Dress for Success

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Do's

- **Invest in your business wardrobe.** A classic suit still goes a long way to making an impact. To update it, you can add a fresh color in your accessories, and add some personal flare in your shoes, watch, handbag and jewelry.
- **Invest in good quality accessories**. A good watch is noticed and lasts for many years. A leather handbag, and shoes that are the newest shape, can look serious yet up to date. The small details of your outfit can make all the difference.
- **Tailor your clothes**. Nipping in a jacket or skirt so it fits your body perfectly can make a $200 suit look like a $600 suit.
- **Pay attention to grooming**. It pays to spend money on a good haircut because your hair is one of the first things people notice. Make sure your nails are polished in a neutral shade, and that your makeup is subtle, and highlights your best features.

Don't's

- **Over-accessorize:** nothing makes you look unprofessional like too much bling at the office. Save the snazzy stuff for the weekend.
- **Wear too much perfume.** Keep your scent very subtle for the day. Remember that you may be working in close quarters with other people. They should only smell your perfume when they are standing next to you - not from three feet away.
- **Show too much skin**. Showing cleavage, too much leg, your midriff, or any body part meant to be covered, will drastically limit your career moves. Dress to impress by showing your conservative side at the office. Remember - business is business.

For Men

- **The Suit** – Dark, conservative 2 or 3 button suit. Two piece in navy, gray, or black. Purchase the best quality you can afford.
- **The Shirt** – White cotton long sleeve dress shirt. Wear white undershirt.
- **The Tie** – Choose something that coordinates with the color of your suit in a simple pattern or a solid color, preferably silk. No bow ties!
- **The Shoes** – Black, well polished lace shoes. Wear with dark socks.
- **The Accessories** – Leather notebook, portfolio, or briefcase. It must be large enough to hold your resume without folding it.
- **The Look** – Clean and neat. Haircut, clean nails, little or no fragrance, no visible body art or piercing.

For Women

- **The Suit** – Dark, conservative suit. Two-piece 1 or 2 button jacket and knee length skirt or pants in navy, gray, or black. Best quality you can afford.
- **The Blouse** – White or light color long sleeve blouse that is not low cut or sheer.
- **The Shoes** – Black, well polished shoes with a short heel and closed toe. Use natural tone or sheer black pantyhose. Bring an extra pair, just in case!
- **The Accessories** – Leather notebook, portfolio, or briefcase. Must be large enough to hold your resume without folding it.
- **The Look** – Clean and neat. Not overdone. Haircut, clean nails, little or no fragrance, no visible body art or piercing.

Six inexpensive ways to look successful

1. GET THE BASICS

- When you're first out of college and don't have a lot of money, buy a few staples that can be mixed and matched.
- A suit that includes a skirt and pair of pants for women (guys, just stick to the pants) and two shirts. You can get up to five or six outfits with these five articles of clothing.
- Keep to dark or neutral colors so your colleagues won't realize you're wearing an item more than once a week. "This will get you through the first couple of months until you have money," Finney says.

2. FOCUS ON QUALITY

- If you don't have a lot, you want to make sure what you have is good.
- Men can find quality, inexpensive suits at Macys', JCPenney and Target.com. For shirts and slacks, experts recommends the Lands' End line in Sears stores, Kohl's and the Kirkland brand of shirts at Costco.
- Women should check out Ross Dress for Less and Target's Merona line.
- Both men and women will find quality threads that will fit into their budget at Marshalls, T.J.Maxx, Loehmann's, Filene's Basement and major department stores' outlet shops.

Six inexpensive ways to look successful

3. DETERMINE COST PER WEAR.

- Most of us are used to looking at the price instead of value, which often leads us to shying away from a pricey item that will last a while and, instead, buying an inexpensive piece of clothing that will fall apart after two or three wears.
- To determine the true value of an item, divide the price by the number of times you will wear it in a given time period (usually a year).
- For example, if shirt is $100 and you will wear it 20 times, it will cost $5 every time you wear it. When you're starting out, look for items that are less than $3 per wear.

4. DRY CLEAN SUITS ONCE A YEAR.

- If work clothes weren't costly enough, there's the added expense of dry cleaning them.
- You can save money -- and your garment from damaging chemicals -- by sending your suit to the cleaners just once a year.
- In between, use a bottle of Febreeze. Test first on the underside, then squirt your garments down to keep them fresh and use spot treatment for stains.

Six inexpensive ways to look successful

5. OUTLINE YOURSELF WITH EXPENSIVE AND COLOR IN WITH CHEAP.

- If you're working in investment banking on Wall Street or at a law firm and need to act like you have money to look successful, you can get status symbols without paying status symbol price.
- For men, it's watches, and women can achieve the look of status with a nice handbag and pair of shoes. You can snag deals on these accessories at outlet stores or online at Overstock.com. People will focus on these "expensive items" and look past your $20 pair of khakis.

6. CONSIDER THRIFT STORES AND CONSIGNMENT SHOPS.

- If you're on a budget, you have to think outside the box. Consignment shops are better than thrift stores because owners are more selective about the clothes they accept and sell, and you can find designer fashions there.
- Or check out platoscloset.com, or MyGirlfriendsCloset.com, where you can buy slightly used clothing.