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Why women can't "keep up" with men or heels in the workplace.

Wednesday, October 03, 2012

I mean the 'heels' on our shoes, not what you may want to call an obnoxious male boss.

Every day I drive past a billboard advertising surgery for varicose veins. The caption is "Love Your Legs Again" and the picture is of a woman, seated with legs crossed, wearing stilettos.

So the comments I've been reading on blogs and message boards about foot pain from shoes got me thinking. The business attire of women tends to hobble us.

My job as a teacher/computer coordinator required me to be on my feet quite a lot. One day a male colleague and I were hurrying down the hall to provide tech assistance. I literally could not "keep up" with him. As a runner, cardio wasn't the problem, but even my sensible shoes with the low (less than 2") heels impeded my stride.

Soon after that, I began wearing running shoes to work for daily activities and stashed my ladylike pumps under my desk in case I had a visitor, meeting or trip to central office scheduled. Then the official directive arrived. We were all to dress professionally – no "sneakers" although orthopedic shoes were allowed. Fortunately, I discovered that my running shoes came in black so unless you had your nose on the floor for a close-up view, I was OK.

In this respect at least, men are fortunate. They can go about their daily work comfortably even in their "dress shoes." Society expects a lot of women. We have many more body image issues than men do and are overwhelming targets of the fashion industry. I've always been a bit of a rebel in that department so my fashion shoes are limited to special occasions. I won't offend a bride by showing up in sneakers at her wedding.

Women have told me that yes, their shoes are uncomfortable, but they "make my legs look so great." I hope they don't end up as the customers of that billboard ad someday.

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WATERMELLEN

I keep telling myself my silly shoes are comfortable but . . . gotta admit, sneakers would be more so!





Thanks for your comments on my fat kids blog. You have certainly done great with your maintenance!!
3176 days ago



SOUTH_FORK

I can identify this post... Over the past few years working in an office my shoes went from something very sensible, but "masculine" to a more petite shape. Living in Florida, sandals and open-toed shoes are acceptable in a business casual office. After all summer of wearing cute flip flops and sandals, I woke up every morning with a pain on the top of my foot (not the classic plantar fasciitis) that would dissipate after I hobbled around for a few minutes but still nag all day. Guess what, switching to mary janes and my old clod-hoppers did the trick... my feet are thanking me for it- and I'm thankful that I don't work in an environment where heels are required! Sitting at my desk in a skirt and a pair of men's oxfords right now- and they look pretty cute!
3176 days ago



SUZYMOBILE

I am so glad I work at home and can walk around barefoot all the time. I'm in trouble only when I have to go to a conference or the home office, and discover that I don't have any shoes.
3176 days ago



CD12758218

Great blog! I love shoes but over the years (decades), while I still want my shoes to be cute, support for my feet is my first concern. I have bad feet and worse knees. The other week, I tried on a pair of shoes that I know are great support and I also thought they were cute (but not in a high heel, make your legs look great way). My friend commented "They aren't very feminine." I said, "I love them." She said, "They're cute." LOL.
3176 days ago



MJZHERE

My daughter, who is a runner, wears the heels like they are sneakers. My mom the same way. Me, not so much...sneakers for this girl.
3176 days ago



MABTE52

Yep you are so right. They haven't yet figured out how to make sexy comfy shoes for women yet and we women continue to wear these uncomfortable shoes.
3176 days ago



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