

# Interview Dress Guide

## Did you know.....The Career Center has a Clothes Closet????

The Career Clothes Closet provides students with the proper and professional clothing attire needed for an interview, a career fair, a conference, or for the first week of work. The attire is generously donated from faculty, staff, alumni, and employers to help students succeed!

Students are welcome to come by the Career Center between 8 AM and 4:45 PM to select the professional attire! No appointment is necessary. Clothing supplies are based upon donations and will be available to students as long as supplies are continually received. (4 item limit for current student per quarter). Please visit the website for further guidelines: <https://www.cpp.edu/~career/student/clothes-closet.shtml>

## Career Center Calendar

Check [www.cpp.edu/~career](http://www.cpp.edu/~career) for current dates, times and locations for Drop-In Advising, workshops and career events.

## Drop-In Advising

Brief, 10-15 minute sessions with a Peer Advisor who can provide you the tools to help you prepare for an interview. No appointment necessary!

Monday-Friday: 11am-3pm

## Summer Hours:

Please call office for Summer hours  
909-869-2342

“How should I dress for my interview?” is a question we hear a lot. As you make your decision, keep in mind that the first impression you make with an employer will be a lasting one. Your attire is an indicator of your professionalism, your knowledge of the industry in which you are interviewing, and your desire to be taken seriously as a potential employee.

## KNOW YOUR INDUSTRY

No longer can you blindly reach for the cookie-cutter gray or navy blue “dress-for-success” suit, because the world of work has changed. Remember that you want to FIT IN with your industry – if everyone is wearing a navy blue suit, you will probably need the same type of suit to be taken seriously. If everyone is wearing Levis and Doc Martins, wearing a navy blue suit will make you stick out like a sore thumb, so semi-dress slacks and a blazer might be appropriate. For work places that do not require formal dress, it is a good rule of thumb to dress “a step higher” for your interview than the day-to-day attire you will wear to work.

Consider the culture of the company and industry in which you interview, but also the prevailing norms of the department or division with which you will be interviewing. For example, the business development team of a software company will quite probably dress more formally than those employed in programming and testing.

## REMEMBER!

How you dress for the interview is not necessarily the same as how you dress on the job. Recruiters and hiring managers will expect you to dress more formally for your interview than you will on the job.

Your experience and the level of the job you are applying for will also affect your mode of dress. For an entry-level candidate, the objective is to come across as capable and mature, and it is hard to go wrong with business dress. A mid-career candidate, on the other hand, may want to accentuate his or her adaptability to a new office culture by foregoing the generic corporate uniform for something more in-step with the norm for the office.

## WHEN IN DOUBT

When arranging your interview, it is acceptable to ask if employees typically wear “business attire” or “business casual” dress, and make your choices accordingly.

## TIPS.....

### Consider These Tips/Advice

Many swear by a navy skirt suit, pearls and pumps. suit in a dark, neutral color, a white or blue dress shirt and a tie in a conservative pattern is appropriate for most interviews. Recruiters all seem to agree that a candidate can't go wrong with a well-tailored suit in a neutral color such as black, navy or gray. At more conservative companies, such as investment banks and consulting firms - a skirt suit, as opposed to a pant suit is a MUST. Otherwise, a tasteful pantsuit with medium-heeled loafers will look put together and professional. A nice sweater shell can replace a button down shirt. Polished shoes in black or brown, in good repair, are essential. Do not fall victim to the white socks with dress shoes syndrome and make sure your socks do not sag around your ankles midway during your interview and some companies suggest anything other than non-textured skin tone hose and heels is pushing the envelope of what is acceptable.

You may want to start your career wardrobe with the following basics:

- Tailored suit in navy, black or gray
- Tailored dress
- Dress & jacket combination
- Two or three blouses in natural fabrics
- Comfortable pumps or loafers
- Flesh colored stockings
- Three or four dress shirts
- Consider a pair of dark pants and a solid blazer for interviewing in "casual dress" environments.
- Business shoes and over-the-calf dark socks
- Matching silk ties in low-key colors

**Be sure to visit the Career Center's Website for additional information about preparing for the interview.**

**<http://www.cpp.edu/~career>**

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## TIPS CONT'D.....

Research the prospective employer - companies and even industries have definable corporate cultures. Find out what the corporate uniform is - and wear it, or slightly better.

- Select an outfit you have worn before and are comfortable wearing.
- Check the ensemble for missing buttons, frayed cuffs and other needed repairs.
- Try on the outfit a few days before - enough time to have drying-cleaning and repairs completed.
- Everything must be clean, neat and ironed.
- No bulging pockets or sagging coat lining.
- Hair and nails must be clean and groomed.
- No strong perfumes or colognes.
- The favorite color of most Americans is blue - it conveys trust, calm and confidence. Blue is a very good interview color.

## THE FINE POINTS!

- ✓ Shoes should be comfortable and polished. Shoes that are well cared-for signal "Good attention to detail."
- ✓ Pay attention to cologne and perfume - many people are allergic and too much can be an instant interview nightmare.
- ✓ Limit your jewelry to one or two classic and conservative pieces.
- ✓ Clean and polish your briefcase or purse; organize the inside. Sometimes a portfolio is a better choice than a brief case, especially if your briefcase is not leather.
- ✓ Allow time to dress with care and deal with emergencies. Examine the results, front and back, in a mirror.
- ✓ Pay attention to your personal hygiene - it's important!
- ✓

### **REMEMBER - Dress for the best possible outcome!**

Having dressed as a student for a while, you may feel awkward at first in the clothing shift you have to make to dress appropriately for an interview. Do not wait until the interview to become comfortable in your new attire and wearing your new clothes.

Remember that your Career Counselor is available to assist you by rehearsing with you in a mock interview setting.