

Role Play: Dress Code Collaboration- Administrative

Situation: ABC company assembles, sells, and ships high-end office furniture. Until recently, the company's dress code has been shirt and tie. In the past few years the code has relaxed; due largely to "Casual Friday" charity fundraisers. This casual approach is no longer confined to Fridays and what employees feel is acceptable is changing. Student staffers are now wearing rap star T-shirts and caps with off-colour language. Some staff are wearing frayed jeans and the hem line of skirts has raised beyond the mini.

The owner of the company sent out an e-mail to all staff. The e-mail "reminded everyone that ABC Company is a place of business" and they should look professional. He also said "female staff should dress appropriately." The e-mail touched off a storm in the office with several people feeling like they were singled out. It also caused some people to refer to the owner as sexist. At present, morale is low and productivity is dropping.

A four person committee has been struck to examine the situation. Committee members represent different employee groups; Management, Sales, Administration, and Order Fulfillment.

Your Position:

- The majority of the administrative staff are women who take great exception to the owner's e-mail. You feel it is sexist and want an apology!
- "Formal" is easy for men who wear a shirt and tie. Women's fashion is more fluid and there are no real standards.
- Some of the administrative staff may have gone overboard a little but you feel you can police yourselves rather than have dress dictated by someone else.
- You don't feel appreciated for the work you do and are "...not paid enough to put up with this crap."