



# JOB INTERVIEW ATTIRE

## DRESS FOR SUCCESS

By Timothy Augustine

**Y**ou have probably heard the saying, “You never get a second chance to make a first impression.” But did you know that about 85 percent of what you convey during this first impression is through nonverbal communication? Therefore, your dress and visual presence can have a profound effect on your chances of obtaining the position you desire.

Perception is everything. How the company views you, how you view yourself and how you want others to view you all play a role in the game of interviewing. The manner in which you conduct yourself is just as important as what you say.

### **Basic Rules**

It’s important to dress appropriately for the industry. Conservative firms—

such as those in the financial, insurance and accounting industries—require a very professional appearance. However, a relaxed or creative industry—marketing, advertising and journalism—may be more impressed with a little more individualistic style. Regardless of the situation, flamboyance is not a wise choice! You want to be remembered for what you say, what you have done and what you can offer the company.

When in doubt, dress up, not down. It is always better to be more professionally dressed rather than less. While many firms today allow casual dress on a daily basis, the interviewee should be professionally dressed.

Be sure your hair is neat and clean. Make sure your fingernails are clean and trim. Check for stains or wrinkles in your clothing. Avoid excessive cologne. Also, make sure you brush your teeth or take breath mints with you.

It's also a good idea to avoid distractions, such as anything that identifies any beliefs or personal associations (like religious beliefs or political

affiliation). In addition, avoid wearing any items that are considered masculine for a woman or feminine for a man (for example, a necktie for a woman or an earring on a man). These items are often distractions and could take the interviewer's attention from what you have to say.

#### Inside Out

Don't forget that the most important thing to wear is a smile. Keep a positive mental attitude. You have worked hard to get where you are and you owe it to yourself. Stand tall, but not stiffly. Show the interviewer you are ready and willing to help this company succeed.

In addition, remember a few other tips. Take a lint roller with you to remove any dog hair, lint or dandruff. Make sure you take a damp washcloth in your car, which you can use to clean and shine your shoes one last time.

Finally, be prepared for inclement weather. Take an umbrella if it is raining, so you don't arrive waterlogged. If it is snowing, wear boots or galoshes to the interview and carry your

dress shoes. Change in the lobby, if needed. The last thing you want to think about during the interview is wet socks and pants because you had to walk through snow.

#### Last Looks

Before you leave the house, make sure you've covered all the basics. Your hair should be well-groomed. I recommend using hairspray to keep it in place. If you have a trendy hairstyle, you might consider toning it down for the interview to match your conservative professional appearance.

When you look in the mirror, you must feel good about your appearance so that during the interview you can be focused on what you have to say. Give the interviewer your best for his or her first impression. Good luck and look good! ❖

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Timothy Augustine is the author of *How Hard Are You Knocking? The Job Seeker's Guide to Opening Career Doors*. He is also co-owner and managing partner of the Herman Draack Company, an international human resource consulting firm. Contact Tim via his Web site: [www.howhardareyouknocking.com](http://www.howhardareyouknocking.com).

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