Vocabulary: work clothes

Vocabulary
Match items from the left and right to describe the clothes shown in the pictures.

collar  heels
hair    hat
hard    mask
high    tie
face    boots
high visibility  gloves
bow     suit
rubber  jacket
Wellington  and tie
business  net

Think of different jobs where people might wear these clothes.

Discussion
Discuss the following questions with your partner.

• What sort of clothes do you wear in the place you work or study?
• Is there a dress code (set of rules about clothes) or can you wear what you like?
• Do you think that dress codes are necessary? For what sort of jobs? Why?

Speaking
Work with a partner. Write a short dress code for one of the jobs below.

• bar tender
• English teacher
• office receptionist
• librarian
• shop assistant (bakery)
• shop assistant (boutique)

Read out your dress code to another pair of students. They must guess the job.
An office worker in London has been sent home from work because she refused to wear high-heeled shoes.

Nicola Thorp, a receptionist at the offices of finance company PwC, arrived for work wearing smart flat shoes. But her supervisor told her to go out and buy a pair of high-heeled shoes or go home. Ms Thorp explained that she needed to spend nine hours a day walking around the office and that high-heeled shoes were uncomfortable. She also pointed out that the dress requirement was unfair as it did not apply to male colleagues. She asked how flat shoes would prevent her from doing her job. She was given no explanation, and when she refused to buy high-heeled shoes, she was sent home without pay.

PwC later pointed out that the dress code was not theirs. They said it was set by the agency Portico, who supplied reception staff for their offices.

A spokesperson for Portico said that Ms Thorp had signed their appearance guidelines. However, he said they would review these as a result of what had happened.

According to UK law, employers can demand that staff follow ‘reasonable dress code standards’. They can also set different dress codes for men and women providing there is ‘an equivalent level of smartness’.

Ms Thorp has since set up a petition demanding that the laws be changed. Ten thousand people have signed so far, which means that by law the government must give a response.
Post-reading: vocabulary, grammar and speaking

Vocabulary

Find a word in the text in bold type for each of the definitions below.

1. someone who is in charge of a group of workers etc.
2. equal to; the same type as another thing
3. a written request to a government etc. that is signed by many people
4. someone who speaks officially for a government or organisation
5. advice or rules about how to do something

Complete the sentences with words from the text.

1. We don't have any ________ for appearance in my office.
2. My ________ always gives me too much work to do.
3. There are some words in my language with no ________ in English.
4. I always sign ________ if I agree with them.

Discuss the statements with your partner. Are they true for you?

Grammar: reported speech

Match a person from the list with each of the lines below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>receptionist</th>
<th>supervisor</th>
<th>PwC spokesperson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Portico spokesperson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example

'Go and buy a pair of high-heeled shoes.' supervisor
1. 'High-heeled shoes are uncomfortable.' supervisor
2. 'This dress requirement is unfair as it does not apply to male colleagues.' supervisor
3. 'How will flat shoes prevent me from doing my job?' supervisor
4. 'Sorry, but I’m not buying high-heeled shoes.' supervisor
5. 'The dress code is not ours.' supervisor
6. 'The dress code is set by an agency who supply reception staff for our offices.' supervisor
7. 'She signed our appearance guidelines.' supervisor
8. 'We will review our appearance guidelines as a result of what has happened.' supervisor

Now use the reporting verbs in the list to report what was said in each example above.

say (3) tell explain point out (2) ask refuse

Example

'Go and buy a pair of high-heeled shoes.' (tell)

The supervisor told her to buy a pair of high-heeled shoes.

Check your answers with the text.

Writing and speaking

With your partner write a short dialogue between a supervisor and a receptionist based on the situation in the article.

Act out your dialogue with your partner.

Grammar revision

What happens to verb tenses in reported speech?
Which of the reporting verbs have similar meanings?
How many different sentence patterns are there in the examples?
Writing and speaking
Can I have a word, please?
Yes, sure.
It’s your shoes. I’m afraid you can’t wear those in reception.
Oh, really. What’s wrong with them?
They’re not high heels.
Oh right. But they’re smart, aren’t they?
Yes. But the rule is that women who work on reception have to wear high-heels. If you want to go out and buy some now, that’s fine with me.
What about men? Do they have to wear high-heels?
[laughs] Of course not!
So can you tell me how these shoes prevent me from doing my job?
That’s not the point. It says quite clearly in the Appearance Guidelines that receptionists have to wear heels.
Well, there’s no way I’m going to buy a pair of high heels.
OK. If that’s how you feel…
I do. It’s a matter of principle.
Then I’m afraid you’ll have to go home.
Very well. But you’ll be hearing more about this, I promise you. It’s sex discrimination.

Grammar
1 receptionist 2 receptionist 3 receptionist 4 receptionist
5 PwC spokesperson 6 PwC spokesperson
7 Portico spokesperson 8 Portico spokesperson

Grammar revision
Tenses usually go ‘one back’, so the present simple becomes the past simple, and the past simple becomes the past perfect.
The verbs explain and point out have similar meanings.
Different sentence patterns in the examples
Verb + object + full infinitive (order or request)
The supervisor told her to buy high-heeled shoes.
Verb + that clause
She explained that high-heeled shoes were uncomfortable.
Verb + question word + clause.
She asked how flat shoes would prevent her doing her job.
Verb + full infinitive
She refused to buy high-heeled shoes.
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