

What you wear to work makes you more productive

“Clothes make the man”, so the saying goes. (“Naked people have little or no influence in society”, Mark Twain once quipped.) But when it comes to dressing for work, what you wear is no joking matter. In fact, the clothes you wear may well have a bearing on your performance.

Increasingly, many workplaces are becoming more flexible with their dress standards. Anne Sabine, Managing Director at Evolve Scientific Recruitment, believes this trend is a by-product of the casualisation of society more broadly.

This shouldn't be confused with a relaxing of standards; rather, the challenge is to take advantage of this casualisation and harness it so that you can be more productive.

- **Maximising productivity.** One of the reasons many workplaces are loosening their workwear guidelines is to improve productivity. If employees are comfortable and at ease, they're likely to work better.

Moreover, Sabine suggests that a carefully selected work wardrobe can make you feel more confident, which will inevitably improve your performance.

“It also sends a message that you're a team player and you know the rules,” she adds. “This is definitely one instance where you want to fit in, rather than stand out. But don't worry - you can still dress to a standard, and retain a little of your fashion personality too.”

- **Work versus play.** Having a work uniform - whether it's designated by your workplace or you decide for yourself what's exclusively workwear - is a really effective way of getting into the right frame of mind to be your most productive at work. This is a good technique for helping to focus the mind and ensure you delineate between work and recreation time.
- **Dress for the job you want.** “Whilst workplace dress codes may be more

flexible, they still exist and an awareness of your employers' standards is important," Sabine explains. "Turning up to the interview or on the first day wearing the 'wrong' thing sends an unfortunate message. It says that you haven't done your research, that you may not be a good fit and perhaps that you don't care as much as you should."

Your appearance – and your attire, more specifically – will demonstrate whether or not you're a natural fit for the culture of the workplace.

Moreover, it may be a cliché, but it's not without truth: the way you dress can help instill you with a sense of confidence. If you feel good and project an image of yourself as a strong, independent person you'll naturally find that your performance will improve.

And, remember, what you wear says something about you. So, when deciding on an outfit, take it as an opportunity to highlight your individuality.