

# **Dress for Success**

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

- Select apparel, fragrances, jewelry, hairstyle, etc. that do not detract from your professional image. The interviewer's attention should be focused on what you say and your qualifications.
- Make sure your hair is clean, neat and professionally styled. Avoid styles that cover over more than your forehead or one that you have to brush back.
- Remove facial and body piercings other than single ear jewelry for interviews.
- Visible tattoos should be covered to avoid distraction.
- Apparel should be clean and neatly pressed.
- Apparel should fit well and remain in place while sitting and/or walking.
- Choose professional apparel that you like for which you receive positive feedback from people who are knowledgeable about the industry standard or specific company policy.
- Less is more. Keep your look simple and successful until you become accustomed to the environment and learn about the company's dress code.

## **GUIDELINE FOR WOMEN'S INTERVIEW ATTIRE**

- Select a skirted suit, pantsuit or conservatively tailored dress that draws the eye to your face.
- Skirts are traditionally knee-length but those slightly shorter or longer are also acceptable.
- Select blouses or sweaters that provide visual interest, but avoid transparent, tight fit, or have low necklines, revealing waistlines or details that detract from your face as a focal point. Typically, arms are covered at least to the biceps and often to the wrist.
- Always wear hose to interviews. Wear plain-style, non-patterned hosiery and select colors that flatter your coloring. For traditional industries, wear a neutral color. For other industries, you may choose to wear hose that coordinates with your skirt. Carry an extra pair in case of runs.
- Perfume should never be strong. A fragrance can cause an allergic reaction or offend the interviewer. When in doubt, do not wear perfume.
- Use natural-looking makeup and clear nail polish. This keeps the focus on the interview.
- Do not carry a purse with a briefcase. Choose one or the other.
- Wear flat shoes or low pumps in colors that avoid making your feet a focal point. Be sure that they are clean and polished. Avoid shoes that hinder walking fast. This lowers credibility. Avoid open-toed shoes since associated with social agendas.
- Add accessories to express your personality and accentuate your best features. A scarf or necklace is an effective way to focus on your face. Keep it simple!
- Women in general wear too many accessories at the same time such as earrings, necklaces, and rings. These can accentuate your personality and can be an asset if worn in moderation. Avoid dangling earrings and wear no more than one ring per hand and a dress watch. Be sure all jewelry focuses on the face.

## **GUIDELINES FOR MEN'S INTERVIEW ATTIRE**

- Wear a matching suit in navy, black or gray (pinstripe or solid) or wear a navy blazer and gray dress slacks. They serve as a visual background that draws the eye to the face.
- Wear white or a light blue dress shirt that contrasts with the jacket and/or tie. Typically, arms should be covered to the wrist. Exposing arms by rolling up your sleeves is interpreted as less powerful and is less formal.
- A (silk or silk-like) tie should coordinate with the jacket and pant but choose one that strongly contrasts with the color of your shirt; selecting subtle or simple patterns enhances credibility.
- Socks should be calf-length or above the calf. Choose natural-fiber blends that allow a flow of air and do not hold in perspiration and heat. Choose colors such as dark blue, black or gray.
- Wear conservative, clean, and polished shoes.
- Select lace-up (not slip-on) dress shoes. The color should be dark or blend with pant.
- Select a leather belt that visually blends or matches your shoes.
- A short hair cut and no facial hair is expected.
- Minimize jewelry. Avoid a necklace. Wear no more than one ring per hand and a dress watch. Be sure all jewelry supports a focus on the face.
- A full-length coat can be worn over your suit; avoid casual coats.
- Cologne should never be strong. A fragrance can cause an allergic reaction or offend the interviewer. When in doubt, do not wear cologne.
- Your briefcase is part of visual effect; consider a simple portfolio as an effective substitute, and try to select a color that supports your visual effect.