

## Dressing for Success

Does it really make a difference how you dress and behave at your interview? Believe it or not, you are examined from head to toe in all interviews. Not only are your experience and personality sized up, but so is your appearance. There's no impression like the first impression. ***Initial decisions formed about you in the first three minutes of the job interview are nearly irreversible.***

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### General Dressing Tips:

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- Clothing should fit well, be clean and pressed
- Clean and polished conservative shoes
- Well-groomed hairstyle
- Clean and trimmed fingernails
- Well-brushed teeth and fresh breath
- Minimal cologne or perfume
- Empty pockets (no bulges or tinkling coins)
- No gum, candy, or cigarettes
- No visible body piercing (nose rings, eyebrow rings, etc.)

***Make a great first impression and take what you wear to the interview seriously.*** How you look is just as important as what you say. Dress your best for all your interviews, regardless of the organization's dress code. If you are in doubt about how to dress for an interview, it is best to err on the side of conservatism. ***It is much better to be overdressed than underdressed.***

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### Professional-Dress Tips

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- Conservative two-piece business suit—a solid, neutral, dark color is best (grey/blue/black/brown)
- Conservative, long-sleeved shirt—a light neutral solid color is best

#### Men:

- Conservative patterned necktie
- Dark well-polished shoes
- Dark over-the-calf socks
- Belt should match or complement the shoes you select (both black/brown)
- Dress watch is better than a sport watch
- Clean shaven and trimmed facial hair
- Wedding ring or college ring only
- No earrings (remove before interview)
- A light briefcase or portfolio

#### Women:

- Dark, low-heel, well-polished shoes
- If pantyhose are worn, they should be neutral in color and without runs
- Manicured nails should have a clear polish or a conservative color
- Minimal makeup and perfume
- No more than one ring on each hand and one set of earrings
- Briefcase or portfolio is preferable to a purse

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## Dressing for Services and Technical Positions:

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While you should always look nice for any job interview, there is something to be said for appropriate attire. You wouldn't wear a tailored suit while working the grill at McDonald's or tendering money at a 7-11. Obviously, if you're interviewing for a mechanic position, you do not need to wear a suit. But, whatever job it is, wear something clean and respectable. No tee-shirts, jeans, shorts, or tennis shoes.

***Some appearance tips for men pursuing service and technical positions are the following:***

- A white, beige, or blue, long-sleeved, button-down shirt
- Brown, navy, or black khaki-type pants
- Brown belt with brown casual shoes or black belt with black casual shoes
- No visible jewelry except a watch and wedding ring.
- Cover any tattoos.
- Make sure you have good personal hygiene.
- If you have long hair, pull it neatly back.

## Companies with Uniforms or Dress Codes:

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Most service and technical positions require uniforms with the company's logo on the shirt. ***So you may want to mimic the uniform in other ways.*** For example, if you know that employees at the fast food restaurant for which you are applying wear black corporate polo shirts with jeans, you could very easily wear a black polo shirt and jeans to the interview. Likewise, if the job requires khaki's, you should go out and purchase a pair to wear to the interview.

If you are applying for a sales job at a clothing store, your best bet would be to wear clothes from that store. Sounds simple, right? Obviously, if you are a woman working in a man's clothing store, you won't have much luck, but get as close as possible. You can also visit the store before your interview to examine the sales clerks. What do they wear when they're on the floor? ***Purchase clothes that are as close as possible to that which the other employees are wearing.***

***Just because you're not applying for a senior level management position at a multi-national corporation, doesn't mean that you shouldn't show reverence for the job.*** Jewelry should be tasteful and elegant, and should not in any way compromise the position you are seeking. For example, a fast food restaurant will not appreciate large hoop earrings. You should also make an effort to wear clothing that covers any tattoos or body piercing (unless, of course, the job is at a tattoo parlor).

Remember when job-hunting, first impressions are critical. ***You are marketing a product – yourself – to a potential employer.*** The first thing the employer sees when greeting you is your attire and that is why you must make every effort to be properly dressed for the type of job you are seeking.

Finally, check your appearance in the restroom just before your interview.

## Sources:

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