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How Generational Preferences, Cultural Trends, Workplace Expectations, and Other Factors Have Changed the Definition of Professionalism in Terms of Attire and How Employers and Managers Can Respond

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ABSTRACT

Business attire is an essential part of personal branding as well as corporate branding activities. Fashion, cultural trends, workplace expectations play a role, among others form and change what an acceptable work attire is. Corporations even use their definitions of work attire in their advertising activities as a part of identity development. Such recent examples are State Farm Insurance, Progressive, and Enterprise Rent a Car. Observations during career development activities at multiple universities also revealed that Millennials might have different professional attire interpretations.

The literature review indicated a gap regarding how perceptions change from generation to generation in this topic. In the paper, factors that may influence the definition of professional attire have been investigated for three groups of respondents, including early career, mid-career, and retired professionals. Grounded Theory methodology has been used. Multiple themes have been identified for the three generational groups. Further research implications have been discussed.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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