

Lecture 3 Notes – Fashion in Today’s Business Environment (Post)

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*“It is only shallow people who do not judge by appearance”
-Oscar Wilde*

How to Dress: WOMEN**Professional Attire for Women:**

- A business suit in a classic style. Pant suits and skirt suits are acceptable, but pant suits are considered more casual, so wear a skirt suit if interviewing for more conservative organizations. A "suit" means that the jacket and skirt or pants are made from the same material. Women have more flexibility with suit color, but avoid colors that are very trendy; stick to a more classic color.
- Under your suit jacket, wear a collared blouse or conservative shell, in a color that complements your suit.
- Shoes should be black or brown, whichever complements your suit color. Wear shoes with closed toes; avoid wearing a shoe that could be considered a sandal. Boots are fine with a pant suit, especially when interviewing in cool weather. Wear nylons that match your skin color.

Professional Casual Attire for Women:

- Wool or synthetic fiber slacks or knee-length skirt with a collared blouse, sweater set, or conservative sweater (possibly wearing a stylish jacket over your top).
- Black or brown shoes with closed toes or boots.
- This trend is more relaxed and comfortable, but demonstrating good judgment in choices and displaying a neat appearance (e.g., polo shirt, shirt with a collar or sweater, khakis or other slacks, dress or casual leather shoes for men and women; moderate length dress or skirt for women).

General Grooming Tips:

- Keep your hair out of your face and don't play with it during your interview.
- Minimize jewelry, and remove visible piercings (other than one earring per ear for women).
- Make sure your hands and fingernails are clean, they will be noticed.
- Minimize fragrances - some people are allergic to perfumes and colognes.
- Keep the makeup light. Let your natural beauty shine through.
- Wear shoes that are comfortable and appropriate for your outfit. It's more typical to wear closed-toed leather shoes. Avoid worn-out shoes.

How to Dress: Men

The Suit is no longer as visible in the workplace of today, but it is still a business essential for interviews, presentations, weddings, and funerals. Suit cuts can be divided into three categories:

- American Cut: classic medium-contour, center-vented or unvented jacket
- Italian Cut: jacket has more shape, shoulder is fuller and more rounded, and chest is fuller; unvented in back with slightly wider pants
- British Cut: more square and stronger in the shoulder and more shaped at the waist; side vented or unvented; pants are slimmer than Italian and American

Vented, two-button jackets are the conservative choice. In most fields today, unvented, three-button jackets are fine and are considered to be more up to the minute. The suit fabric can be wool, cotton, or appropriate microfibers. Wool is the traditional choice, and certain types of wool will actually keep you warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer than cotton. Cotton is worn because it is usually more comfortable than wool.

Navy blue and grey are the traditional business standard for suits. Black in a matte fabric has recently become acceptable. Dark colors are associated with authority, but tradition has also embraced suits in lighter shades of brown (tan and beige) and grey. Solids are a safe choice but can become boring. Wall Street still favors subtle pinstripes.

Executive Etiquette and Social Presence

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Pants worn on the hips make your stomach look bigger while pants that are hiked up to the waist (over the hipbones, not the “pants to the armpits look”) are more slimming. Double pleats and cuffs are the classic choice, though flat fronts and no cuffs make you look slimmer and taller, respectively, and are more modern.

Accessories are an important part of the gentleman’s outfit. Ties are an outlet for one’s personality, but make sure that it’s appropriate in the workplace. Silk is the fabric of choice, and wearing it in a solid color or in an understated pattern is a safe bet. Remember that the tip of the tie should just reach the top of your belt buckle. Make sure that your belt coordinates with your shoe color. Wear an elegant timepiece that is not too gaudy. Thin faces with leather brown or black bands go best with a suit.

Fashion Tip: Dress like your peers, only with more style. This can give you a leg up in the workplace

Dress Categories (Etiquette Grrls)

White Tie – the most formal category of dress

Girls	Boys
Long evening gown Long gloves Stockings Evening shoes to match the gown Tiny Evening bag to match your outfit Good jewelry	Black Tailcoat Matching trousers White shirt, tie, and waistcoat Black patent-leather evening pumps Black socks

Black Tie – “Formal, but not White Tie”

Girls	Boys
Long evening gown Stockings Evening shoes to match the gown Tiny Evening bag to match your outfit Good jewelry	Black dinner jacket Matching trousers White shirt Black bow tie (do not wear with a wing collar) Black cummerbund or black waistcoat Black patent-leather evening pumps Black socks

Semi-Formal– appropriate for a number of occasions including cocktails, dinner parties, dinner at nice restaurants, etc...

Girls	Boys
Long or short dress Nice shoes to match dress Stockings Tiny Evening bag to match your outfit Good but subtle jewelry	Suit or sport coat with dress pants Button-down shirt with point or spread collar Tie Black lace-up shoes Black socks

Casual – i.e. none of the above

Girls	Boys
Blouse or dressy tee and skirt; or blouse and nice pants; or dress Sweater or Twin Set Nice shoes (no sneakers or flip-flops) Subtle jewelry Daytime bag (made of leather or cloth; not sparkly)	Button-down shirt and nice pants Sweater Nice shoes Dark socks