

## Tips on Professional Dressing

When students are requested to dress professionally for a conference or class activity, the following guidelines should be observed.

Gentlemen:

- A shirt with a collar should be worn. A t-shirt under a baggy sweater does not constitute a professional look, even though it is very stylish right now.
- Ties are a must, and a suit coat for presentations. Ties should be tightened properly.
- Please remove the labels sewn on the outside of the suit coat sleeve. These are meant to identify the manufacturer at the time of purchase, but should be removed before wearing. Also, clip the stitching that holds the back vent closed.
- Remove all earrings and body piercing jewelry.
- Do not stand with one or both hands in your pockets. It's sloppy looking, and makes you look nervous.

Ladies:

- A skirt is recommended, again, because it conveys professionalism much better than slacks. Skirts should be no more than 2" above the knee, and not much longer than mid-calf.
- Wear no more than one earring per ear, and remove all body piercing jewelry.
- I know that "tight is in," but it is most unprofessional, and usually very unflattering, as well. Please avoid tight clothing.
- Remember the guidelines: clothing should not be too tight, too sloppy, nor show too much skin. (In business, any skin between the neck and just above the knee may be too much.) Clothing that is at all "clingy" or sheer requires appropriate and modest lingerie underneath.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

- All clothing should be pressed, so that it is free of wrinkles. If you don't own an iron, I recommend buying (and using) one...It is an essential item for the business professional.
- Shirts should be tucked in.
- Dressy khaki pants are fine for a "business casual" look, but "cargo" or "painter" pants are not. Also, remember a belt is required if there are belt loops. The exception is when men wear braces (suspenders). Then, they substitute for the belt. Belts and braces are never worn together.
- The best colors for a professional business suit are navy or charcoal gray. Ladies may wear a black suit. Men should save their black suits for weddings, funerals, and formal dinners.
- Shirts and blouses should be white or cream. Pale blue may sometimes be worn, as well.
- Use excellent posture, too. Stand up straight to look, feel, and sound your best. Don't wiggle, jiggle, giggle, or dance.

What is business casual? This varies from company to company. Typically, it's a khaki skirt or trousers, a light shirt with a collar, and a navy suit coat but no tie. Alternately, it may be khakis with a shirt and tie, no suit coat. In more casual business situations, choose khakis and a polo shirt that is navy or white. Belts and socks or hosiery are still required.

Remember, Dress WELL For Success! Make that critical first impression a good, professional one to begin establishing credibility and rapport with your audience immediately.

