

## *Time to Buy a Suit!*

**S**o, every one of you had an interview outfit when you were admitted to the School of Pharmacy. We have yet to see such a brilliant applicant that our interviewers would ignore his or her Sponge Bob jammies and fuzzy bunny slippers on interview day to allow them admittance.

But perhaps you've forgotten the ins and outs of interviews since then and too many late-night study sessions with greasy pizza and un-diet sodas have left you sans the interview outfit that got you into the school oh so long ago.

Well, now is the time to reinvest in a good outfit for interviews. While we would love for your first interview with a potential employer to also be your last – and provide you with that perfect first job post-graduation – we realize that for many students that may not be the case. Investing in a good interview outfit is the first step toward not only surviving the interview process, but thriving through it.

Gentlemen, let's start with you.

You'll need a suit, preferably. More casual business attire may call for a suit jacket and slacks or a sport coat and khakis, but interviews most often would mean a suit in black, blue or gray, if you feel adventurous. Power lore in business would then call for a white button-up and a solid tie in a well-chosen color, like red. However, in an interview situation, the real key is not necessarily controlling the meeting so much as being remembered after it's over, so color may not be your enemy.

That being said, let's not get crazy here. Leave your novelty tie at home and forego the paisley shirt. But let's face it, unless you are one of the few gentlemen out there who wear makeup often and well, all you really have to work with is what nature gave you. Choose a shirt or tie color that enhances your skin tone or makes your eyes pop without taking over your outfit. You don't want to be remembered for the color of your shirt!

And while we're focusing on the neck up, let's talk grooming. Do it. Trim the hair from the top of your head to beneath your collar line so that whatever shows is pleasing to the eye of the beholder – and keep in mind that beholder isn't always the guy staring back at you in the mirror! That means all the hair, not just what grows on your head, but on your face, in your nose, your ears, on your neck, in between your eyes, whatever the case may be. If you don't know what I mean, find a hairstylist who does eyebrows, as well.

Back to the suit... Have it fitted. If you are going to invest in a new suit, be sure you get one that fits you well across the chest, at the stomach and across the shoulders, as well as the arm length. Even mid-level suit stores have folks who do fittings and generally have someone on staff to hem the pants so they fit properly in length as well. If your suit fits you the way it should, it will not only make you look better, it will make you feel better, more confident and more like the candidate that we taught you to be!

Buy socks to match the suit, not the shirt or tie. Do not wear white gym socks with your suit, and while we're at it, do not wear your black suit socks with your white tennis shoes – or sandals. That's just not a good look for anyone.

Accessorize carefully. Choose shoes and belts that match. When in doubt, black is a good go-to. Minimize any ostentatious jewelry and go lightly on the cologne.

Ladies, your next job interview is not about making a fashion statement and should have nothing to do with sex appeal. That being said, women have come a long way in the working world since the days of slaving away in the steno pool. Gone is the advice on pantyhose and tidy up-dos, but there are still some dos and don'ts for professional attire in today's man-eat-man business world.

Whether you wear a dress, pantsuit or skirt is up to you, but consider each wisely in regard to your style, comfort level and body type. Choose a fit that will most flatter your body without being too confining, too revealing or too loose and sloppy, so that the result is a silhouette that makes you feel pretty and confident.

Test your dress. This goes for any outfit you choose. Move in it. Be sure the cut is not too revealing with regard to cleavage, tummy, rump or hemline – whether you are sitting, standing, or even bending over to retrieve whatever you may drop when you walk into the interview!

Be careful about the colors you choose. Just as with our gentlemen, you do not want to be remembered for wild patterns, bright colors or inappropriate fit. Your outfit needs to complete the image you present of a confident, prepared, strong professional woman – not take over your image by making its own statement. Choose colors that make your eyes stand out and give good quality to your skin tone. If you wear makeup, match your makeup coloring to your outfit choice for a finished look.

With regard to accessories, less is more. Choose quality jewelry pieces that pull the outfit together without overpowering your look. Stick with flats or moderate heels in a color that will not draw unwanted attention. Now is not the time to prove your prowess on the 6-inch stilettos in your closet. Whatever shoe you choose, be sure it is comfortable and that you can actually walk in it.

Grooming – we all know ladies have much more of this to do than their male counterparts, should they choose to wear an outfit that reveals their legs. Life is simply not fair. Take the time to do all the little things that make you feel lovely – paint your nails and give yourself a pedicure, tweak the eyebrows, curl your hair – whatever it may be. When you feel you look your best, you will be at your best, and confidence makes all the difference.

Did you see a word repeated often in this piece? Yes, boys and girls, confidence is the key. It's true we only get one chance to make a first impression, but that few-second rule goes out the window when your first visual impression is built upon with a firm handshake, a strong, vibrant manner and a confident interview. Make sure your overall first impression when you leave the interview says, "Hire me!"