

# Preparing for the Interview

## *Dress for Success*

First impressions are important. Few interviews are won in the first five minutes, but many are lost in the first five seconds. One of the ways in which they can be lost is through unprofessional appearance or conduct.

The impression you want to give is that of a professional – to demonstrate that you can dress for the occasion and to show that you belong. The best advice is to dress the same way as successful people in the field you are entering dress. Choose business attire to create a tasteful, yet stylish impact. You may select clothes similar to what is worn by the people pictured in the company's annual report, or promotional brochures. When in doubt, ask or model your ensemble for an experienced professional you respect. If you think something would look great at a party or other social occasion, it probably is not business-like. Also, make sure you feel comfortable in what you wear as this will be reflected in your overall performance during the interview.

In grooming, strive for a neat fresh look that underscores your attention to detail. Women, use make-up, perfume and jewelry subtly to let your confident personality shine through. Men use aftershave or cologne sparingly and jewelry should be minimal. Add to your presence and poise by standing and sitting erect and controlling any distracting hand and body movements.

Appearances are crucial. You need to look the part in order to be asked to play the part. However, remember that professional attire is only one aspect of a successful candidate. Interviewers want to hire real people with personality, interests, skills and enthusiasm, not just a slick exterior. Don't assume that your expensive suit will get you the job, only you can do that!

### **What to wear – Men**

- Suit or professional sport coat with matching slacks
- Light-colored shirt
- Tie
- Dark-colored socks or those that match your pants
- Polished shoes
- Minimal jewelry – consider removing earrings and other jewelry from piercings
- Minimal aftershave/cologne and have clean, well-groomed hair
- Carry a matching purse and/or portfolio that contains resumes and a notepad
- Bring a nice pen

### **What to wear – Women**

- Business suit (slacks or skirt) or matching ensemble with blazer
- Skirts should be no shorter than at top of knee
- Be aware of V-neck and/or sheer tops that may be revealing or show undergarments
- Hosiery that matches your slacks/skirt – be sure it is clean and without holes/runs
- Carry extra hosiery with you
- Comfortable, polished shoes – no outrageous heels or boots
- Wear conservative jewelry and make-up with minimal perfume
- Carry a matching purse and/or portfolio that contains resumes and a notepad
- Bring a nice pen