

DRESS FOR THE JOB YOU WANT

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In today's very competitive job market it is important to have every possible competitive advantage when seeking a new job. One of the easiest advantages you can gain is the way you look when going to an interview. Dress for success. Dress to express the real you.

What **DO** you do to score points at an important interview, and how **DO** you dress to win that all-important, life-enhancing job you want? After twenty years of career counseling and working with a wide variety of clients, I have adopted several basic principles of dressing for success. I call them the **FOUR ALWAYS**.

1. ALWAYS DRESS FOR THE INTERVIEW ITSELF.

You might be a field engineer or a computer operations supervisor who dresses casually for daily work, but be certain to dress for the interview. Once you get the job, then you may dress for field or office conditions, but not before. Going to the interview wearing jeans and a hardhat just won't work.

2. ALWAYS DRESS FOR THE INDUSTRY YOU ARE INTERVIEWING FOR.

Forget about your last job or field. If you used to work in financial management and have relied upon conservative clothing to fill your wardrobe and you are now about to interview for a position in the fashion, glamour, entertainment, or advertising industries, for instance, you may require more innovative wardrobe statements.

Be sure to accessorize. While dressing for the interview, still signal that you're in touch with the industry's dress code. If you train people in a corporate management environment, certainly dress differently than if you were training on a college campus.

3. ALWAYS DRESS FOR THE COMPANY YOU ARE INTERVIEWING WITH.

Even within an industry, companies vary as to dress style. Know the rules by doing enough informational interviews to prepare your interview cloths in advance. One of my clients drove over to the company the day before the scheduled interview to observe how other women and men in that division actually dressed. She took no chances. When she showed up for the interview she looked like she already worked there and she secured the job.

4. ALWAYS DRESS, GROOM, AND EMOTIONALLY PRESENT YOURSELF AS IF IT WERE THE MOST IMPORTANT DAY OF THE YEAR.

Plan for bad weather and humidity that soaks your suit jacket and compromises your makeup; for stockings that run; for a wrinkled overcoat that caught in the car door; for missing belt loops or buttons or anything else that could possibly go wrong.

Scuffed shoes, coffee stains, or a worn-out or stressed look will not impress the interviewer. Pay attention to wardrobe and grooming details and do whatever is necessary to look calm, confident, put-together, and sharp.

Just as a resume presents your candidacy in writing and interviewing reveals your personality, so your appearance addresses employer image concerns: "Will she fit in here? Does she look the part? How will our customers react to him?"

These **FOUR ALWAYS** principles may not guarantee you'll win the job, but they'll make sure you won't lose the interview.



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