Dress codes

Before you watch

A
Work in pairs. Discuss the questions about dress codes.

- Are the clothes that you are currently wearing casual or smart? Why do you think that?
- Is there a dress code for your job?
- What do you normally wear when you are working? Do you dress differently in different settings, e.g. the office, working from home, meeting clients? If so, how?

Video

A
Watch the video. Discuss the question with a partner.

- Which of the dress codes described by the speakers is most similar to the dress code at your workplace?

B
Watch the video again. Decide if each statement is true (T) or false (F).

1. Kieran describes his outfit as casual.	**T / F**
2. Flip-flops are not allowed in Vivek's workplace.	**T / F**
3. Vivek doesn't always dress formally when he meets clients.	**T / F**
4. People must dress formally in Tolani's workplace.	**T / F**
5. According to Jenny, formal dress is common in her field of work.	**T / F**
6. Asif dresses like his clients in order to make them feel more relaxed.	**T / F**

C
Work with a partner. Listen to your teacher's instructions.

D
Look at all the items of clothing from activity C. Decide which items would go with each dress code below. There may be more than one answer. If you are unsure, ask another pair or your teacher.

Dress code	Item of clothing / Accessory
Smart-casual	
Business-casual	
Formal	
Casual	

Intermediate

Language focus

A

Read the extract from the video.

Tolani: I wouldn't say we have a dress code per se. We **tend to** dress very formally at times because we are outside meeting, you know, partners and customers so we want to put the best version of ourselves forward, but on typical days, well … we come in, it's … it **tends to** be casual so, you know, jumpers, jeans are acceptable as well.

Discuss the questions with a partner.

- What is the function of the phrase in bold?
- What is the negative form of this phrase?
- Listen to your teacher say the phrase 'tend to'. What do you notice?

B
Change the statements to include the phrase 'tend to'.

1. I'm busier at the start of the week than at the end.

2. Our meetings go on for far too long!

3. I don't get through my workload for the day.

4. I usually wear formal clothes to work.

Tick the statements that are true for you. Compare your answers with a partner.

C
Read the extracts from the video.

1. 'If I'm meeting someone from a big bank or a big company, I've got to dress appropriately.'

2. 'When I am meeting clients and meeting partners, I'll … wear a nice work dress.'

Discuss the questions with a partner.

- Which sentence explains something that is necessary? How do you know?
- Which sentence explains something that is a choice or decision? How do you know?
- Is there a difference between 'if' and 'when' in these two extracts?

D
Complete these sentences with your own ideas.

1. If I'm meeting an important client, …

2. If I'm spending the day in the office, …

3. When I'm deciding which outfit to wear to work, …

4. If I'm working from home, …

Intermediate

Communication focus

A

Think back to the questions you discussed at the start of the lesson.

- Is there a dress code for your job?
- What do you normally wear when you are working? Do you dress differently in different settings, e.g. the office, working from home, meeting clients? If so, how?

Prepare to answer these questions in detail. Think about how you can use the language from this lesson.

B

Share your answers with different classmates. Note down their responses in the table.

Classmate	Notes

Useful language

- You can ask your classmates about different scenarios related to dress codes by using the question 'What if …?' or 'What about if/when …?'

  Examples:

  What if you're meeting a client outside the office?

  What if you have a last-minute video meeting?

  What about if you pop in to work at the weekend?

C

Review your notes. Whose workplace dress code is most similar to yours? Share your views with a partner.

D

Discuss the questions with a partner.

- Overall, how do you feel about your dress code at work? Is there anything you would change?
- What new language did you learn in this lesson?

Intermediate