

### Guidelines for Dress

In general, the look you should try to achieve for an evening business occasion, such as a dinner meeting of a professional organization, is a conservative, inconspicuous and indistinguishable one. Your goal is to blend in, not stick out.

#### Women

- ◆ **Suit** ~ Blue or gray in color, solid or pin stripe; made of an all-weather wool.
- ◆ **Blouse** ~ Wear a white, long-sleeved ½ inch longer than jacket sleeve, no collar button, clean and well-pressed.
- ◆ **Belt** ~ If worn, should be made of leather and match your shoe color.
- ◆ **Neck piece** ~ Wear something to mimic a man's tie, either a scarf or tie with a broach or pin.
- ◆ **Hair** ~ Should be in a professional style.
- ◆ **Makeup** ~ Should be kept subtle.
- ◆ **Hosiery** ~ Wear plain style of natural colors.
- ◆ **Shoes** ~ Style should be a medium heel (appropriate for your height) and dressy (NOT casual). Should be polished and shined.
- ◆ **Accessories** ~ Should be minimal and coordinated.
- ◆ **Outerwear** ~ Wearing a raincoat or overcoat depends on the weather. Style should be conservative and traditional.
- ◆ **Gloves** ~ Should be made of leather and match your shoe color.

#### Men

- ◆ **Suit** ~ Blue or gray in color, solid or pin stripe; made of an all-weather wool. When standing or walking, the jacket should be worn buttoned. If wearing a three-button suit jacket, button the center button. If wearing a two-button suit jacket, button the top button.
- ◆ **Tie** ~ Should NOT be a powerful color. Tack or clip should be simple, not gaudy, with no religious or political affiliation.
- ◆ **Shirt** ~ Wear a white, long-sleeved ½ inch longer than jacket sleeve, no collar button, clean and well-pressed.
- ◆ **Shoes** ~ Style should be dressy (NOT casual) and should be black/cordovan color, polished and shined.
- ◆ **Socks** ~ Should be black in color, mid-calf style.
- ◆ **Belt** ~ Should be made of leather and match your shoe color.
- ◆ **Jewelry** ~ Minimal, coordinated with other accessories, and nothing that will affiliate you with a religious or political group. NO earrings or piercings.
- ◆ **Hat** ~ Wear for function only (warmth), not just for style.
- ◆ **Hair** ~ Get a haircut – keep it off the ears, collar. Shave beard, at a minimum trim it.
- ◆ **Outerwear** ~ Wearing a raincoat or overcoat depends on the weather. Style should be conservative and traditional.
- ◆ **Gloves** ~ Should be made of leather and match your shoe color.

## *Dressing for the Job*

When you dress in clothes that mean business, you have a better chance of being thought of as serious-minded. Here are 14 tips that can help you dress for the part.

1. **Wear shoes that are well maintained.** The way you take care of your shoes says a lot about you. It tells people if you pay attention to detail or have a tendency to let things go.
2. **Schedule haircuts at regular intervals.** Your hair is one accessory that you take with you every day, everywhere. Schedule appointments regularly—don't wait until your hair looks like it needs to be cut. It's better to pay a little extra for a quality haircut than to be somebody's guinea pig.
3. **Press your clothing.** Even permanent press clothes need to be ironed or touched up to have a "finished" look.
4. **Keep a "business professional" outfit at the office for emergencies.** Suppose a client company requests a last-minute meeting on your company's "business casual" day? Rather than attend the meeting in the wrong attire (and feel awkward), keep a "business professional" outfit on hand.
5. **For men: Button your American-cut blazer or jacket when you stand.** You'll present a more polished look. (Women don't have to do this.)
6. **For men: Wear socks that cover your calves.** This small detail can make all the difference in the world, so opt for socks that cover your calves rather than the short ones that are less appropriate.
7. **For men: Wear an undershirt under your dress shirt.** Why? There are four reasons: 1) An undershirt worn beneath a dress shirt makes a white shirt look even whiter; 2) it adds body to the dress shirt; 3) it keeps even a lightly starched shirt from itching; and 4) it protects the dress shirt from perspiration.
8. **For women: Don't wear more than 13 accessories.** Start counting what you have on—your earrings (one per ear, please), your necklace and rings (one per hand on your ring or pinky fingers, unless you are wearing an engagement ring and a wedding band), your watch on one hand and bracelet on another, your belt, any ornate buttons on your outfit, etc.
9. **For women: "Business casual" doesn't give you license to wear short skirts.** Don't wear skirts that are shorter in length on business casual days than you do on business professional days. While being fashionable is important, looking like you mean business so that you can grow within your organization is even more important.
10. **For women: Don't wear slacks to work if you've never seen top-level women at your organization wear them.** If you want to succeed within an organization, you should look the part by not wearing slacks on business casual days, even if your colleagues choose to do so.
11. **For women: Don't wear hosiery and shoes that are darker than your hem.** Choose hosiery and shoes that either match the color of your hemline or are lighter.
12. **For women: Wear skin-toned hosiery when your business outfit consists of a short-sleeved jacket or dress.** This will give you a balanced look by having as much of your legs showing as your arms.
13. **Your real taste in clothes comes out on business casual days.** Putting together a business casual wardrobe is just as important (and costly) as investing in a business professional one. Your business casual wardrobe should consist of the same type of clothes and accessories described in your organization's business casual dress code policy. If your company does not have a documented business casual code, emulate the dress of the person whose position you want!
14. **Dress for the position you want, not the position you have.** You may have the knowledge to assume the position, but if you don't look the part, you will be passed over!