The Interview

Helpful hints and guidelines concerning professional dress

Brigham Young University-Idaho Internship & Career Services
(Inspired by Tyler Watson, Health Sciences, BYU-Idaho)
“Image and dress are about respect—respect for self and respect for others, respect for occasions, roles and goals.”

Judith Rasband, Director of Conselle Institute of Image Management
“Appearance communicates... but few people recognize how their dress affects them.”

Judith Rasband
“Research indicates the way people dress affects the way they think, feel, act and behave. It also impacts the way the people they come in contact with react and respond to them.”

*Image Integrity*, Church News, June 2007
“Prophets of God have always counseled His children to dress modestly. The way you dress is a reflection of what you are on the inside. Your dress and grooming send messages about you to others and influence the way you and others act.”

Judith Rasband
“When you are well groomed and modestly dressed, you invite the companionship of the Spirit and can exercise a good influence on those around you.”

“For the Strength of Youth”
“There is more to modesty than being covered up. Modesty is also about attitude and fit. Modesty is about common sense.”

Judith Rasband

“Always be neat and clean and avoid being sloppy or inappropriately casual in dress, grooming, and manners….Show respect for the Lord and for yourself by dressing appropriately. . .”

“For the Strength of Youth”
A person’s image is always at work

- “Appearance communicates.”

- “We are so unaware of the influence of how we present ourselves.”

- “[Our image] can work for us or against us, and often without our awareness.”

Judith Rasband
Before putting on an outfit, consider the following:

- What message is my clothing sending?
- Why is it in fashion?
- What is this look saying?
- Why do I want to wear this?
- What is my intent?
What is the purpose of an interview?

- To verify the facts on your résumé
- To get a feel for your personality and communication skills
- To determine how you and your qualifications could benefit the company
- To assess how well you would fit with the culture, goals, and mission of the organization
Does it matter what I wear to an interview?

Appearance equals almost half of what your interview success is based on.
General Guideline #1: A Step Above

What you wear to an interview should be a step above your audience’s normal work dress.
General Guideline #2: Avoid Extremes

- Potential employers will assume that the way you present yourself to them is the way you will present their business to their clients.

- Dress in such a way that potential employers will feel confident that you, as an employee, would represent their company well.
Avoid Extremes!

Do not wear too much make-up. You want the focus to be on how you could be a good match for the company and not your make-up.

In an interview, you want to appear classy and professional. You want the focus to be on you, and not your jewelry.

You do not want your employer’s attentions to be distracted by flashy shoes, that draws attention.

Make sure your hair is simple, professional and out of your face.
Which of these women are dressed appropriately for a standard business interview?
Answer: 1. and 5.

Why?
- Solid, conservative suit
- Neat, professional hairstyle
- Limited jewelry
- Coordinated blouse
- Modest
# What to Wear to a Standard Business Interview (Women)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Don’ts</th>
<th>Dos</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• No denim, corduroy, or cargo-style material!</td>
<td>• Solid color, conservative suit with a coordinated blouse, or a collared blouse made of dressy fabric if you can’t afford a suit</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Avoid the ‘T-shirt’ look</td>
<td>• Moderate shoes</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Avoid shoes that draw attention to them (No Stilettos, sandals, or flashy shoes)</td>
<td>• Limited jewelry</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Avoid accessories, make-up, and hairstyles that draw attention</td>
<td>• Neat, professional hairstyle</td>
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<td>• If it does not conform to the honor code, don’t wear it (pay special attention to your blouse)</td>
<td>• Sparse make-up &amp; perfume</td>
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<td>• No dirty nails or chipped polish</td>
<td>• Tan or light hosiery (no net or patterned nylons)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• No backpacks</td>
<td>• Manicured nails</td>
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<td>• Portfolio or briefcase</td>
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Which of these men are dressed appropriately for a standard business interview?
Answer: 4.

Why?

- Solid, dark, conservative suit
- Simple-patterned tie
- Button-down dress shirt
- Short, neat hair
# What to Wear to a Standard Business Interview (Men)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Don’ts</th>
<th>Dos</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Overly bright or large-patterned clothing</td>
<td>• Solid color, conservative suit</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Short-sleeved shirts, especially when worn with a tie</td>
<td>• A tie in a simple pattern that matches the colors of your suit</td>
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<td>• Unshaven or scruffy hair</td>
<td>• Button down dress shirt</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Scuffed or inappropriate footwear, including sneakers and sandals</td>
<td>• Get a haircut; short hair always fares best</td>
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<td>• Socks that don’t match your shoes!</td>
<td>• Polished dress shoes in a dark color</td>
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<td>• Carrying a backpack or fanny pack instead of a briefcase or portfolio</td>
<td>• Dark, dress socks</td>
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<td>• Dirt in finger nails</td>
<td>• Light briefcase or portfolio case</td>
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<tr>
<td>• After shave or cologne that is too strong</td>
<td>• Clean, trimmed fingernails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Minimal cologne</td>
</tr>
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</table>
What should applicants wear to interviews with companies that have more casual atmospheres?
Scenario #1:

Sally is interviewing for a job as a fitness instructor. The normal work dress is yoga pants, a t-shirt, and tennis shoes.

Q: What should she wear to the interview?
Answer:

Sally

Sally is dressed professional, yet casual enough to not be overdressed for the interview.
Scenario #2:

Bobby is applying to be a Social Worker in inner-city Chicago. The normal work dress is jeans and t-shirt.

Q: What should he wear to the interview?
Answer:

Bobby

Bobby is neat, clean, and professional, yet will still be approachable by what he is wearing.
Always dress modestly and tailor what you wear to the culture of your audience, in order to show “respect for self... respect for others, respect for occasions, roles and goals. (Rasband)”