

Dresses that 'work' for you

Don't let common style sense go on vacation during summer

BY HARDIP JOHAL, THE PROVINCE JULY 30, 2010



Tulip dress by Joe Fresh Style, \$39 at Canadian Superstore.

Photograph by: Submitted photo, The Province

Rising temperatures can lead to a vacation from common style sense when it comes to dressing appropriately for the workplace.

Overly casual or revealing clothes frequently find their way into the office during summer, says Mihaela

Ciocan, a certified image expert and president of Vancouver-based ImagePro International Institute.

If you would wear it to the beach or while walking your dog, then don't wear it to the office, says Ciocan.

"Summer weather and mood invite more relaxed attire. However, work clothes must be chosen carefully," says Ciocan.

"Every company has its own dress code based on the corporate culture, line of work and audience. Design, technology and manual-labour jobs tend to keep it casual. Still, it does not mean that what we wear will go unnoticed."

When choosing a dress, put the following on your what not to wear to work list — no matter how warm it is outside: spaghetti straps, open-back styles, shiny or see-through fabrics.

When it comes to hemlines, the most appropriate length is knee-level, meaning right above or right below the knee, says Ciocan.

Pay attention to your neckline, too, she adds.

"One that invites a second glance is too low," she says. "If it is too low, you should raise it visually by wearing a camisole underneath it."

Look for a simple silhouette, such as a sheath or wrap style and count on camisoles and cardigans for a little stylish coverage wherever needed.

For examples of summer dresses that work in the office, see our picks at right.

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