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INVEST IN YOURSELF

by Kathy Boyce

Communication can take various forms – verbal, written and visual. For communication to be effective, each statement or thought must be connected. The main thought must be understood by the receiver.

When we communicate visually we want the impression of high performance to come across instantly. This way we have an above-average chance of being heard. If we want to be viewed as timely, in the sense of up-to-date or "with the '90s", we must connect this with an up-to-date visual presentation. To project a 1990's look, a more relaxed, creative yet professional ensemble would give one a more current appearance. Conversely, if we were to dress in a 1980's "dress for success" suit we would not be communicating a modern impression.

The other elements of styling must also flow so that the reader is not confused by other issues or inconsistencies in appearance. Therefore, complete your professional look with current hair styling, grooming, footwear and accessories. The story must be complete. The packaging must have impact. With high competition for contracts, sales and employment the payoffs are great.

Human resource managers who see employer potential could save large payroll dollars by encouraging skilled personnel to develop their visual presentations. Keep in mind that every member of a company is an extension of the company's profile. An employee would be flattered that their personal style is worth the company investment. For the self-employed, their visual presentation should be viewed as an ongoing budget allocation, just like advertising and promotion. Also, every job applicant needs a marketing edge in order to demonstrate that they can outperform all the other applicants.

We live in a highly visual society; we analyze and judge instantly. Take the example of two job applicants or two sales people. Both have equivalent experience/products and job qualifications/price, but only one has "the look". "The look" (not natural beauty) projects that person is in control, up-to-date, and a progressive thinker. Who would you hire/buy from?

Developing a personal style can give one a competitive edge. Couple that with personality and 'the sky is the limit'. Invest in yourself, your employees and your future. It is a confidence boosting process that ultimately leads to higher performance on the job.

Kathy Boyce owns and operates "DRESSINGS", a custom apparel service specializing in the development of personal and professional visual presentation. For more information, phone 836-2686.