



DRESS FOR SUCCESS IN EVERY SEASON

Submitted by Beth Braccio Hering on Wed, 05/16/2012 - 1:00pm

Share This: [in](#) [g](#) [t](#) [f](#) [e](#)



Professionalism doesn't take a vacation just because the weather gets warmer. Make sure it's clear that the office, not the beach, is your destination by taking some time to evaluate your summer wardrobe.

"The biggest mistake I see when dressing for the summer months is employees wearing clothes that are too casual for the company/industry," says Lisa Quast, career coach, founder of Career Woman, Inc., and author of the recently launched [Career Savvy e-books](#) and *Your Career, Your Way*. "Just because it's summer, it doesn't mean it's okay to wear shorts and flip-flops."

When in doubt about an outfit, Quast recommends erring on the side of caution, especially on Casual Fridays. "You never want your manager to pull you aside to discuss your inappropriate attire." Since standards can vary greatly by company and industry, take wardrobe cues from respected colleagues or inquire with human resources. In general, it is wise to avoid apparel that is too revealing (such as tank tops, short shorts, and tight pants) or that looks better suited to washing your car (old T-shirts, running shorts, cut-offs). And if you are a manager, consider dressing a step above policy to maintain a look that is casual yet highly polished.

Another consideration is geography. "If you move from the colder, northern part of the United States to a southern, much hotter location, you'll need to re-think your summer work wardrobe," Quast says. "The typical dark suit you wore almost year round in New York or Seattle won't be appropriate in Phoenix or Atlanta. Choose light-colored, lightweight fabric, and skip wearing nylons with your heels."

A final word of caution for summer – watch your use of fragrances. Heat can make perfume and cologne even more potent, which can create issues with co-workers.

