
Dress for Success

Presented by

Career Services Center
Clarion University of
Pennsylvania



First Impressions

“You only get
one chance
to make a first
impression.”



For the Interview

- Present yourself as a professional
- Dress for the interview, not a party
- Don't distract the interviewer's attention; it should be on what you have to say, not your appearance
- Arrive early and check out your appearance
- A smile, a firm handshake, and a positive attitude make a good first impression

Buying Basics

- Invest in the best clothes that you can afford.
- Be a smart shopper and buy during sales.
- Research how people at your prospective organization dress.
- Seek the assistance of a retailer specializing in professional clothing.

Suits for Women

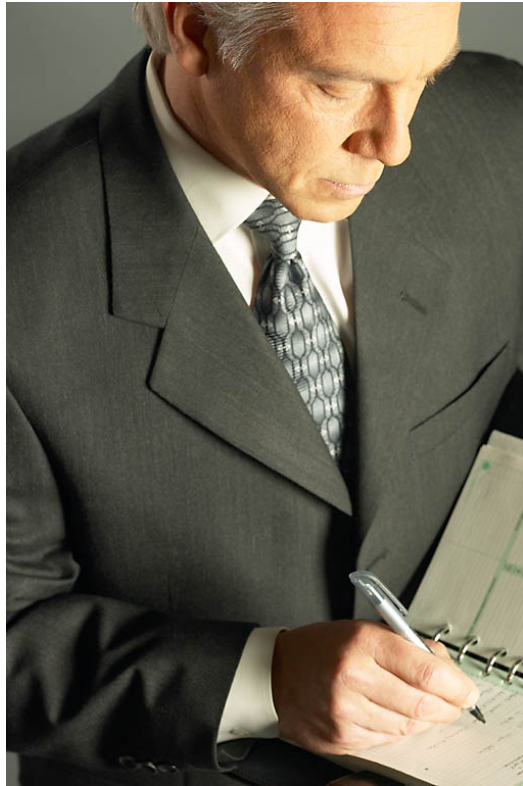
- Jacket with matching skirt or pants
- Skirts are preferred for the interview; should be at the knee...no shorter
- Wool gabardine can be worn year round and is easy to care for
- Safe colors:
 - Black
 - Navy blue
 - Charcoal gray
 - Brown or tan



Suits for Women (cont.)

- Business dress with matching jacket is okay...no party, cocktail, or sun dresses

Suits for Men



- Single breasted, 100% light-weight wool
- Jackets should have two or three buttons
- Only button the top two buttons or the middle button...never all three
- Safe colors
 - Charcoal gray
 - Navy blue

Blouses/Tops for Women

- Tank-style tops in cotton, knit, or silk
- Tailored shirt
- Safest color: white
 - It's conservative
 - It doesn't offend anyone



Shirts for Men

- No button-down collars
- Long sleeves only
- Fabrics
 - 100% easy-care cotton
 - Cotton/polyester blend
- White is conservative, but the least controversial color
- Wear a short-sleeve, plain white T-shirt under your shirt



Ties for Men

- Learn how to tie it correctly
- Ideally, it should touch the top of your belt
- Stay away from gaudy ties for the interview unless you're absolutely sure the interviewer will appreciate your individuality
- Always make sure it is clean!



Stockings/Socks

Women

- Stockings should be skin-toned
- Never white

Men

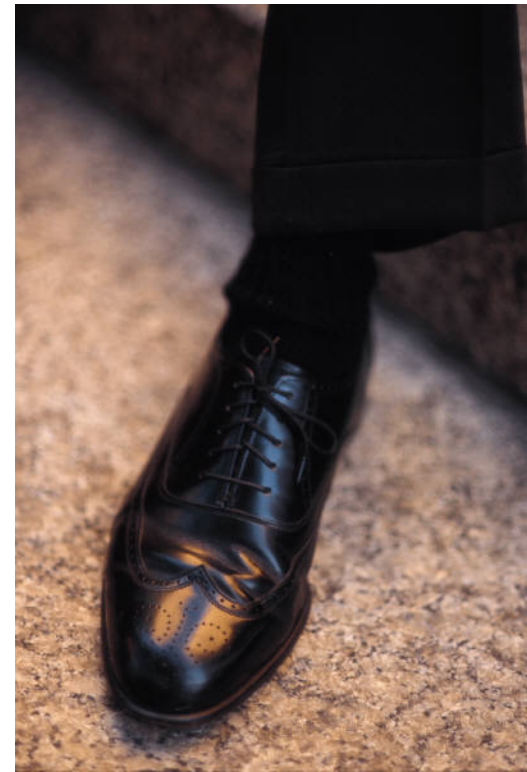
- Socks should match your shoes or pants
- Should cover your calf

Shoes/Purse for Women

- Close-toed pumps with medium to low heel...no spikes
- Match your leather to your suit color
 - Black for a black or charcoal gray suit
 - Navy for a navy suit
- Always polished!
- Purse should match shoes...not too large
- Carry only one item (purse or briefcase) to the interview

Shoes/Belts for Men

- Business/professional shoes...not casual shoes
- Tie or slip-on style is acceptable
- Colors
 - Black for black or navy suits
 - Brown for brown suits
- Always polished!
- Belts
 - Should match the color of your shoes
 - Approximately one-inch wide
 - No large buckles



Jewelry

Women

- Limit it to:
 - Watch
 - Small earrings
 - One ring on each hand
- No jingling bracelets or dangling earrings

Men

- Limit it to:
 - Watch
 - Ring
- Leave earrings, ID bracelet, and rope chains at home

Hair/Nails/Makeup for Women

- Avoid using makeup excessively
- Wear a natural look
- Wear a simple hairstyle...neatly combed
- Pull long hair off face or wear up
- Nails
 - Manicured and no longer than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch past fingertip
 - Use clear polish; avoid bright colors

Hair/Nails for Men

- Get a good haircut one week before an interview
- Don't overstyle with too much gel
- Nails should be short and well groomed...get rid of grease or dirt

Additional Tips

- No perfumes or colognes
 - Can be overwhelming
 - Some people are allergic
- No body piercing
- Cover up tattoos for interviews
- Wear deodorant and brush your teeth



Tips (cont.)

- Don't eat food that will leave an odor; use a breath mint
- Don't drink alcohol before an interview

Business Casual

- Varies from one organization to the next
- One organization's business casual may be another's business professional
- May be okay for some career fairs or employer information sessions. Check with the Career Services Center staff.

Business Casual Guidelines

- Find out how your organization defines “business casual”
- Stick with classic, rather than trendy, clothes
- Should look appropriate for a chance meeting with a CEO, a supervisor, or an administrator
- Should not look like cocktail, party, or picnic attire
- Should be clean, well pressed, and not show wear

Business Casual Info

- For illustrations
 - <http://www.businesscasualdress.com/illustrations.htm>
- For additional information
 - <http://www.career.vt.edu/jobsearc/buscasual.htm>

Beyond your clothes...

- The initial impression that you make includes more than your clothes. It also includes:
 - Poise
 - Warmth
 - Ability to communicate
 - Social skills
 - Attitude

Questions about Your Interview Attire?

- Contact the Career Services Center staff at 814-393-2323, or visit our office in 114 Egbert.