

GET THE JOB

Looking the Part

Yes, you should actually dress for the job you want

In some cases, Casual Friday has turned into casual every day, but that doesn't mean your next job might not require a higher standard.

Certainly, the gig economy has changed things — and in some cases for the better. We've never had more flexibility, in the hours we work, in the places where we work, and in how we dress when we work. But if your position isn't a self-employed role, at-home or transient, there may be an expectation that you look the part.

MEETING EXPECTATIONS

Should you get called in for a formal interview, first impressions will count. You'll want to stand out among other candidates who may take Casual Friday to its logical extreme — and, depending on the industry, you may be meeting with people who never ascribed to that loose concept, anyway. If a hiring manager senses that you're a lowest-common-denominator candidate — someone who is just trying to get by with the least amount of effort possible — you may quickly fall down the list of potential candidates. Pay special attention to



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the way your interviewer is dressed, and ask questions about expected attire.

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH

In some cases, companies have a dress code, with specific details about what can and cannot be worn at work. They may require a uniform, or explicitly exclude certain fash-

ion choices. Following these rules speaks to your commitment to the work, and to your enthusiasm. So paying attention to these norms can be critical to your relationship with the boss, long after you've secured the job. Keep in mind that even places which allow jeans or T-shirts may have second rules about messaging on the shirt, or

things like accompanying footwear. Find out what the expectations are, and try to exceed the minimum. You worked hard to secure this job, and it would be a shame to lose it over this kind of thoughtless infraction.

KNOW THE TERMS

You may see terms like

“casual,” “business casual,” and “business professional” tossed around. Here are the typical definitions: Casual doesn't mean T-shirts, so much as crisp, often collared shirts, jeans and closed footwear. Business casual usually entails a look like jeans with a sport coat. Business professional is just what it sounds like — a more formal look.