



UNP-0129

# Your Professional Image

## Introduction

A nice appearance is an investment in you. It gives you confidence and enhances the perception you want others to perceive. Clothing says a lot about who you are whether you are aware of it or not. Your appearance reflects how you feel about yourself and it may be the only impression a stranger gets to see.

## Feel Good About Yourself

Understanding and accepting yourself is the most important aspect of a positive image. Everyone isn't a size 0, 2, 4, or 6. Garment size is not the issue – body image is. Take a look around. There are people of different sizes, shapes, weights, and heights – you are not alone. Learning to look and feel good about yourself and your appearance begins by recognizing, understanding, and accepting who you are today. Tomorrow's success begins now!



## Your Professional Image

A nice appearance is an investment in your career. Although it will not take the place of education or job competency, it will enhance those requirements and increase your chances for getting ahead in your job or career.

An interviewer's decision not to hire a job applicant is usually made within the first 30 seconds of an interview. That first impression is mostly based on your appearance. The right look can make a person look more professional and not only increase their chances of being hired, but possibly

increase their starting salary as well.

First, there is more to dressing right for a job or on a job than just having a sense of what looks right for you. There's more to consider than the color of your complexion, the shape of your body, or the kind of personality you possess. Consideration for the kind of company you want to work for, the kind of people you will work with, the kind of work you are seeking, and where you would like to see yourself in the future of the company are all important. Plan your professional wardrobe with these goals in mind. Remind yourself, if you're smart enough to do the job, you're smart enough to dress right for it.





## Communicating through Clothes

What does your dress appearance say about you? What statement do you want to send? Does your wardrobe say, "I don't care or I'm not organized?" Some people send out the wrong message unintentionally. Clothing speaks volumes whether you know it or not, and that first impression stays with people for a long time.

On the office grapevine, clothes speak louder than words. Know how to use clothing to establish yourself in whatever role you want to play in life. It will help you win that role much quicker. Dress for the job above you – the job you would like to have. This lets others know you want to advance.

## Planning your Professional Wardrobe

### A good wardrobe should:

- Cover your life as well as your body.
- Comfort your purse.
- Bail you out of most emergencies.
- Bring out your best self.
- Give a boost to your soul.
- Beam out messages of approval from others about and around you.

The important thing about a professional wardrobe is that it has to be working nonstop. It has to be in fashion on a continual basis. Take the minimum amount of time and effort. It should be varied and versatile and make you feel and look good. Your professional wardrobe should be thought of as an investment. You are investing in you, your career, and your future.

### Tips on Professional Dress

- **Think Classic:** Look for styles that will not be outdated and short-lived.
- **Quality:** Buy the best you can afford. Shop sales and thrift and consignment shops.
- **Body:** Choose clothing that compliments your body and enhances your skin-tone.
- **Fit:** Clothes are to fit with ease, not too tight or too big.
- **Groom:** Shoes, hair, face, and hands should be neat, clean, and appealing.

**Note:** Always dress in a conservative manner for interviews – not too dull or flashy!



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