

Role Play: Dress Code Collaboration- Supervisor

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 staff are 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:

- You are busy and have to get this issue resolved. You have more important things to do.
- You are concerned by the drop in productivity.
- You wish the owner did not send out his e-mail.
- You recognize that long sleeve shirts and ties are not practical for the order fulfillment staff who are frequently lifting boxes of assembling furniture.
- You know that other businesses have casual Friday's and you don't want to be at a disadvantage for recruiting new employees.
- Your boss will need to save face so you will want the code to be as formal as is practical.