

Giving for Success

BY SHAINA TAYLOR

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As a woman, I can admit I often stare at my closet and think to myself, "I have nothing to wear." Unfortunately, this is literally true for thousands of disadvantaged women.

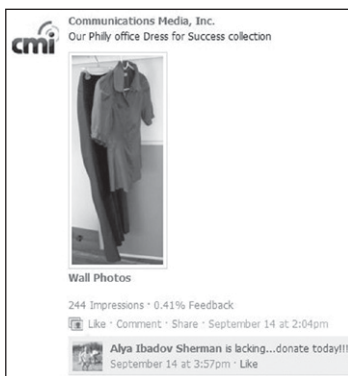
Dress for Success (www.DressforSuccess.org) is a global non-profit organization that helps women in need who are searching for work, transitioning back into the workforce, or looking to get ahead in a current position. The organization collects current new or gently worn women's business and interview appropriate clothing, including blouses, suits, sweaters, blazers, pants, skirts, pumps, purses, and scarves.

BANDING TOGETHER FOR GOOD

Our Human Resources Director, Nancy Logue, introduced me to Dress for Success, and we knew immediately that as a company we wanted to help in any way we could. We set aside two weeks in September for employees to go through their closets and help support this good cause. We teamed up with our corporate communications department to spread the word across our four offices. We believed if our family of companies – Compas, Communications Media, Inc., InfoCures, and Singularity – banded together, we'd have great results.

SPREADING THE WORD

We started with internal e-mails and posters, then spread out to social media, posting news of our progress on Facebook and Twitter.



The Philly office went to Facebook to encourage more donations.



As donations flooded in, photos on Facebook were worth a thousand words.

The first day was disheartening, as our clothing racks at each location sat bare. We tried not to let it get to us, but deep down I think we were wondering if we were going to be able to pull this off. Then on Tuesday, the second day, as I walked into the office, I found five freshly pressed suits and four pairs of pants waiting by my desk. We had a similar response at our three other offices. I knew right then that this was the beginning of many good things to come.

The next two weeks went by quickly; every day we had employees drop clothing off in each office. In fact, the clothing rack that once sat bare was now busting at the seams and couldn't accommodate our growing stash. We took over a nearby supply closet and soldiered on. The offices that seemed a little lean posted photos with a call to action on Facebook, resulting in another outpouring of donations.

DRESSES AND MORE FOR SUCCESS

We are thrilled to share that our employees came together and collected an astounding number of professional pieces: 35 suits, 71 separates, including shirts, pants, and skirts, 12 pairs of shoes, and six accessory items! We plan to make this collection an annual event. We've also been inspired by our employees to hold a clothing drive for Career Gear (www.CareerGear.org), which offers the same services for disadvantaged men.

Dress for Success is an inspirational organization. Our clothing drive on their behalf really helped show the caring nature of our employees as they cheered each other on and posted photos of our progress to Facebook. It's amazing what good you can do simply by cleaning out your closet.

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NOTE: If you're looking for a chance to support Dress for Success, the Healthcare Businesswomen's Association (HBA) is holding a collection at this year's Leadership Conference on November 9-11 in Washington D.C. For more information, visit www.HBANet.org.



Shaina Taylor began moving the overflow of donations into the storage closet at the New Jersey-based Compas office.