

Tips on Professional Dressing

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

Professional dressing means:

Gentlemen:

- A shirt with a collar should be worn. 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 excessive earrings and face/ear 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 or dress slacks is recommended, again, because it conveys professionalism. No miniskirts. Skirts should fall no more than 2-3 inches above the knee.
- 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 excessively tight clothing.
- Remember the guidelines: clothing should not be too tight, too sloppy, nor show too much skin. (In business, too much skin between the neck and the top of your shirt, and 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 however most hotels provide an iron in the room.
- 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 vary but navy, black or gray work well. Ladies may wear a solid colored suit but try to stay away from bright colors i.e., red, pink, yellow, etc.
- 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. There are many sources for examples of business casual on the internet. If you don't know, Google it!

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