



DRESS FOR SUCCESS

WACKERLE CENTER FOR CAREER, LEADERSHIP AND FELLOWSHIPS

Throughout the job-search process employers use short-cuts to save time - scanning resumes for job related skills and accomplishments, making strong connections to the job within your cover letter and how you are dressed with the job interview.

Although dressing and grooming appropriately may not get you the job, it will give you the edge and help make a positive first impression.



TYPICAL GUIDELINES

Although some dress codes in the workplace have relaxed considerably, it is better to be overdressed than underdressed if you are unsure. However, in a more casual environment being overdressed might suggest that you are not a good fit for the culture. Here are some guidelines to consider:

- Clothes should be newer and in good condition, fit correctly, and be clean and lint free
- Wear dress shoes that are comfortable, clean and that do not have scratches or scuff marks
- Hair should be well groomed
- Wear a light fragrance - not something that is too strong. Ask an honest friend if in doubt
- Bring essentials only - professional briefcase or portfolio
- Cellphone off!

RESEARCH

If you are preparing for an interview or your first day on the job, remember it is always best to be overdressed when unsure. Here are some ways to get an idea of what staff wears on an everyday basis.

Check out their social media accounts

Many employers post images of employees at work or at business functions. Look for everyday type images (not dressy corporate events or more casual functions) to get a sense of culture.

Call the hiring manager or HR department

You can ask questions about an employers dress code. Questions like: "How formal is the dress code?" or "Do most interviewees wear a suit?"

BUSINESS PROFESSIONAL

In large companies, and industries like accounting, banking, finance, government, law, etc. expect business professional attire.

- Suit jacket and pants/skirt of matching colors
- Solid, dark or neutral colors
- Dress shirt or blouse underneath
- No bold stripes or bright prints/colors
- Ties
- Dress shoes

BUSINESS CASUAL

A very common form of dress in many offices because it is not too casual, but not too formal.

- Clean, pressed dress shirt or blouse
- Nice pants/slacks
- Skirts and dresses should be knee length or longer
- Shoes should be clean and in good condition

CASUAL

Although it is never suggested for a job interview, if you work in an informal office, you might wear casual clothing. You should avoid wearing casual dress with clients, important meetings and in interviews, even if the office is casual overall.

- T-shirts
- Jeans
- Khaki pants
- open-toed shoes, sneakers
- Still never tight or revealing clothing
- You should still look as if you care about your appearance

BE YOURSELF

No matter the culture of the office and dress code, you should feel like yourself. Wearing a pair of vintage loafers or a statement necklace paired with a conservative suit is acceptable. You want to feel confident about how you look when you are interviewing.