

IMAGE – A MARY KAY TRADITION

By SrNSD Pat Darforth ... I have continued adding to this article since March, 1991!

We realize that our company has been successful beyond Mary Kay's wildest dreams, beyond the financial advisors' admonitions, and beyond the business community's ability to comprehend. When we believe in this amazing success story, why would we want to deviate from the path that brought us here? When we believe in "The Mary Kay Way" why would we purposely, or inadvertently, allow changes in the principles, image, and traditions that have made us who we are? We are so very much more than the "Best Selling Brand of Facial Skin Care and Color Cosmetics in the US". We are literally a force to be reckoned with ... not a religious or political organization, but a force of powerful women who can and do influence literally millions of other women! I often talk about the fact that a Mary Kay Consultant or Director is invited into a home where someone with a religious or political agenda is not. We are in the business of "making Mama happy" ... and we all know, "when Mama ain't happy, ain't nobody happy"! Yes, that's an old joke, but it's lasted because it's true!

What is "The Mary Kay Way"? The path is clear when you read Mary Kay's books, and listen to or read her speeches. Mary Kay never held back when she talked about principles, image, and traditions ... and I believe her standards still hold true. I always used to teach, "Would you wear that, say that, do that, treat that person that way, etc. if Mary Kay were standing next to you?" Mary Kay died on Thanksgiving Day 2001 ... now she is always "standing next to you".

What I am suggesting as "Image" holds true at any time that we are representing our company. It might be an event as BIG as Seminar, Leadership Conference, or Career Conference ... or as small as a "small town" meeting of Consultants at a local restaurant ... or it might be just YOU conducting your Mary Kay classes or making reorder deliveries. Whether we are in convention centers, restaurants, hotels, airports, or homes ... we are "Mary Kay" to the people observing us. Whether is a Mary Kay company event or a workshop, or a retreat ... we are "Mary Kay" to the people observing us. If it's a "retreat" at a hotel ... they don't know that it's a "retreat". It looks like a business meeting to them, and ... we are "Mary Kay" to the people observing us.

This is a loooooooong article! :) I have been adding to it since 1991. Here are my personal thoughts on the most often asked questions. Yes, I know "fashion & trends" change, but good taste doesn't. Forgive me, that was the Home Economics degree coming out! I am a firm believer that: ...

- "It's much easier to do (wear) the right thing than to try to explain why you didn't."
- "If you have to ask the question, you probably already know the answer."
- "What would Mary Kay do/say/wear is always the right answer."

PANTS - ONLY appropriate for Mary Kay:

- "RETREATS" ... True "retreats" are at a "retreat location" like a camp, ranch, private home.
- "THEMED EVENTS" ... "Mary Kay Casual" is not a "themed event" ... it still means a skirt to me.
- TOP DIRECTOR & NATIONAL SUMMIT TRIPS ... Earn one! You'll even see ME in pants.
- NEVER WITH A RED JACKET, DIRECTOR'S SUIT, OR NSD SUIT ... You will see me on stage at Seminar in a swim suit before you will you will see me in that! What WOULD Mary Kay say?!?!?

BARE LEGS &/or SANDALS & OPEN-TOES SHOES - ONLY appropriate for Mary Kay:

- When NOT wearing your NSD suit, Director suit, or Red Jacket
- And for AFTER-FIVE or FORMAL EVENING EVENTS ... ie. Seminar Unit/Area/Company Awards.

But wait ... there's more ...

INAPPROPRIATE TIMES FOR PANTS - a picture is worth a thousand words:



Career Conference 2003
This was on the stage. If WE in the sales force don't speak up, this image will continue to grow. Our MKHQ can't really "enforce" the no pants tradition or they will sound like our "employer" and the IRS would LOVE that ... the IRS could then take away our tax benefits as independent contractors.



Seminar 2002
Mary Kay EXPO
They most likely traveled, checked into their hotel, and picked up their packets dressed like this. Wouldn't professional dress have been just as comfortable? What does Mary Kay think?!?!?

APPROPRIATE TIMES FOR PANTS



Danforth Area Retreat 2005
Regan Danforth and Chantelle Gonzalez with their two Future Directors (now Directors!) Denise Gregory & Renee Motyka. At my HOME retreat, not a HOT EL!

DRESS & SIT LIKE A LADY!!

Career Conference 2007
Compare the woman on the left with the woman on the right. Bare arms, low-cut and sleeveless top, skirt too short, no pantyhose on legs that need them, sandals.



NOW THIS IS THE LOOK!
Meet Molly McColgan of the Brenda Atchley Unit. She has just a FEW of her more important MK awards, pinned on just the RIGHT side of her jacket ... not up & down both sides and the sleeves! She has her cuffs turned up to shorten her sleeves so that her MK bracelets show. YES!



Allow me to say that I am a *very casual* person. When at home I live in a sweat suit, jeans, shorts, or a swimsuit, depending on the weather. However, when I am doing *any* Mary Kay business (Classes, Makeovers, Reorders, Interviews, MK functions) I honor Mary Kay's request and wear a skirted outfit. If I am not in a MK professional outfit, but I am dressed appropriately for what I am doing, I will still talk Mary Kay to those I meet. They don't expect me to be in a suit and heels when I am skiing, scuba diving, or watching a gymnastics practice or horseback riding lessons! However, I personally do not wear a Mary Kay pin unless I am wearing a skirt ... wearing my pin seems to imply that I think I am dressed Mary Kay professionally. When women come to my home for a Class, Makeover, or Interview I always wear a skirted outfit, usually my Beauty Coat with a black skirt. If they are dropping by to pick up a reorder they get whatever I am wearing that day! I dress professionally for delivering reorders, but would hand a reorder to a customer at school, children's activities, etc. if I were dressed casually, and appropriately, for the occasion. I always travel in a skirt when on Mary Kay business (Career Conference, Leadership, Seminar) and I usually hand carry my Director/NSD suit ... ask anyone who has ever lost their luggage why that is important! In 1988, when Tim retired from the Air Force and went to Delta Airlines training, the girls and I drove 10,000 miles around the USA visiting our Mary Kay people. I wore a skirt every day and I was perfectly comfortable. I do not think it is appropriate to check into a hotel, or pick up a registration packet unless dressed in a skirted outfit. I always dress in a skirted outfit in the hotels and convention centers unless we are attending a costume function (ie. 50's Party, Western Night, etc.). Even a "Mary Kay Casual" Motivational Event means a skirt to me. When I am at any Mary Kay event, unless it is a Retreat (at a home/woods/ranch – not a hotel!) I always have a skirt on. When on Mary Kay business, I always ask myself,

“Would I wear this if Mary Kay were standing next to me?”

Please believe that I am addressing the "business casual" issue as thoughtfully as I can. It is my intention to bring attention to this challenge in a positive way. I know this article is long, but it has been years in the making. I am not alone (I think I am actually in the majority) in my opinions. Unfortunately most don't speak up. They talk among themselves, and call me!

(The following was written in April 2001) This week alone I probably *spent* (I can't say *invested* although I believe in the future ramifications) nearly 10 hours in a variety of conversations about the attire at different Career Conferences. I had hosted a Career Conference where a sister NSD and I were appalled at the attire we saw. During packet pick-up at least half were in some type of slacks ... not even *nice* slacks, but leggings, stretch pants, shorts, etc. One Red Jacket even had on jeans with her jacket. Needless to say we covered image BIG-time in our Director Class. **One of the Directors spoke up to say that her new offspring had heard from a speaker at New Director Week that it was "becoming acceptable to wear slacks for Mary Kay business: deliveries, facials, etc."** Most Directors in the class were also appalled and completely in agreement with us. When I returned home I received feedback from several Consultants and Directors (not all in my Area) about what they saw and heard at Career Conference. **One quoted a Consultant General Assembly teacher as saying "As long as you have your Mary Kay face on, it's OK to wear your pin with nice slacks and shorts outfits."** Mary Kay always said she could look at a group of Consultants and know who their Director/National was. **AMEN.**

Where do we "draw the line"? This is what I say in all "image" classes:

Nice pant suits become jackets with slacks ...

Jackets with slacks become sweaters or un-tucked shirts with slacks ...

Sweaters and shirts with slacks become designer sweatshirts with slacks ...

Designer sweatshirts with slacks become "hand-painted" sweatshirts with slacks ...

"Hand-painted" sweatshirts with slacks become sweatshirt and leggings sets ...

And where are we going? ... *down* the image scale!

Do we let outside influences determine our traditions?

1970s - When I became a Mary Kay Consultant in March 1973 it was a "polyester pant-suit" world. Women were beginning to wear slacks everywhere and I did too. Having recently graduated from college, when our hair was longer than our skirts, I had no appropriate dresses/skirts to wear for my Mary Kay business. It was almost 15 years till we had the Beauty Coat so I sewed a pink polyester double knit dress and wore it everywhere. When I got pregnant with Jessica I sewed a pink polyester double knit maternity dress. I have a picture of me wearing it at Seminar 1973. People would ask if it was my uniform and I would reply that it was! Women were wearing more and more slacks outfits, so we in Mary Kay really got attention ... *positive attention* ... for dressing femininely.

1980s - In the 1980's women were eagerly working their way into corporate America and many felt that dressing like a man would be an advantage. We in Mary Kay continued to dress femininely ... *and continued to receive positive attention*. By the end of the 80's our tradition of dressing femininely was getting publicity in the "dress for success" books and articles. We began winning yearly industry awards for our Director's suits!

1990s - By the 1990's women were more eagerly trying to get out of corporate America so they could balance the priorities in their lives. Corporate America began facing the challenge of defining and expecting appropriate "business casual". We in Mary Kay began to attract these "corporate women", many of whom had a wardrobe consisting mostly of slacks outfits. At times they balked at dressing femininely, but most of them came to realize that in a dress/skirt they got what? ... *positive attention!*

2000s - Now it's the New Millennium and everywhere we look life is looking "uni-sex" ... similar hair ... similar jewelry ... similar attire. Corporate America has lost its appeal for many women. They want control over their lives and they are searching for financial and personal freedom. Our traditions are appealing ... wearing skirts is a part of the Mary Kay Tradition. It is a part of our total image. They may come to Mary Kay in "business casual" ... usually slacks ... but they are willing to dress femininely when they understand the benefit ... *positive attention!* And yes, the GEN X "get it" and agree on the benefits of wearing skirts!

We hear all of the justifications for not wearing dresses/skirts.

It's too hot ... I wore dresses/skirts in Arizona and New Mexico when it was 117 degrees in the shade.

It's too humid ... I wore dresses/skirts in Alabama, Virginia, and Texas when the humidity was 98%.

It's too cold ... I wore dresses/skirts in Utah and Ohio (sometimes with boots and long underwear) when it was -10F.

I have a long drive ... I wore dresses/skirts *every day* of my family's 10 week - 10,000 mile driving trip in 1988.

I'm flying ... I *always* wear something I could work in for three days ... have you ever lost your luggage?! And who wants to drop their slacks on a dirty airplane/airport bathroom floor? Ugh.

I don't have any dresses/skirts ... Then buy one black skirt and a Beauty Coat. As your Mary Kay business grows, so will your Mary Kay business wardrobe.

I believe that it is important to "hold the line" no matter what the justifications.

Is it illegal to wear slacks? ... no

Is it unethical to wear slacks? ... no

Is it immoral to wear slacks? ... no

It is simply a tradition in Mary Kay to dress femininely ...

if for no other reason than that Mary Kay herself asked us to do so!

We have arrived at a point in time where most of our Consultants, and possibly even our Directors, have not ever seen Mary Kay herself. Those of us who knew Mary Kay personally, know beyond a doubt how she felt about this. The only time I ever saw Mary Kay in slacks was on the Top Director and NSD trips ... when we had *earned* the casual girlfriend time with her. **Mary Kay herself always expected us to dress femininely at any official Mary Kay function.** **What I believe and teach is, "Would you wear that, say that, treat that situation or person that way, if Mary Kay were standing next to you?" Think about it: now Mary Kay IS standing next to you every moment of every day.**

When we began to have "casual/theme" functions at official Mary Kay events (Career Conference and Leadership Conference) I saw the challenge ahead. Once there is *any* activity that allows slacks it also ***allows confusion about what is appropriate for other occasions.*** Does that mean I don't want us to have "theme" functions? No, I just think it needs to be a clearly defined theme ... Western, Hawaiian, 50's, Mardi Gras, Favorite TV/Movie Star. I never agreed with the motivational evenings allowing slacks just for the sake of being casual and comfortable. You can be *just as casual and comfortable in a dress/skirt* ... unless it's a costume theme, my Consultants and Directors and I *always* wear skirts.

Have you ever been moved up to First Class on an overbooked flight? I have at least twice. Tim was an airline captain and I can tell you, when they overbook Coach and there are seats in First Class, they look for the best-dressed people to move into First Class in order to make more room in Coach. Fair? Maybe not, but life isn't "fair" ... "fair" is where you get cotton candy. It's a proven fact that in life, the one who looks the best is more likely to "get their way" ... whether it is in the business world or in their school, neighborhood, or life in general.

You may think I am over-zealous about the dress/skirt tradition. Some think I am over-zealous about the Go-Give spirit ... and the Faith first, Family second, Mary Kay third philosophy ... and the Adoption program. The "real world" certainly thought that about Mary Kay herself. Remember how special "60 Minutes" found us? I remember having "PM Magazine" filming a local TV segment in my living room in 1980 and remarking on how professionally we dressed. Today as I travel around the country people on planes, in airports, restaurants, hotels ... ALL know I am with Mary Kay ... even if I don't have a Mary Kay pin on. **What is it that sets us apart? Our image ... dressing femininely in a "man's world". If we give this up ... and that's the road we are on today ... we will look like any other convention in town.** We have been where there were other conventions. They are usually not a "pretty picture". And WOW do WE stand out as the professionals!

A male friend of mine once said, "A woman in slacks is still a woman, but a woman in a skirt is perceived as a lady." Mary Kay knew that. She just wants us to "pass it on".

I do believe I am doing what Mary Kay herself would want ...

I just want to do it the right way ...

and I believe it is much easier to do the right thing than to try to justify why you didn't.

Adapted from a memo that came out in Readers' Digest around 1998.

It is both hysterically funny, and hopelessly sad. I typed it at the time and then re-typed it, paraphrasing it to suit what *could* happen to our Mary Kay Sales Force!

Dressed Down ... written by Marti Attoun, Joplin, Mo. Globe

Memo No. 1 to employees: Effective immediately, the company is adopting Fridays as Casual Day so that employees may express their diversity.

Memo No. 2: Spandex and leather micro-miniskirts are not appropriate attire for Casual Day. Neither are string ties, rodeo belt buckles or moccasins.

Memo No. 3: Casual Day refers to dress only, not attitude. When planning Friday's wardrobe, remember *image is a key to our success*.

Memo No. 4: A seminar on how to dress for Casual Day will be held at 4pm Friday in the cafeteria. Fashion show to follow. Attendance is mandatory.

Memo No. 5: As an outgrowth of Friday's seminar, a 14-member Casual Day Task Force has been appointed to prepare guidelines for proper dress.

Memo No. 6: The Casual Day Task Force has completed a 30-page manual. A copy of "Relaxing Dress Without Relaxing Company Standards" has been mailed to each employee. Please review the chapter "You Are What You Wear," and consult the "home casual" versus "business casual" checklist before leaving for work each Friday. If you have doubts about the appropriateness of an item of clothing, contact your CDTF representative before 7am Friday.

Memo No 7: Because of lack of participation, Casual Day has been discontinued, effective immediately.

Dressed Down ... paraphrased by Ind. SrNSD, Pat Danforth

Memo No. 1 to sales force members: Effective immediately, the company is adopting a *non-policy on sales force attire* so that all may express their *independent contractor status*.

Memo No. 2: Spandex and leather micro-miniskirts are not appropriate attire for conducting business. Neither are *leggings, sweat suits, short shorts, bare legs, sandals, or T-shirts*.

Memo No. 3: *Relaxed sales force attire* refers to dress only, not attitude. When planning your *business wardrobe*, remember *image is a key to our success, and to our future*.

Memo No. 4: A seminar on how to dress appropriately will be held at *1pm on Day 2 at each Seminar*. Fashion show to follow. *While attendance cannot be mandatory, we suggest that you might want to attend. Of course we know that only the people who already dress properly will attend!!*

Memo No. 5: As an outgrowth of *the Seminar class*, a 14-member *Sales Force Attire Advisory Board (SFAAB)* has been appointed to prepare *suggested* guidelines for proper dress.

Memo No. 6: The *SFAAB* has completed a 30-page manual. A copy of "Relaxing Dress Without Relaxing Company *Principles and Traditions*" has been mailed to each *sales force member*. Please review the chapter "You Are What You Wear," and consult the "home casual" versus "business casual" checklist before leaving for *appointments*. If you have doubts about the appropriateness of an item of clothing, contact your *SFAAB* representative *or feel free to contact any of our corporate executives at home. A home phone list of all SFAAB members and corporate executives follows.*

Memo No 7: Because many people naively don't realize the future implications of "Relaxed Sales Force Attire", it becomes a wedge of discouragement that could contribute to bringing about the end of our famous and respected **Mary Kay Principles and Traditions**.

Adapted from a Paul Harvey news broadcast in the early 2000s:

Corporate America would give anything to turn back the clock and not start "Casual Friday". It has become "Casual Everyday" and the work ethic has gone downhill with it!

Seminar Mary Kay Style

Author Unknown

I just wanted to share something with the group about an experience at the Emerald Seminar 2002!

We were the last Seminar held and our group stayed at the Adams Mark Hotel. While we were there, "brand x" came in to have their "Seminar" at the Adams Mark.

We had to pass their "Seminar Site" in the hotel to get to our NSD Area events!

I am so proud to be a representative of such a wonderful Company as Mary Kay and glad that Mary Kay has asked us to look the part when out in public and when doing any Mary Kay events! It was never more evident than this last week ... seeing the comparison between the two companies.

They were going through the event in shorts, cut-offs, and pants. Hardly, if any, dresses or suits!

The size of the event was not even as big as our own NSD Area's Awards night!

And, to look at them, you couldn't tell they were in the beauty industry!

They were checking us out also, because of the professional look everyone had going back and forth to our classes and Seminar. Plus it blew them away seeing all the dressy outfits in the evening!

I will never again complain about having to dress the part. It does make a difference in attitude and results!

Sandal & Open-Toe Shoe Pledge

Author Unknown

(From SrNSD Pat Danforth: I think this is hysterical ... partly, I am sure, because it is so true! I would like to encourage you to take a serious look at yourself. If you don't have the legs, feet, and toes to look GOOD in bare legs and open-toed shoes or sandals ... DON'T WEAR THEM!

It is always better to "keep people guessing" and hide our flaws.

You'll never see me in a midriff hugging dress!!!)

NOW, ENJOY THE FUN WITH THIS!

Please raise your big toes and repeat after me:

As a member of the Cute Girl Sisterhood, I pledge to follow these rules when I wear sandals and other open-toe shoes.

I promise to always wear sandals that fit. My toes will not hang over and touch the ground, nor will my heels spill over the backs. And the sides and tops of my feet will not pudge out between the straps.

I will polish my toenails. I vow to keep the polish fresh, intact, and chip-free. I will not cheat and just touch up my big toe.

I will sand down any mounds of skin before they turn hard and yellow.

I will shave the hairs off my big toe and others if needed.

I won't wear pantyhose with reinforced toes even if my misinformed girlfriend, coworker, mother, or sister tells me the toe seam really will stay under my toes if tuck it there. (NOTE: Sandalfoot pantyhose are acceptable)

If a strap breaks, I won't duct-tape, pin, glue or tuck it back into place hoping it will stay put. I will get my shoe fixed or toss it.

I will not live in corn denial, rather I will lean on my good friend Dr. Scholl's if my feet need him.

I will resist the urge to buy jelly shoes at Payless for the low, low price of \$4.99 even if my feet are small enough to fit into the kids' sizes. This is out of concern for my safety, and the safety of others. No one can walk properly when standing in a pool of sweat and I would hate to take someone down with me as I fall and break my ankle.

I will take my toe ring off toward the end of the day if my toes swell and begin to look like Vienna sausages

I will be brutally honest with my girlfriend, coworker, mother, or sister when she asks me if her feet are too ugly to wear sandals. Someone has to tell her that her toes are as long as my fingers and no sandal makes creepy feet look good.

This is my summer shoe pledge!!!

Applause, November 2005

“Heart & Heritage” Article

First impressions last: What that “Mary Kay look” tells the world.



Smartly dressed Mary Kay women turn heads! But you may wonder if they all started out looking like Mary Kay's dream image. One Independent National Sales Director recently reminisced that she remembers that **when she signed her agreement in 1973 that her hair was longer than her miniskirt!** She remembers when skirts had all but disappeared from her closet. And she remembers when, after accepting the opportunity, she sewed a pink double-knit dress for her Mary Kay appointments. Later, Independent Senior National Sales Director Pat Danforth was expecting her first child, so she sewed a pink double-knit maternity dress to temporarily replace it!

The world has seen vast changes since Pat started her Mary Kay business in 1973, and even more changes since 1963, when Mary Kay Ash opened the doors on a new future for women. Her views have continued to set apart the independent sales force, even when experts said those views were outdated. Mary Kay believed a woman who looks her best will most likely do her best. And when she does her best, others eventually will benefit. “When you feel good because you look good, people respond to you positively,” Mary Kay once wrote. “While some contend that you feel good because people treat you well, I believe that feeling good about yourself stimulates a positive reaction toward you.”

Pat is living proof of that principle. To represent the Company in the best light, she never wears her Mary Kay jewelry with anything but a skirt or dress, and she teaches women in her area to ask themselves, “Would I wear this if Mary Kay were standing next to me?” In her leisure hours, “I’m a very casual person,” says Pat. “At home I live in a sweat suit, jeans, shorts or swimsuit, depending on the weather. But when doing any Mary Kay business, I honor Mary Kay's request and wear a skirted outfit. Even a ‘Mary Kay casual’ motivational event means a skirt to me.” So what if she encounters a business opportunity while “dressed down”? “If I’m dressed appropriately for what I’m doing, I’ll still ‘talk Mary Kay’ to those I meet,” she says. “They don’t expect me to be **heli-skiing, horseback riding, or scuba diving** in a suit and heels!”

When women come to her home for a skin care class, makeover or interview, Pat typically wears a black skirt with her Beauty Coat. When she travels, she wears a skirted outfit in which she can work for three days – just in case she arrives and the luggage doesn’t. “For me, traveling is not a reason to wear pants,” she says. “My daughters and I drove 10,000 miles in 10 weeks visiting women in my area, and I wore a skirt every day. From the beginning, we’ve received positive attention for dressing femininely, and the chance of offending someone is much smaller in a skirt. Why not enable our image to keep as many doors open as possible? A feminine image is Mary Kay tradition, the key to our success, and our future.”

As Mary Kay once noted, “People judge you by your appearance. Whether you’re selling a product, applying for a job, or vying for promotion, they appraise not only your grooming, but the air of confidence you project, which is a reflection of how you feel about yourself.

There is certainly more to a person than appearance,
but you still get only one chance to make a good first impression.”