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 and industry to try to understand the 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.

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

Neatly groom your hair. Keep it clean and styled. Try to keep long hair up and away from your face.

Limit the quantity and flashiness of jewelry, ties, and other accessories. Keep the focus on you and not your accessories.

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

Remove or hide tags from new clothes. Try the outfit on beforehand to make sure you like it.

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

Wear nice shoes that are in good condition but also comfortable enough to walk and stand in for long periods of time.

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.