

DRESS TO IMPRESS: SECRETS OF PROPER ATTIRE

The Importance of Proper Attire

Appropriate attire supports your image as a person who takes the interview process seriously and understands the nature of the industry in which you are trying to become employed.

In some industries, customer contact and image presented is critical. In such industries your attire will be judged critically.

For your interview, your attire should be appropriate and well-fitting, and should not take center stage. If you are primarily remembered for your interview attire, there is a chance you made an error in judgment!

Dressing nicely and appropriately is also a compliment to the person you meet, so always put your most professional foot forward.

Whether an interview or other business event, always dress for success.

Business Attire

What is business attire? It is the written or unwritten dress code of an organization. Business attire suggests a formal, conservative dress style. It is what is expected when interviewing with an employer unless otherwise stated. Attention to **detail**, impeccable **grooming**, and a **well-fitted suit** are a must to make a lasting impression.

Women's Interview Attire – Fit-in, don't stand out!

The Suit: Choose a classic suit avoiding trendy suit styles.

For a conservative organization, a skirt suit is still considered appropriate interview attire. A pantsuit, while acceptable for some organizations is still considered less formal.

Hemlines should be knee length or longer. Miniskirts are not only inappropriate they scream “do not take me seriously!”

Choose wool, gabardine or rayon fabric.

Color does not have to be limited to dark colors but remember the rule – if you have to ask yourself “Can I” then don't.

Make sure the suit flatters your figure and is a good fit; not too tight or too loose.

Jacket sleeves should fall ½ inch below your wrist.

The Blouse:

Blouses should be updated, but neither low cut nor revealing.

Do not wear a camisole or see through blouse.

Shoes and Hose:

Shoes should be pumps or sling backs, do not wear shoes with open toes, open heel or ankle straps.

Shoes should be of good quality leather.

Shoe color should be darker than your suit.

Heels should be 1-2 inches; higher heels should be saved for after hours.

Hosiery should be worn with a skirt to match your skin tone or suit.



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Accessories:

Jewelry should be kept minimal and conservative. Remove all facial piercing except earrings. Follow one of the following rules when accessorizing for an interview:

The 5 Piece Rule: Wear only 5 accessories – earrings count as 2; watch counts as 3, allowing 2 additional accessories.

Or

The 13 Piece Rule: Wear only 13 accessories remembering to count each button on your suit front and sleeves as individual pieces.

Regardless of which rule you follow, the meaning is clear, do not over accessorize.

Make-Up and Grooming:

Make-up should be natural looking, better toned down than so loud that they remember your eye shadow but not you.

Nails should be clean and manicured, avoid overly long fingernails and nail art.

Nail polish and lip color should not be too trendy or bright.

Hair should be clean, neat in appearance.

Perfume should be applied very lightly if at all. A good soap and antiperspirant will allow the interviewer to remember you not your scent.

Conceal any visible tattoos with clothing, accessories or cover-up like that available through Tattoo Camo.



Dressing on a Tight Budget

Don't wait until you are pressed for time and have to make a hasty decision or a choice that is not in your budget. Remember that self-confidence is your primary goal when selecting your professional interview attire. Purchase clothing with multi-use potential.

Invest in impressive, classic, well-made separates that can be combined for a 'professional' or 'casual Friday' look.

Begin by selecting your best 'neutral' as a nucleus for a professional wardrobe. Colors like black, dark gray and navy are versatile, but pearl gray, stone, steel blue, camel and celery are fashionable options that lend new dimensions to any working wardrobe. Your best neutral is dependent upon personal coloring and personal style as well as your best visual impact.

Purchase matching components. Having options such as wearing a skirt or pant with jacket or vest multiplies possible combinations.

Use shirts/blouses/sweaters to create a variety of visual effects.

Select ties/scarves and jewelry that add to possible visual variety.

Consider investing in season-less fabrics that drape and travel well, such as lightweight stretch wool, washable matte jersey or a blend of cotton and rayon.

You are not expected to be able to afford the same clothing as a corporate CEO. Do invest in quality that will look appropriate during your first two or three years on the job. One good quality suit is sufficient for a job search if that is all your budget allows. You can vary your shirt/blouse tie/accessories.



Resources: www.tattoocamo.com

www.youngpolishedandprofessional.com

Division of Student Affairs
Center for Career Development
C-224 Montebello Complex
443.885.3110
www.morgan.edu/careerdevelopment



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