

## Workplace Dress Code: What If Someone's G-String is Showing?

What should you wear to work? Do you really need to buy a whole new wardrobe, or will your boss let you get away with sporting your favourite jeans and T-shirt on the job?

When our parents and grandparents went to work, it was easy: Everyone wore a business suit. Now that office environments are becoming more relaxed, and "Free-Dress Friday" or even casual wear during the summer is acceptable, it can be difficult to be sure about what you should wear to work. After all, what is casual wear? Many people simply don't know, and this means that embarrassing situations can occur.

What should you do if someone at your workplace is wearing inappropriate clothing? Karl Weiss, a fashion expert, told Express Yourself (EY) his views on dressing suitably for the job.

**EY:** Karl, is it true that many people on the job are wearing clothing that is too sexy, too casual, or simply unprofessional?

**Karl:** Unfortunately, yes. Many people don't realize that what they wear when hanging out with friends is not the kind of clothing they can wear at work. I've seen people at jobs in offices with blouses or shirts buttoned too low, with underwear showing above the pant-line; even guys who had decided that it was cool to wear sandals.

**EY:** What is wrong with all of this?

**Karl:** Sorry; do you really need to ask? At work you want to be taken seriously, and that means you should cover up. One important on-the-job rule is never show your underwear; neither a bra nor underpants should be visible at any time. Feet also should always be covered.

**EY:** So, when you think that a blouse may be too revealing, choose another one to wear?

**Karl:** Absolutely.

**EY:** What should you do if a friend at work dresses inappropriately; let's say, whenever she bends down, her underwear is visible?

**Karl:** Oh dear, the all-too-common office problem of the G-string! The first thing I will say is that you have to be a very good friend to talk to the person. You need to be trusted, and your opinion must matter. If you know each other only casually, the person is likely to feel insulted and be offended, and you'll simply end up in a fight.

**EY:** Great advice. So, how should you go about saying something to your very good office friend?

**Karl:** You need to be discrete. Tell the person of your concern in private, not somewhere public where you might be overheard. You don't want to see your friend get into trouble or possibly be fired. Explain that you are always available for some advice or just to talk.

**EY:** Can someone be fired for wearing inappropriate clothing?

**Karl:** It depends on the job and how long the person has been there. If you are new to a job that requires you to look professional in front of clients, then yes, your boss could ask you to change your clothing or warn you that you risk being let go.

**EY:** Why don't all businesses have a dress code?

**Karl:** Many do; those that don't, should. All employees should have a clear idea, preferably in writing, of what is and what is not appropriate work apparel. When a business doesn't set standards, there is usually trouble. Suddenly, it seems okay for employees to wear tight low-cut jeans or flip-flops.

**EY:** Do you have any last suggestions for people who hate always being dressed up?

**Karl:** An easy thing to do is to keep a suit jacket at work that you can put on if a client or the boss drops by. Another thing is to avoid clothing with a message printed on it; you never know how the words might be interpreted.

**EY:** Thanks Karl. I'm sure that your advice will be appreciated by our readers, and likely their bosses, too!