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## PROFESSIONALISM

### Good Clothes = Good Days

If Your Plan Isn't Working, Wear Something Different

By Pat Heydlauff



If business isn't going your way, you aren't hitting your sales goals or your productivity has dropped dramatically, take a close look at your clothes. Did you know that what you put on in the morning sets the tone and success energy level for the rest of your day?

The concept of clothing providing you something other than privacy and warmth just might be revolutionary. It certainly is financially rewarding. In the world of Feng Shui, the Chinese art of creating harmonious surroundings that enhance the balance of yin and yang, what you wear is considered exceedingly important and not something one should leave to random choice made in the mood of the moment. Clothing surrounds you and provides you with positive, helpful, success-oriented energy—or negative, distracting, draining energy.

When it comes to clothing, your work environment may require a certain style in order to fit within professional

standards and guidelines. But before you put on that navy pinstripe suit or that pink cardigan set, consider this: *How will this outfit make me look and feel for the rest of the day?*

The colors, textures and design of your clothing, as well as the way it fits, can make you feel confident and in control—or weak, unimportant and ineffective. If you work from a home office, your clothing choices will be equally important. You either dress for your business to succeed or you dress for a mediocre day. Glitches, setbacks, obstacles, low focus and missed sales often happen right in your closet before the day begins.

#### How to Dress for Success

First and foremost, apply this rule for the best success energy:

*If it doesn't fit you, look great on you and make you feel like a million dollars, don't buy it, and if it's already in your closet, get rid of it.*

Next, decide what kind of day you want to have, and dress accordingly. Determine which

clothes give you lots of energy for a busy day, and which provide low-key energy for a quiet but highly productive day. Take into consideration the style, fit and color of the clothing when making these decisions. If you have a favorite suit that is somewhat subdued, but you love to wear it because you feel great in it, use accessories to give it that much-needed energy boost.

Use the guidelines below to pick the right clothes and energize your day:

- When you want to accomplish a lot with minimum interruptions, wear neutral colors like khaki, gray and washed-out colors. Neutrals provide a “melt-into-the-woodwork” energy.
- On days where you need to be very productive, upbeat and on-the-go all day, wear bright colors—they provide you an abundance of energy.
- When you need to be in total control of your workplace situation, wear dark colors

in fitted, structured designs. Pinstripes work well in this category, as long as the pinstripes are subtle. Wear similar light-colored shirts or blouses with dark suits, or you can even use a necktie or neck scarf as a slight contrast with the darker colors. These provide strong, foundational energy for your day.

- On days where you want to work at a more leisurely pace, wear loose-fitting, light-colored clothes. They provide more creative energy and encourage interaction with others.
- When you want to absorb all the energy of the moment, or utilize that energy to make a strong statement, wear black. It radiates your internal confidence energy.
- When you are totally self-confident, secure in who you are or want to be noticed, wear red—it tells the world who you want them to think you are.
- When you are constantly on the phone talking to customers and clients, or if you spend all your time on a computer, wear earthy colors like brown, salmon, peach, light burnt orange, and beige. These provide good relationship connection energy with people.
- If you are in sales, wear

green or use earth tones like salmon and peach. Green will provide you with new business and money energy. Earth tones will help you connect to others.

- If you are going to be in a high-stress situation, wear the color blue. It provides calming energy that is needed during a chaotic day.
- Wear all the busy patterns, animal prints and the extravaganza of floral patterns you want—but keep them out of the office. They create out-of-control energy that will sabotage your ability to focus and be productive.
- If you are thinking, “What about white?” consider white as a good contrast color, especially in the form of a shirt or blouse—but avoid white suits and dresses unless this is an acceptable practice where you work. White is a very low-energy color, which means that when you wear it, you have to provide all the energy. It also gives off a casual and “at play” energy, one that would be more appropriate for leisure activities such as tennis, sailing and golf.

Color, shape and design provide great positive energy if they are in alignment with your energy needs for the

day. Start noticing how you feel when you are wearing certain colors and designs. Pay attention to the events of your day in certain outfits. Do you feel drained, or do you still have enough energy left to enjoy your evening with family or friends?

If things haven't been going right for you, it's time to take a serious look at changing what you've been wearing. You will be more focused, efficient and effective by wearing clothing that not only looks and feels good, but also provides energy to help you accomplish your goals and objectives each and every day. ■

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