

A QuickRef Guide to PROFESSIONAL DRESS

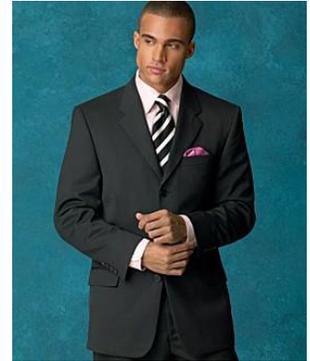
The Career Centers
Cuyahoga Community College
www.tri-c.edu/careerservices

Dress for Success - Appearance Matters!

The Career Centers recommends a **conservative, professional approach to dress for an interview**. While you might not agree with the following, **all are considerations for being screened out** of a job interview due to appearance, depending on the organization, your career field, and the perspective of the person interviewing you. When in doubt, be conservative, be professional, and be aware that **you are selling a total package**.

Recommendations for Men:

- Dark suits – navy & charcoal grey are best
 - Properly fitted, preferably wool or wool blend
 - Your pant should touch the top of your shoe
 - Suit should be buttoned when standing, unbutton to sit
 - Single-breasted suits are recommended over double-breasted
- Dark dress shoes – black, brown, or cordovan - polished and buffed (no loafers)
- Dark dress socks (absolutely NO gym socks)
- Conservative neck tie
 - Avoid bright colors or loud patterns
 - Tie your tie to fall to the middle of your belt
- Long-sleeve shirt, even in warm weather
 - White, cream & light blue are all good choices
 - Pointed collars project a more professional image than button-downs, but either is acceptable
 - Always wear an undershirt
- Good leather belt that matches shoe color (shows your attention to detail)
- No earrings or other jewelry (wedding or class ring, cufflinks, neutral tie tack are permitted)
- Well-groomed facial hair
- No long side burns or long hair
- Nails - trim and clean
- If you have to ask, the answer is probably no



Recommendations for Women:

- Dark coordinated suits, properly fitted - not too tight, not too loose
- Skirt suits are still recommended for conservative organizations
- Skirt length no more than one inch above the knee
- Coordinating dress blouse - no plunging necklines, no sleeveless tops
- Polished matching dress shoes with moderate heel
 - No open toe/heeled shoes
 - Shoe color should be darker than your suit
- Neutral colored nylons (no runs)
- Hair past shoulder length pulled away from face
- Minimal conservative classic jewelry
 - No flashy, dangling earrings
 - No more than one pair of earrings, one in the center of each earlobe
- Natural looking make-up
- Clear or conservatively colored nail polish, no chipped nail polish, nails not too long
- If you have to ask, the answer is probably no



Recommendations for All:

- Dress watch
- Carry a nice pen (speaks volumes about your understanding of quality)
- Carry a briefcase or good quality bag
 - Women should avoid carrying a purse to an interview
 - Turn off your cell phone
- Fresh breath
- Freshly bathed / showered
 - No body odor - use deodorant
 - No cigarette smoke – it lingers
- Freshly pressed clothing, free of lint, pet hair, etc.



Potential Career Killers

- Heavy cologne / perfume
- Visible tattoos
- Visible body piercing(s)
- Unnatural hair color (purple, green, orange, etc.)
- Overstuffed briefcase, bag, or pockets
- Scuffed shoes
- Loose or missing buttons
- Clothing that is wrinkled, too tight, or too big



Put the business back in business casual!

Great for conferences, work-related social events, travel, and even some work environments, business casual is intended to be **a little less formal** than business professional attire, but still projects the idea **you're ready to do business**.

Recommendations for Men:

- Sport coat or blazer creates a pulled-together look (and eliminates the need for a tie!)
- Dress slacks, wrinkle-free khaki trousers, wool flannel, or linen
- Casual button-down oxford shirts, with or without a tie
- Oxfords or loafers in brown or black



Recommendations for Women:

- Pant suits are considered business casual in many work environments
- Classic sheath dress with a cardigan in the same fabric and/or color
- Crisp cotton blouses and cardigan twin sets
- Dress slacks, wrinkle-free khaki trousers, wool flannel, or linen
- Jewelry and scarves add polish, but don't overdo it
- Closed-toe shoes are still best; flats are optional
- Knee highs or trouser socks with trousers
- Neutral-colored nylons with shorter skirts are suggested



Unacceptable Attire:

- Jeans or shorts
- Leggings, stretch/stirrup pants, or other form fitting pants
- Sweat pants, spandex, or workout attire
- Athletic shoes, hiking boots, sandals, or flip flops
- Flannel shirts or T-shirts
- Hats / caps