



Dress to *i*mpress



PERSONAL BRANDING GURU LESLEY EVERETT
BRINGS HER METHODOLOGY TO DUBAI

Lesley Everett, a leading UK personal branding expert, tells us how to use your personality and individualism to create your own unique and positive brand image.

As a personal branding speaker people often assume my area of expertise is image, style and dress. This is true to a degree, as the way we dress is of course part of our brand packaging, and creates perceptions about us in the eyes of others.

But, over the past 14 years of working with this subject in the corporate world, it has become very clear that the way we project ourselves is much more than just image. Our personal brand is a collection of the perceptions that others have of us, and this is made up of a variety of elements — first impressions, presentational brand, voice impact, body indicators, behaviour and attitude, as well as dress and appearance. Add to this, building your visibility and personal PR and it encompasses the core elements of my methodology to getting the most out of personal branding.

In this issue, I'm going to focus on the image element of our personal brand, as I believe that this is still causing a significant issue in some businesses today. The business 'ca-

sual dress' code still creates problems for many individuals, and with summer fully under way this often causes the usual dilution and damage to your all-important corporate brand as well as personal brand messages.

With this in mind, here are my top tips for making sure that your dress and appearance don't get in the way of your personal brand and true qualities and abilities:

* Don't always do what you've always done — consider if your dress sense reflects your personal brand as it is now, today. Is it appropriate for your corporate environment as well?

* When looking at your business casual wardrobe, apply the same criteria to it as you would to your sharpest, suited look — does it fit well? Is it past it's best? Has it been washed 100 times and lost its colour and shape? A dress down day doesn't mean a licensed slob day!

* Consider if your clothes and accessories are up-to-date — not necessarily hitting the heights of modern

fashion. If they are slightly dated, then your thought processes will be considered dated too!

* Make sure you know your best style of clothes for your shape, and best colours for your natural colouring — you may need help with this and there are many image consultants who specialise in it. Make sure they are qualified in business image though...

* Don't forget the accessories; they do get noticed — shoes in particular. We all judge, and get judged on them too! Think about your briefcase, pen and watch — they all say something about you.

* Dress and style is, of course, individual, but make sure yours reflects your authentic personal brand positively, rather than get in the way of what you want to project about yourself.

Lesley will return with more personal branding tips in the coming weeks. For more information see www.walkingtall.org

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