

IS THIS WOMEN TOO “HOT” FOR CITIBANK ?

Debrahlee Lorenzana, 33, has filed a lawsuit against Citibank claiming she was the victim of a hostile work environment simply because of the way she dressed on the job. Debralee Lorenzana alleges that she was fired from her position at Citibank because ***she was too good looking***, and the male staff could not handle the distraction.



She said she felt that way back in September of 2008 in Citibank's Chrysler Building branch. But Lorenzana said it quickly turned in to a nightmare. She said she was told by her bosses to tone down her wardrobe. "We don't want you to wear turtlenecks , pencil skirts and fitted suits or even heels," she said. Lorenzana's bosses told her that ***“as a result of the shape of her figure, such clothes were purportedly ‘too distracting’ for her male colleagues and supervisors to bear.”*** She was told by at least two managers that she needed to stop wearing heels and tailored clothing that accentuated her curves and other bodily assets.

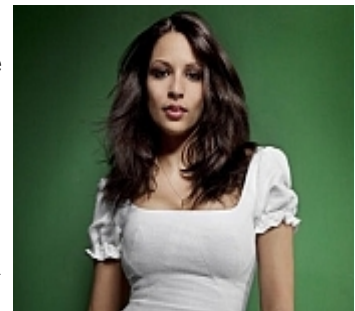
Lorenzana argued that other women in the same branch wore even shorter skirts and showed ample cleavage because they were short, overweight, and they didn't draw attention. She said her superiors at Citibank said her case was different because she had a better body than most women. ***"What they said to me is (other women's) body types and my body type were different and because of my body type I drew too much attention,"*** she said.

Lorenzana said she went to human resources, but that infuriated her bosses. She said they kept harping on her appearance. After finally getting the transfer she had asked for, she was fired in August of 2009. Poor job performance was the explanation. A Citibank representative told CBS 2 HD there is a business-appropriate dress code for the company but would not provide details or the written policy. CBS 2 HD also learned managers have discretion when it comes to enforcing it.

All Citibank would say about Lorenzana was: "We believe this lawsuit is without merit. (We) cannot comment more specifically on this litigation, this former employee's overall performance, or the reasons for her termination." As Lorenzana sues for lost wages and emotional distress, she hopes to teach Citibank a lesson: don't desire me, don't discriminate against me. Just let me do my job.

Author's Opinion

- 1.) I'm not sure if she was fired for being too hot or not, an arbitrator will decide that (she signed an arbitration agreement when she was hired, so there will be no judge or jury).
- 2.) There are many cases of workplace discrimination, but financial services is also a very conservative field. People expect a serious looking representative when dealing with money.
- 2.) But I have to wonder: The bosses say you're not dressing according to the dress code. Debralee Lorenzana hears "as a result of the shape of her figure, such clothes were purportedly 'too distracting' for her male colleagues and supervisors to bear." They warned her repeatedly. She didn't alter her behavior.
- 3.) She calls out her fellow co-workers, saying they are short and fat and dress much worse. This opinion about her coworkers certainly doesn't sound like someone very nice to work with.
- 4.) "It's so tiring, My entire life, I've been dealing with this" Lorenzana tells the *Village Voice*. ". Sounds like an ego trip to me.
- 6.) It seems both parties are on truth. Yes, the firing of Debra Lee Lorenzana for her incompetence may mean that she was too hot that no man stands her fiery figure. You know men in corporate sector are often found with problems like early ejaculation.
- 7.) Debralee Lorenzana said in her defense that the kind of background in which she has been brought up has taught her that women should take care of themselves and make sure they look their best whenever they go out, whether to the market or to work.



Questions

Why not just dress down a bit and keep your job ?

Was Debralee dressed too provocative that the men at her job couldn't handle it?

Was Debralee too hot for the job? Or does she just think she was too hot for the job

Complicated issue of the case study

Whether her natural physical appearance was too distracting or her dressing style made attractive at the workplace? As her lawsuit puts it, her bosses told her that **“as a result of the shape of her figure, such clothes were purportedly *too distracting* for her male colleagues and supervisors to bear.”**

Citibank does have a dress-code policy, which says clothing must not be provocative, but does not go into specifics, and managers have wide discretion.

OTHER ASPECTS TO FOCUS :

Need to look good or gorgeous at workplace ?

Corporate Dress Code and Dressing sense

Awareness of Work culture and Work environment

Non verbal communication - Body language

Gender discrimination issues.

Workplace fairness and equality

Male / Female Co-workers concerns

Professionalism, Workplace Attitude.

This case is prepared by HARISH S, MBA (Marketing) dated 02/07/2010.
