

## **Dress for Success**

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**It's true - You Are What You Wear!** Especially when it comes to the job interview.

Believe it or not, you are examined from head to toe in all interviews. Not only is your experience and personality sized up...but also your appearance. The dress code for men and women differ substantially so this article is broken up into separate sections for each gender.

Before you go on that job interview, make sure you read these dressing tips! Many people take for granted the appearance aspect of the job hunting process. The better you are dressed, the more confident you will feel and exude.

There's no impression like the first impression. Initial decisions made about you in the first three minutes of the job interview are nearly irreversible.

**The purpose of your clothing is to project an image of professionalism. Consider:**

- Your clothes should subtly add to your appearance. More importantly, clothing shouldn't detract from your business persona.
- Much as you may want to stand out, wearing the business "uniform" communicates instantly that you are a mature, stable professional and a member of the team.
- Even if the internal dress code is very casual, your interviewing attire should adhere to a conservative standard.
- Dress up - the best you would ever dress when actually employed there.

**Here's how to dress for the best possible outcome:**

- Research the prospective employer - companies and even industries have definable corporate cultures.
- Find out what the corporate uniform is - and wear it.
- Select an outfit you have worn before and are comfortable wearing.
- Try on the outfit a few days before - enough time to have drying-cleaning and repairs completed.
- Check the ensemble for missing buttons, frayed cuffs and other needed repairs.
- Everything must be clean, neat and ironed.
- No bulging pockets or sagging coat lining.
- Hair and nails must be clean and groomed.
- Scent should be low-key or absent.
- The favorite color of most Americans is blue - it conveys trust, calm and confidence. Blue is a very good interview color.



## The Fine Points

- Shoes should be comfortable and polished. Shoes that are well cared-for signal "Good attention to detail."
- Be parsimonious with scent - many people are allergic and too much perfume is an instant interview killer.
- Jewelry - real jewelry, if you have it. No jewelry is better than fake. No rhinestones cufflinks, no cloth watchbands, no novelty tie tacks.
- Clean and polish your briefcase or purse; organize the inside.
- A winter coat must be cleaned and pressed, particularly since a coat may be the main item your interviewer first sees.
- Your umbrella should be in conservative colors (black, tan, navy, gray) and in working order. Do not leave it to drip on the company carpet.
- Bring a pen and paper; check that the pen works and doesn't leak. Store them in the inside jacket pocket, where you can easily find them.
- Allow time to dress with care and deal with emergencies. Examine the results, front and back, in a mirror.

## Men - Consider These Tips/Advice

- tailored suits in navy, gray, beige. (black is a funeral color, avoid it.)
- dark suit, light shirt
- natural fabrics - wool/wool blend for the suit, cotton for the shirt, silk for the tie
- business shoes and over-the-calf dark socks
- matching silk tie in low-key colors

## Women - Consider These Tips/Advice

- simple, tailored suit
- tailored dress
- dress & jacket combination
- simple blouse
- natural fabrics - wool/wool blend, cotton and silk
- conservative colors - blue, gray, beige or black
- avoid loud or flashy styles and colors
- use makeup sparingly.
- *low-heeled pumps, flesh colored stockings*