

## 4.5 DRESS FOR SUCCESS

### What to Know

You should look your best when you go to a job interview. Dress one step above the dress required for the job. You only get one chance to make a first impression, so make it a good one. Remember, first impressions are formed when the interviewer first sees and greets you. You need to look professional, confident, and competent.

To help you decide what to wear to an interview, visit the company and notice what people are wearing. Make sure your interview clothes are appropriate for the job you are applying for and for the location of the interview. Do not wear a suit to an interview at a construction site, and do not wear jeans and a sport shirt to an office setting. You will find differences in the way people dress depending on the industry they work in. It is always better to find yourself over-dressed than under-dressed for an interview.

Try to think ahead to the interview. If there is a possibility you will be required to perform a task, make sure you are prepared. For instance, if you are applying for a job as a welder, you may be asked to demonstrate your skills on the spot. You should have your work clothes and tools available at the interview.

### Guidelines

#### Dress For Men

Use the following list to check yourself prior to an interview. You may want to seek an opinion from someone in the field in which you are interviewing.

- Hair should be trimmed, neat, and clean. Have a clean shave. If you wear a beard or a mustache, be sure to trim neatly.
- Wear glasses with up-to-date frames and clear lenses. Do not wear sunglasses with dark tints or mirrors.
- Wear no more than one ring on each hand and a watch. Do not wear any other jewelry such as bracelets, necklaces or earrings. Cover or remove any body piercings.
- Depending on the position you are applying for wear:
  - A navy blue or gray suit, single breasted; white or pinstripe dress shirt and a matching silk tie; or
  - Navy blue or gray jacket; coordinated gray, tan, or charcoal slacks; white or pinstripe dress shirt and coordinating silk tie; or
  - White, pastel, or pinstripe dress shirt and conservative tie; coordinated navy blue, gray, charcoal, or brown dress pants; or
  - Plain sports shirt; coordinated navy blue, gray, charcoal, or brown slacks; or
  - Clean sports shirt and clean casual pants.
- Tip of the tie should come to the center of belt buckle.
- Belt should show no signs of wear or weight gain/loss; should match shoes.
- Nails should be cut short, filed and clean.
- Clean and polished conservative dress shoes with dark socks. Work boots may be appropriate for some job interviews. No loafers or tennis shoes.

- Minimal or no aftershave, perfume or cologne, no strong smelling deodorants, and no smoking.
- No gum, candy, or other objects in your mouth.
- Carry a good leather or leather-like portfolio or slim briefcase.

## Guidelines

### Dress For Women

Use the following list to check yourself prior to an interview. You may even want to seek an opinion from someone in the field in which you are interviewing.

- Clean hair, short or tied back and professional.
- Makeup should be simple. Avoid bright colors or too heavy an application.
- Wear glasses with up-to-date frames and clear lenses. Do not wear sunglasses with dark tints or mirrors.
- Simple earrings, not dangling; a pin or a necklace and a watch; no more than one ring per hand; no more than one bracelet.
- Job experts and employers are split on the notion of pantsuits, so a skirted suit is a safer choice.
- Depending on the position you are applying for, wear:
  - A seasonal business suit in solid color or conservative pattern with tailored or pleated skirt; blouse in a complimentary solid color such as white, cream or pastel; skirt should come to the knee; or
  - Jacket in solid color or conservative pattern; coordinating blouse and tailored or pleated skirt in appropriate length; or
  - Tailored blouse, preferably with long sleeves, in white, cream or pastel; coordinating tailored or pleated skirt in solid color or conservative print or pattern and appropriate length.
- Nails should be short to medium length; manicured with light or clear polish.
- Medium heel pumps, no open toes or backs; no scuffs or nicks in heels; do not wear flats.
- Stockings or pantyhose should be flawless (no runs) and conservative in color. Wear them even in the summer.
- Minimal perfume or cologne, no strong-smelling deodorant, and no smoking.
- No gum, candy, or other objects in your mouth.
- Carry either a good leather or leather-like portfolio or purse—not both.

*A great pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do. (Walter Bagehot)*

