletters help build customer and partner relationships, contribute to branding efforts, increase awareness, improve customer service and add value to purchases and registrations. **by Mark Brownlow**

And those are just the indirect benefits.

But in the rush to the virtual printing presses, marketers are making a lot of mistakes. Eliminate those mistakes and the true potential of newsletters unfolds. Here are six of the best.

1. Confusing newsletters with promotions

Many marketers don't make the distinction between an e-mail newsletter and e-mail promotions. The latter are action-oriented; designed to provoke some kind of (immediate) response through a click, a sign-up, a purchase, whatever. They're what most people think of under the term opt-in e-mail marketing.

E-mail newsletters may contain action-related elements, but their real potential lies in building, over time, a lasting, long-term relationship with the reader. Which means they may not try and induce any kind of immediate action at all. Instead, they create a climate, an environment, a relationship which predisposes the reader to taking such an action at some other time.

You can think of promotions as transaction-oriented, and newsletters as relationship-oriented. An e-mail promotion says, "Buy the new Brownlow Desk Chair 2002", the e-mail newsletter carries an article about avoiding back strain in the office.

If you don't get the difference clear in your head, then you're likely to commit mistakes 2 and 3 as well.

2. Being too publisher-centric

Subscriber loyalty depends on a lot of things, but content is at the top of most people's list. Not just content, but valuable content. Content that is useful, timely and relevant. A successful newsletter delivers useful information, at the right time, and to the right people.

With competition for in-box space growing, even that isn't always enough though.

You need to be unique, too. Unique in terms of what you say (your content) or how you present it (which is where newsletter personality and style come into the equation).

Many companies produce newsletters filled with announcements about their new premises, staff, products, services, programs, charity work, etc. All fine in the right place, but all assume the reader is as interested in the company as the owners and employees are. The reader is actually interested in information that addresses a problem or need (for help, humour, marketing intelligence, industry insight etc.). If you can work your products and services into addressing those needs and problems, and avoid sounding like a promotion, fine. But you'll generally need to be more innovative than that.

3. Using the wrong success metrics

The metrics used to judge e-mail promotions don't always apply to newsletters. Clickthrough rates are, for example, an unfair measure of emails which may not be designed to stimulate immediate clickthroughs. Using short-term metrics to judge long-term initiatives leads to wrong decisions.

Calculating newsletter ROI is a tough nut to crack, since newsletter costs are immediate and relatively easy to measure, while the benefits are long-term and difficult to measure.

Peter Meyer suggests one approach. Another

approach is to measure the revenue produced by subscribers before and after they subscribed, and compare this with a control group of non-subscribers.

4. Ignoring the value of the headers

You hear a lot about subject lines in e-mail marketing. But not a lot about the other e-mail headers, particularly the "to" and "from" headers. Consider a newsletter which arrives thus:

From: server11@somenewsletterservice.com

To: list member_Subject: Brownlow Chairs

Now compare it with this one:

From: mark.brownlow@brownlowchairs.com

To: A.Customer

Subject: [Brownlow Chairs] A desktop health and safety tip...

Use a combination of the three headers to:

- maintain the impression that it's a one-to-one communication
- to identify a recognizable sender (the relevant brand, person, website or company)
- identify the publication
- give recipients something they can use for filtering their mail (into a "chair newsletters" folder, for example)
- encourage the recipients to open and read the mail

5. Making it difficult for people to unsubscribe

Some marketers still believe a disgruntled subscriber is better than no subscriber at all. So they make people jump through hoops to get off an address list, or they wait a few more newsletter issues until the unsubscribe request is properly honoured.

At best, the would-be ex-subscriber manages to get unsubscribed and leaves with a bad impression. At worst, they remain trapped in your distribution list. So you pay for mails to go unread, and suffer as the recipient complains to all and sundry about your poor administration. Not to mention the spam accusations.

Trapped subscribers also lower response rates to any advertisements and other offers in your newsletter, skewing the statistics and disappointing any third-party advertisers.

So make your unsubscribe process quick and painless.

6. Not making the most of website traffic or customers for sign-ups

Think of the effort invested in persuading website visitors to become customers. Then compare this with the typical effort expended to persuade them to become newsletter subscribers.

How many times have you seen a subscription box tagged on the bottom of a web page, with no indication of the newsletter's contents, frequency, privacy policies etc.?

Give people the opportunity to sign-up for a newsletter everywhere: web pages, confirmation messages, thank you pages, receipts, etc. At the least, let people know what will happen when they submit their address—what can they expect in their in-boxes and how often? And what will you do with their e-mail address? (Which means posting a prominent privacy policy).

Avoid these mistakes and potential can start becoming reality.

The Institute for Independent Business

FOUNDED IN 1984 in the UK, the Institute for Independent Business (IIB) is now one of the world's largest international networks of business advice providers.

As of 1 July 2010, nearly 6,000 carefully-selected men and women have been accredited worldwide as IIB Associates.

Experienced professionals

Experienced senior business people in their own right, who have elected to become self-employed business advisers, Associates and Fellows of the IIB have received additional training to enable them to focus accurately and cost-effectively on the needs of clients and prospects.

This ensures that Associates' clients receive the "practical advice that works"—the Institute's motto in every country in which the Institute operates. ■

BUSINESS ALERT

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WORDS OF WISDOM

There is no human problem which could not be solved if people would simply do as I advise.
Gore Vidal

Selling

Creating customer loyalty

How to make relationship marketing work for your business

It's a truism that loyal customers will buy more of your products more regularly and the chances are that they will probably recommend your business to others. So if you want your clients to come back again and again, it's essential to build long-term relationships with them and with other people key to your business.

One way you can do this is through relationship marketing. This means knowing as much as you can about your customers, engaging in two-way communication with them and identifying those potential and existing customers that are likely to provide a long-term, profitable relationship.

But be wary of the 'busy fool' syndrome. If you take on new relationships, figure out what these clients will bring to you. In the early days, it may not be easy to turn down business, but avoid situations where you are overstretching yourself for limited gain.

Take potential and existing customers' characteristics into account when you are considering whether relationship marketing can work for you. Some customers may only be looking for the cheapest product and the quickest way of getting it, and will have no interest in high levels of

service or loyalty schemes, for example.

"You can't always deliver a Rolls-Royce service to all your clients, but the more you know about them, the more you can differentiate between service levels. But ensure your staff can do this too," advises Nick Hood, senior partner at corporate recovery firm Begbies Traynor.

How to make relationship marketing work for your business

Trust between both parties is crucial

Communication is also vital – don't allow issues to build up in the background

Set standards and stick to them

Find out what your customers' expectations are and monitor them. It can be all too easy to keep providing the same service, but you must be aware of your customers' changing needs

Learn to stand your ground. Don't dilute your brand or your product with potential customers who are going to make small or one-off purchases

Be prepared to sacrifice the price, but never compromise the service

SOURCENOTE: BusinessGO

Factor both intuition and analysis into group decisions

Decision-making has both intuitive and analytic sides. Both are important to a good decision, but it can be difficult to integrate them, especially when you're coordinating input from several members of your group. For example, imagine that you and your group are hearing a talk or a series of presentations about various options for deciding a complex issue, such as a new software system or customer service procedure. Try the following three steps to make the most of the group's responses:

1. Divide the group into two teams of note-takers. The analytical team records the main points and key details from the talk as objectively as they can. The intuitive group, however, listens intently and records only the questions, ideas, and impressions that come to mind.

2. Organize the notes. After the presentation, one person from each team organizes the team's notes into an easy-to-read summary. Distribute copies of both summaries to everyone on both teams.

Allow the group a few days to study the notes before meeting to discuss them.

3. Discuss the notes. Meet again as a group to consider the teams' findings. For example, you might start with the list of questions and insights, drawing on the more objective information to provide answers that will help you make your decision.

Worried bosses state the facts

EMPLOYERS are so concerned about being sued over references that many are scared to state more than basic facts, say recruitment experts.

Employers are increasingly at risk of being sued for damages if inaccurate, defamatory or misleading information is included in a reference for a past employee.

This has left employers vulnerable and many are opting to simply give statements of service rather than a full reference.

Jenny Cainer, founding director of Marketing Professionals UK, a marketing recruitment agency says that this trend is making references worthless:

"We see hundreds of references and most aren't worth the paper they're written on. Employers are so scared of saying the wrong thing that references are given out by personnel, not line managers, and they are only able to confirm employment dates and statistics such as number of sick days. They are not able to comment either way on performance as they were not the direct line manager so 'satisfactory' is as good as it gets.

"This information is little use to a future employer as they are often non-the-wiser having read such a reference and it can only be to the detriment of the candidate (and future employer) who anticipates they will get a glowing recommendation from their referee.

"The right questions need to be asked in the interview stages to sort the wheat from the chaff. Employers should never solely rely on references to make up their mind about a candidate."

www.marketing-professionals.co.uk

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