

# Professional Dress Guidelines

Proper professional dress is essential for interviews and career fairs. Even if you would not be required to wear a suit in the position to which you are applying, it is the expected attire for job interviews and career fairs. Be sure to try on your interview outfit prior to career-related events to ensure a proper fit. Here are several tips for women and men on how to dress professionally and make a positive first impression.

## What to Wear for Women:

### **Suit**

- Long-sleeved blazer with a straight or pleated skirt or pants.
- Color should be neutral, such as navy blue, gray, tan, or black.
- Most solid-colored suits will work as long as they are not too bright.
- Patterns are only acceptable if they are extremely subtle.
- Skirt should be knee length or longer.
- Avoid tight pants and baggy pants.

### **Shirt/blouse**

- Stay away from shiny or sparkly material.
- Cotton or matte silks are always a good choice.
- A nice touch is often a collar pin or a simple necklace.
- A colorful scarf that compliments your outfit is acceptable, but it should not be too bright.

### **Shoes**

- First - no bare legs! Stockings or panty hose, usually in a skin tone or a complimenting color, are a must.
- The best shoes are simple pumps with no more than a one or two-inch heel.
- Shoes should be black or a complimentary color that works with your suit.

### **Jewelry and Perfume**

- Simple post earrings or hoops work best.
- Wear no more than one earring per ear, one ring per hand, or one bracelet. Avoid dangling/noisy jewelry.
- If you must wear perfume, keep it very light.

### **Makeup**

- Keep it simple and conservative. Avoid use of bright eye shadow and nail polish.

### **Hair**

- Keep hair from covering your face - eye contact is important when meeting employers and interviewers.
- Pull hair back if it normally covers your face but choose a hair style which makes you feel comfortable.
- When using hairspray, do not overdo it (especially if it is scented).

### **Purse**

- Carry either a small professional purse or a tote. Avoid carrying both a tote bag and a purse.

## What Women Should Avoid:

- Clothes with beads, sparkles or glitter
- Bright scarves
- Open-toed and strappy shoes or sandals, canvas shoes, platform soles, spiky heels
- Tongue rings, facial jewelry, or an excessive amount of jewelry

### **What to Wear for Men:**

#### **Suit**

- Neutral colors, such as navy blue, gray, black, tan, and olive green are always acceptable.

#### **Shirt**

- The shirt should be a solid color - think about what color looks best on you.
- Make sure the shirt is well ironed, has a collar, and compliments the color of your suit.

#### **Tie**

- A simple stripe or repeating pattern is less distracting.
- The tip of your tie should reach the middle of your belt buckle.

#### **Shoes**

- Footwear should match your clothing. Be sure to polish shoes.
- Wear black shoes for a navy blue suit, black suit, or a gray suit; brown shoes for a tan or olive green suit.
- Socks should be a solid color that matches your pants or shoes in color.

#### **Hair**

- Your hair should be well groomed. If your hair is long and has a tendency to cover your face, pull it back.

#### **Jewelry and Cologne**

- Keep jewelry simple and to a minimum: if you have a nose, tongue, eyebrow or any other rings worn in facial piercings, take them out to avoid distracting the interviewer.
- Use cologne in moderation.

### **What Men Should Avoid:**

- Polo shirts and t-shirts
- Wrinkles
- Bright colored ties or “story ties”
- White socks
- Noisy/too much jewelry