

Men—straighten your tie

This is a very simple wardrobe correction that can do wonders for your appearance. You can show every customer you are “on your game” when your tie and other wardrobe essentials are in proper order. When you wear a tie, check several times throughout the day to be sure your tie is straight and neat.

Make a conscience effort to color-match your tie with your shirt and slacks. When you are standing, button your coat. When you are seated, unbutton your coat. A tie clasp adds a stylish look and helps you keep the front and back ends of the tie together.

A shirt and tie or suit is always going to make a better impression than casual wear. You will look better, and your customers will immediately sense that you care enough to dress appropriately. The tie is the ultimate accessory for adding class and distinction.

Customers will not normally compliment you for wearing a tie. But it resonates with them nevertheless. Your tie sends a subliminal message to them. It says that you are ready to assist them in a professional manner.



Don't wear baggy pants

One fashion statement of the hip hop culture has somehow made its way onto the retail scene. It's true that the type of pants you wear will have little to do with your ability to work the sales floor. Still, the number of people who shake their head in disbelief and disgust at this form of "expression" cannot be ignored.

It's not about your freedom to wear baggy pants, but it's about the way other people perceive it. Think of it this way. When you approach a customer and start a conversation, you are hoping to have their undivided attention so they will appreciate your effort, focus on your message, and hopefully, make a sale. The last thing you need to do is distract them by what you are wearing.

Baggy clothing worn by you or anyone else in business can give you a disheveled appearance and affect your ability to make a good impression. For the most part, this is



more of a problem for younger people who embrace the hip hop culture. Is that you? If so, then you are one of the people who can benefit from cultivating a more business-like appearance.

Baggy pants can leave customers questioning how seriously you take your job. This is one of the few things in customer service that is a quick and easy fix!

Use breath mints

One thing about offensive breath is this: the person with bad breath is usually unaware that their breath is offensive!



Are you bold enough to tell someone they have bad breath? Most people are unlikely to be that forward. How many times has someone told you that you have bad breath? Probably not very many. Does that mean you rarely have it or that most people are not bold enough to tell you?

Keep breath mints handy and use them many times throughout your day. You are dealing with the public, and you are often just inches away from them. Make sure your breath does not take their focus away from the service you are providing.

Certain foods and drinks can also make your breath smell. Be aware of this when you return to work after lunch or break time. Perhaps the most offensive smell of all is the smell of cigarettes. If you must smoke at lunch time or during your break, have a breath mint at every opportunity.

Bad breath in any social circumstance is a turn off. Improve your customer's experience and increase your approachability by having pleasant smelling breath.

Limit the length of your hair if you're a guy

With a few exceptions, such as mountain and beach communities, long hair and ponytails for men are generally considered social statements of an era long since past. While you'll still see it occasionally in manual labor positions, factories, and warehouse work, long hair is generally frowned upon in most customer service-related fields.

In their push toward professionalism, many modern businesses call for a trimmed look that is commonly regarded as corporate. It is important to maintain a clean cut image, because the way customers perceive your appearance is crucial.

Don't think that emphasizing this is important only at the beginning of your job. Don't let your hair grow longer as your tenure progresses. When an employer hires you, they accept the image that you have demonstrated in your interview. If you were hired with long hair, chances are your employer tolerates it. If long hair was not in style at the time you were hired, maintain a length that your employer will appreciate.

The choice is yours or it is a mandated dress code. Either way, you can impress your customers and employer by maintaining a clean cut image that is consistent with the appearance of your co-workers.