

**«If fashion is not something that exists in dresses only because is in the sky, in the street, it has to do with ideas, the way we live, what is happening...then I don't do fashion, I am fashion.»**

A personal reflexion from Coco Chanel's quotes.

I would have used «***Dress to impress...your abstract thinking***» for the article, it describes so much better its intention. However, I prefer to draw on three little words. They are like a good *parfum* in contrast to an *eau de toilette*. With few drops this writing can get a better starting, so it might leave a more emotional impression and a lasting trail in reader's mind. What's more, we can go even further by choosing a symbol: 2. Perhaps that lasting trace will turn into an emotional impression twice.

**Why I call dress to impress this entry has its *raison d'être* in the workplace.** In one of my experiences, while living in England, I was looking for a job in one of these newspapers with specialized sections in one day a week runs. In particular, it was on the Wednesday print - not usual in Spain, by the way -. While looking for offers I found one that captivated my attention: "**Dress to impress**". What can it be? I asked myself. Maybe something about the clothing industry, fashion, catwalk ... and I said to myself, I have not come far in Spain, but maybe here I can do it, this is my place. I quickly get excited with a possible alternative if something catches my attention.

Then, after dreaming, I decided to read it at all. Luckily it was an offer for a management position, what I was looking for. Not as glamorous as fashion shows, but enough to go dressed as if you were on the catwalk. **Dress to impress!**



**Why did a position like this call attention to something as superficial as clothing? Actually, is the clothing we choose to wear something completely vain and superficial or says a lot about us?** After talking about this matter with my roommate, she told me that in England some people did not have the habit of going so well dressed to look for work as is customary in Spain. Something that has nothing to do with those people who like to dress elegantly. England is a country where smart people, it is not smart, it touches another level, it is stylish, posh as they say. And I love it, being honest. I love to have *swag*.

However, **before speaking in more scientific terms of the cognitive and psychological reach of our clothing, I would like to invite you to a small experiment.** From it, you can discern from your understanding why.

### Would you like to try...?

If you usually put on a casual fit when you go out for whatever, a dinner, a meal., next time try to dress up well. Wear formal clothes, if you are a gentleman, put a well-fitting suit on; in the case of ladies, it would be perfect a nice dress, although a well-fitting suit is a great choice, too. Depends on your style. Maybe, you can feel out of place at first, although pay attention to people reactions... Do they show you more respect?, are they more polite?

Nevertheless, the more important appreciation is how you observe yourself. Because it is not only other people who judge as by our clothes, but we do ourselves as well.

Anyway, where I want to go is not just the experience of your environment in such situation, but **the cognitive consequences of formal clothing**. According to this, scientific studies show that the fact of **dressing up formal clothes** is associated with the **perception of a less accessibility, the feeling of power and a higher professionalism**. In fact, formal dress **is related to psychological formality and social distance**, in contrast to the casual one, which is approached to intimacy and familiarity.

Slepian, Ferber, Gold and Rutchick, from their scientific article "**The cognitive consequences of formal clothing**", show that formal dress causes **the same effect as social distancing and formality of language**. And, what is that effect? **Increasing abstract thinking**.

Well, and **what abstract thinking....is?**

It could be something assimilated to adolescence, while this, adolescence, is typical of human beings, something that differentiates us from animals. And, what is more, it is the stage of transition from childhood to adulthood.

### **Abstract thinking**

presents a certain analogy with adolescence as it is exclusively human, it is a human being capacity in this case. It refers to the **willingness of people for creating original ideas or posing situations that help us putting ourselves before possible scenarios**. As we

see, it is a skill that is achieved



mean that it can be developed through training and perseverance.

To develop this type of thinking requires a partial disconnection with the material world, in order to enable the discovery of relationships and links with what we do not see, that is, with ideas, notions and the immaterial world.

Possibly you are wondering about the advantages of this type of thinking - *when can I appreciate that I am using it and for what? Is it a skill that I was born with or have I been developing it without being aware of it? -*.

There will always be someone who tells us that there is nothing like being landed, with feet well planted like trees, and not dreaming and flying since our thoughts. If what we are looking for is the pragmatism of our daily decisions, of everyday life, it will be a great advice. However, if what we are looking for is a different, creative, original solution, one that is not seen, unusual, something that we unite with hammering as it has never been seen, this is not born but from a glance above. From a higher thought, abstract thinking. And yes, of course it is closely related to intelligence, to greater intelligence, greater capacity for abstract thinking. And of course it can be developed, just like intelligence does.

You may wonder about the use, application and advantages of this type of thinking. Special importance comes in the business world. To be a successful manager, you need this kind of thinking. It is the one that will train you to offer innovative alternatives in your business. And, we must not think of Wall Street or Silicon Valley, but of any business that we find on the street. The coffee in the corner, for example.

**Abstract thinking allows us to look beyond pragmatism, from which numerous benefits are derived**, such as the following:

### **(a) critical sense and personal independence**

**It helps the formation of the critical sense and the personal independence that it entails.** What does this mean? **Instead of letting others think for us, this kind of thinking strengthens our criteria in different contexts and in certain situations.** Something that **derives in autonomy, in personal independence and leads us to the feeling of freedom.** To feel more free people because we enjoy the feeling of this ability. The **"I can"**. It allows us to dive a little in ourselves and to empower us as well.



## **(b) Increase creativity**

Our creative capacity is sometimes castrated by the material resources available to us immediately. **The fact of seeking connections with what we do not see at a glance, with *the immaterial*, leads us to enhance our creative capacity.**

## **(c) Alternative scenarios and Probability analysis.**

What are alternative scenarios? It would be like reading a book, or watching a movie. With our thoughts we move to other worlds, to other scenarios, from which, rather than traveling, we extract from their observation and appreciation something useful for our present.

**In business management, the usefulness of abstract thinking will end up endowing us with a proactive mind, a mind that anticipates events, instead of reacting to them.** Something that, inevitably, **will end up helping you to position yourself as a pioneer, innovator or, simply, someone who makes a difference and whom the crowd follows.**



**A clear example of a proactive mind and innovation can be seen in Madonna's one.**

Personally, I am fascinated by her artistic and business talent. In fact, she is able to impose fashions and styles since her originality and creativity. She is a visionary. Also, overly disciplined and hardworking. Very moved by oriental philosophies, which point towards hardwork, respect, discipline, punctuality and a long list of positive aspects. Another day we will talk about Eastern philosophies (Far and Middle East) and their applications.

Remember that a director's main task is to orchestrate different human and material resources in order to efficiently and effectively manage his business. Something that allows a competitive advantage, which is what it is about. To position himself or, at least, to stay on time in his sector.

For this simple reason, consider that **the management of a business is not based solely on the choice of information alternatives already put on the table. It is not only a pragmatic task, it is a task that arises from ideas, analysis and previous considerations.**



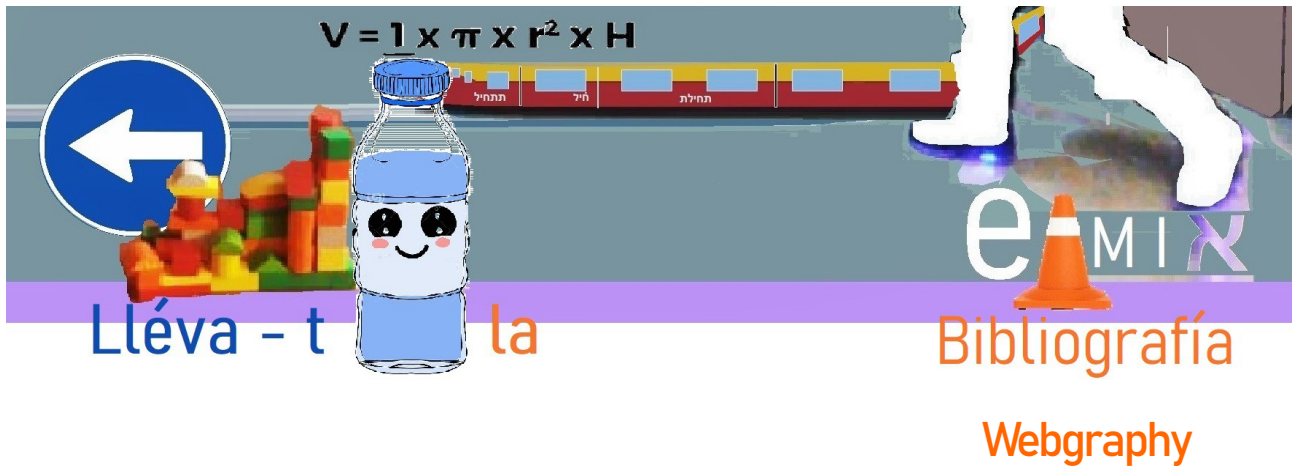
Now **think of unicorns**, these companies, most of them **from nothing, have achieved an impressive capital based on innovation, on the visionary mind.** As you can see, it is that **abstract thinking is the one that manages to unite "hammer" absurd ideas that end up being a black horse, if not.**

Finally, **use a formal, smart and appropriate clothing, not only for a particular occasion, but for your day to day.**

If you run a business as simple as a clothing store or a coffee shop, **dress elegantly. In addition to procure respect and professionalism, it will subconsciously suggest the feeling of power, capacity, autonomy and independence.** Something that **will end up appearing in grace for your thought, will drive you to a higher thought, to the abstract.** What everyone does not see, his originality.

I have written in English for a simple reason. It's a little wink I give to all my subscribers. Most of them are from abroad. Well, I know my writing is quite Spanish for now, so I hope to improve it over time.

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