

Dressing for Success



When it comes to interviews and other professional events, dressing too formally is generally better than dressing too casual. Putting together a professional-looking outfit requires planning ahead. Research the organization you are interviewing with as well as, the industry to get a feel for appropriate dress. When in doubt, ask a friend or relative if the outfit you have picked out looks professional enough. To help with planning your outfit, we have compiled a list of tips that any candidate can use to help put together an ensemble that will surely make a good first impression.

Tips for looking your best

Make sure what you are wearing is something that is comfortable and makes you feel confident

As a general rule, stick to black, gray or navy suits, pants or skirts that are a solid color or have a very subtle pattern. ■ ■ ■

Neatly groom your hair.
Keep it clean and styled.

If wearing makeup, use neutral colors and minimal amounts of eyeshadows, lipstick, blush and foundation.

Choose a shirt or blouse that coordinates well with your outfit, paying attention to potentially clashing patterns or colors.

If wearing a tie, select one that is solid, striped or with a small pattern.

Avoid spraying too much cologne or perfume that can distract from your interview.

Make sure you've removed the tags from your new clothes and have washed and tried the outfit on beforehand.

Shower, brush your teeth and make sure your hands and fingernails are clean.

Wear a coordinating belt with dress pants.

Wear close-toed shoes if wearing heels make sure the heels are in good condition and are not too high.

Be sure your clothes are clean and free of wrinkles or creases.

Limited jewelry is appropriate.

Rather than bring a large backpack, carry a padfolio with you to take notes in and keep business cards.

Looking your best on a budget



Having a professional-looking wardrobe doesn't have to drain your bank account. Check local consignment, thrift stores and outlet malls for great deals on clothes, accessories and shoes. Subscribe to emails from your favorite clothing stores to get notified of upcoming sales and to receive coupons.

Types of Interviews



Phone

Advantage: The employer cannot see what you can see, lay out all your interview answers in front of you.

Disadvantage: You cannot read their body language to know how they are responding to you.

- » Dress for the interview - Even though they can't see you, dressing for the interview will help you feel more confident
- » Avoid background noises – Be conscious of your surrounds
- » Your voice becomes MORE important
- » Keep your answers on the shorter side; end strong, don't trail off
- » Listen - Make sure you are listening so you can answer the question that was asked
- » Do not use speakerphone
- » Try not to use a cell phone
- » Smile, your voice naturally has more enthusiasm when smiling
- » Have a writing pad and pen to write down questions



In-Person

Advantage: You can clearly observe their body language and adjust your answers and tone accordingly.

Disadvantage: All your answers need to be in your head. You cannot reference any notes you took to prepare.

- » Make sure you have the time and location correct
- » Get directions – leave early to give yourself extra time
- » Arrive 15 minutes early
- » Turn off your phone
- » Make note of everyone you meet for thank you's
- » Your confidence can be demonstrated with eye contact, body language and your handshake



Virtual

Advantage: It may not be as nerve wrecking over a video then it is in person.

Disadvantage: The communication is not as fluid as an in-person interview due to the limitations of screens.

- » Set up your account and test your settings ahead of time
- » Be conscious of your background - Make sure your background setting is not distracting
- » Dress for the interview from head to toe
- » Double check to see if the virtual interview is real time or virtual
- » Check your internet quality and connection

Career Tip:

After the interview write down questions you weren't too confident in responding to be able to practice them for future interviews.