

Dressing for an Interview

Contributed by Melissa Gaspari
Tuesday, 03 February 2009

It is vital to wear the proper attire to an interview because the impression you make within the first 30 seconds will affect the duration of the interview. The following are some tips to help you "look the part."

- The safest look for both men and women in an interview is traditional and conservative.
- It is also important to dress for the position you want, not the one you have. It is always better to dress too conservatively than not conservatively enough.
- If possible, find out the dress code of the company you are visiting by asking someone in personnel about the dress code.
- Good hygiene is vital when wanting to make a good impression. Therefore, watch for bad breath, dandruff, body odor and dirty, unmanicured nails.
- If you have any body piercing or tattoos make sure that they are within conservative limits. Piercing should be taken out, replaced with a clear stud or covered with a bandage/band-aid. Tattoos can be covered with bandages or clothing, small tattoos can also be covered with makeup. Even though society sees them as acceptable, that does not mean the workforce has accepted them.

MEN

SUITS

The best colors for suits are navy, and charcoal though light gray. Brown is also acceptable. A black suit is sometimes viewed as too somber. A two-piece suit is preferable.

SHIRTS

Always wear a long-sleeved shirt that is white, cream, or pale-blue, preferably a solid color without stripes.

TIES

The tie should complement your suit, but not match it. The width of your tie should be between 2 ½" and 3 ½ ". The tie should extend to your trouser belt, the size of the knot should be small. Never wear a bow tie.

SHOES

Shoes should be black, burgundy or brown leather, depending on the color of the suit.

SOCKS

Socks should complement the suit: blue, black, gray or brown.

ACCESSORIES

Avoid wearing religious or political insignias. The watch you wear should be plain and simple. Belts should match and complement the shoes you wear. If you carry a briefcase, a leather one is your best bet. Preferably, you may want to carry a leather or leather looking notebook to hold copies of your resume and for note taking.

JEWELRY

Minimize your jewelry. A wedding band, a tie tack and a small pair of cuff links are appropriate. Anything else will be over doing it.

COLOGNE

A little cologne is acceptable, but make sure you will not overpower anyone with the aroma. Consider the facts that you will probably be interviewing in a small room and allergies to scents are common.

WOMEN

SUITS

A solid or pinstripe suit is best. A conservative pants suit or a skirt with a coordinating solid black or navy jacket is appropriate. A one-piece business dress with a matching jacket is also acceptable interview attire. Colors most suitable for an interview include charcoal, medium gray, steel gray, black and navy blue. The skirt should be no shorter than 2" above the knee.

BLOUSES

Blouses should be solid in color, preferably white or cream.

SHOES

Shoes should be closed-toe pumps with low or mid heels. The best colors to wear are black, brown and navy. Stay away from multicolored shoes. Also, when wearing pantyhose, stick to neutral skin tones.

ACCESSORIES

If you carry a briefcase, do not carry a purse. An alternative is to carry a leather or leather looking notebook to hold resumes and take notes. Belts should complement or match the shoes you wear.

JEWELRY

When it comes to jewelry, less is more. Minimize the number of rings that you wear, possibly only an engagement ring or wedding bands. Wearing a necklace and earrings are acceptable as long as they are subdued. A bracelet is also acceptable.

MAKEUP

Natural is the key word concerning makeup. Your eye makeup, blush and lipstick should be subtle.

PERFUME

A little perfume is acceptable, but make sure you will not overpower anyone with the aroma. Consider the facts that you will probably be interviewing in a small room and allergies to scents are common.