

Dress code

Before you watch

A

Work in pairs. Discuss the questions about dress code.

- Are the clothes that you are currently wearing casual or smart? Why do you think that?
- Do you ever 'dress to impress'? If so, when?
- How important are first impressions?
- What words or phrases do you know for describing dress code? For example, *formal*, *casual*.
- Is there a dress code for your job? Do you dress differently in different settings, e.g. the office, working from home, meeting clients, etc.?

B

Listen to your teacher's instructions. When the activity finishes, discuss these questions.

- Have your views on the importance of first impressions changed?
- What could we learn from this activity about our own preconceptions?

Video

A

Watch the video. Discuss the questions with a partner.

- Which speaker's description of dress code was the most similar to the dress code in your workplace? How?

B

Watch the video again. Answer the questions.

1. What can we learn about Chris's private life from the way he dresses?
2. What are Vivek's feelings towards beachwear in the workplace?
3. How are Tolani's and Jenny's dress codes similar?
4. Why does Asif dress like the people he meets?
5. What are Anne's views on formal wear?

C

Read the statements made by speakers in the video. Discuss the questions with a partner.

- Do you agree with each statement? Why? Why not?
- What are the pros and cons of each dress code principle?

Vivek: 'We are credible from what we say rather than what we wear.'

Tolani: 'We want to put the best version of ourselves forward.'

Asif: 'Dress the way they dress.'

Language focus

A

Match each highlighted phrase in 1–6 with the correct meaning (a–f).

1. 'To be fair, if it's really hot, we don't mind.' _____
2. 'As long as we're not meeting clients.' _____
3. 'I wouldn't say we have a dress code **per se**.' _____
4. 'On typical days, . . . it **tends to** be casual.' _____
'We **tend to** dress very formally at times.'
5. 'I've got to dress **appropriately**.' _____
'I normally wear what's **appropriate** for my day.'
6. 'So, you know, jumpers, jeans are **acceptable** as well.' _____
 - a. We use this phrase to mean 'exactly' or 'in the exact sense of the word'. A similar phrase would be 'as such'.
 - b. This phrase explains how something often or usually happens. We use it when we want to stress that something is not always true.
 - c. This phrase introduces a condition. It's like saying 'If this does/doesn't happen ...'
 - d. This word means '(in a way that is) right for the situation'.
 - e. This means 'considered by many people to be allowed or reasonable'.
 - f. We use this to make criticism or negative situations seem less strong.

B

Complete the sentences with a word or phrase from Language focus A.

1.
A: It's just question after question after question! He doesn't know where to find anything on the drive!
B: _____, it's only his first week! He'll get used to it.
2.
A: I really think we should give them a verbal warning. It's the third time they've been late this week.
B: Agreed. It's not _____.

3.

A: Keith, can I have a word?

B: Sure, what's up?

A: It's about, well, those swimming shorts. They're not _____ for the workplace at all. I mean, we have clients visiting today.

4.

A: I'm sorry Janet, but I'm not sure I can get the report to you by this afternoon. There have been a few issues this week.

B: Okay, these things happen. _____ it's ready by Friday. Is that doable?

5.

A: How did the meeting go? Did she like the proposal?

B: Well, I wouldn't say she liked it, _____. Put it this way, she didn't reject it completely.

6.

A: Urgh. Another meeting. I wonder how long this one will be.

B: Hmm. The boss does _____ go on a bit.

A: Go on? We were on screen for three hours last week. On a Friday!

C

Look at the transcript for the video. Add words and phrases you find to the table.

Items of clothing and accessories	Phrases for describing dress code

Which items of clothing would you associate with each dress code?

Communication focus

A

Complete either task 1, 2, 3 OR 4.

Task 1

What is the dress code like where you work?

Answer this question in more detail than at the start of the lesson. Try using some of the words and phrases from the Language focus.

Task 2

Your company have decided to update their staff handbook. They would like you to write a short section titled 'Dress code policy'. It should be no more than 200 words and is primarily aimed at new staff.

This is a 'formal yet personal' document. Try to use appropriate language.

Task 3

Look back at Language focus B, question 3.

Work with a partner. Role play this conversation. Improvise a further eight lines of dialogue, in which the character tries to justify wearing swimming shorts to work.

Task 4

Look at the list of jobs or think of your own.

Nurse Sales representative Make-up artist Police officer Teacher

Discuss the following questions with a partner.

- How would you describe the dress code for each job?
- Would you say there are any items of clothing that are inappropriate to wear in each profession?