

The University of Akron School of Law

2017 – 2018

DRESS FOR SUCCESS

**HOW TO BE PROFESSIONAL & POLISHED FOR
INTERVIEWS, MEETINGS & WORK**



Career Services Office

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DRESS FOR SUCCESS

First impressions count. Right or wrong, many people judge a person's competence and abilities based on their appearance. While a college campus may be the perfect forum in which to exhibit your flair for the latest in fashion, the interview or workplace is not the place to do so. Dressing professionally and appropriately will elevate your image and give you the confidence necessary to succeed both during your interviews and on the job.

Exercise good judgment when deciding how to dress for an interview, the work day or any professional event. Educate yourself about your interview audience or work environment, and consider what adjustments may be necessary to make your look more appropriate. If you look professional, capable and confident, you will portray those qualities during the interview or the work day.

✓ **Dress for the job you want**

Dress as you want to be seen: serious, professional, upward-bound and ready to meet clients. Dress for the job you want, not necessarily the job you have. Summer interns should dress similarly to the attorneys in the office. Always err on the side of dressing in a more conservative manner. Once you have received a position, remember that to advance, you need to "look the part" according to that employer's culture.

Your wardrobe reveals six things about you:

1. **Self-respect** – clothing that minimizes flaws and emphasizes strengths shows self-respect.
2. **Self-esteem** – ill-fitting, soiled or torn clothing can show a poor sense of self-worth.
3. **Confidence** – the way you carry yourself portrays your level of confidence. The right clothing can help to accentuate this.
4. **Organizational Skills** – a unified look from head to toe without calling attention to any one item or color shows organizational skills.
5. **Soundness of Judgment** – wearing the right outfit for the right occasion is an indication of good judgment.
6. **Attention to Detail** – beyond the clothing – trimmed nails, tasteful jewelry and professional hair style can show an attention to detail.

INTERVIEWS

Interviews are *always* an occasion to wear a business suit. Below are wardrobe suggestions generally considered appropriate for interviews:

For Both Men & Women

- Conservative business suit, preferably of a quality, natural material
 - Suits should be tailored for a good, comfortable fit
- Remove keys, phones or coins from your pockets
 - Keep cell phones in your car, or at least turn them *off*
- No gum- or candy-chewing
- No visible body piercings (nose rings, eyebrow rings, etc.) or tattoos

For Women

- Wear a suit with a jacket and skirt or slacks
 - Skirt should be knee-length or just below the knee
 - Navy blue or grey are always safe color choices
- Shirt with a collar – may be short-sleeved if worn under a suit jacket
- Shoes should be polished and be conservative.
 - Avoid going for a “splash of color” with brightly-colored shoes or prints
 - No open-toed shoes or sandals
- Nails should be trimmed and clean
 - Polish, if worn, should be clear or a light, neutral color
- Basic hosiery at or near skin color (and no runs!)
 - Carry an extra pair in your bag, just in case
- Keep your makeup simple and natural (it should not be overly noticeable or sparkly)
- Hair should be neat and kept away from your face
- Avoid perfume
- Simple handbag, portfolio or attaché
 - Keep what you carry to a minimum
- No more than one ring on each hand
- One set of earrings only

For Men

- Conservative business suit preferably of a quality, natural material
 - Solid dark blue, black or grey is best, or a subtle pinstripe
- Necktie should be silk, with a basic pattern
 - No peace signs, scales of justice, cartoon characters or possibly controversial symbols
- Conservative, long-sleeved and collared dress shirt
 - White is the best bet; avoid stripes or patterns
 - Should be professionally cleaned and ironed, if possible
- Simple laced, polished dress shoes
 - Wear dark socks that compliment the color of your suit
- Hair should be trimmed and neatly styled

- Be freshly shaven & avoid cologne
- Clean, trimmed fingernails
- Wear simple jewelry (wedding ring, watch) – no earrings
- Carry a portfolio or simple briefcase
 - Keep what you carry to a minimum

BUSINESS CASUAL

It is a good rule of thumb to err on the *business* side of business casual. By dressing in a clean and neat manner, you present yourself as a good representative of your employer. It is important to be “business ready” and to always have a suit (and for men, a tie) in your office for a last minute meeting or invitation to attend court proceedings. If you have any doubt about the employer’s rules for business casual dress, ask the recruiting office or the human resources professionals for a copy of the office’s policy; if working in a smaller office, ask your supervisor or other attorneys. The following are general business casual dress tips:

For Women

- Skirts and dresses
 - Avoid beach or club wear
 - Skirts and dresses should be at least knee length
- Pant suits or slacks
- Long-sleeve shirts
 - Sleeveless shirts should remain covered with a jacket or sweater
 - Do not wear strapless shirts to the office, even under a jacket
- Flesh-colored hosiery
 - Wearing hosiery, even during a business casual day, may be required; check with your employer
- Jackets or sweater sets
- Closed toe and heeled shoes
 - Strappy shoes or sandals are not generally accepted
 - Thongs shoes or flip flops are not acceptable

For Men

- Long-sleeve, collared shirts
 - Golf shirts or polo shirts are only acceptable when there is a clear policy or tradition of wearing them; check to see what other attorneys are wearing
- Dress slacks or, if the culture allows, khaki pants
- Jacket, vest or sweater
- Conservative tie
- Shoes or loafers
 - Wear socks that match your pants/slacks
 - Remember, basic is best
- Leather belt

For Women & Men – Things to Avoid at All Costs

- Tight or revealing clothing
- Capri pants or shorts and miniskirts
- Denim
- Leggings, stirrup pants or stretch pants
- T-shirts, tank, halter, open back or midriff tops
- Exercise or sports apparel
- Sneakers or hiking boots of any kind - even if they “might pass” as shoes
- Very bright, bold patterns
- Flip flops OF ANY KIND or other beach style sandals

LOCAL CLOTHING RETAILERS AND SERVICES

The following is a small sampling of local clothing retailers or service providers that may be needed when searching for a suit or getting your clothing ready for an interview. You don't have to spend a fortune, but you do have to look for quality material and make sure your clothes fit well. A few basic items or good ties can allow you to get through several interviews.

Tailoring Services

Stitch InTime Tailoring
1659 Honodle Ave.,
Akron, OH 44305
330-836-3367

Art Craft Cleaners & Tailors
385 Kenmore Boulevard, Akron, Ohio
330-535-9019

Donatelli's Custom Tailoring
2122 Phelps Avenue, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio
330-928-0486

Alterations Express
2965 W. Market Street, Suite P, Fairlawn, Ohio
330-836-0004

Dry-cleaning

Mimi Rinal Dry Cleaners
257 E. Cuyahoga Falls Avenue, Akron, Ohio
330-535-1616

White Swan Quality Cleaners
214 West Avenue, Tallmadge, Ohio
330-633-3363

Squires Coin Laundry & Dry
2755 Manchester Road, Akron, Ohio
330-848-1616

First Choice Dry Cleaners
2391 Triplett Boulevard, Akron, Ohio
330-784-8808

Bailey Road Dry Cleaners
1907 Bailey Road, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio
330-928-9376

Valley Laundry Services
1375 N. Portage Path
Akron, OH 44313
330-835-1020

Shoe Repair

Highland Shoe Repair
828 W. Market Street, Akron, Ohio
330-376-9670

Akron Shoe Repair Inc.
1912 Brown Street, Akron, Ohio
330-724-7991

Vince's Shoe Repair
182 E. Tallmadge Avenue, Akron, Ohio
330-535-1312

Fairlawn Shoe & Luggage Repair
117 Merz Boulevard, Suite 115, Fairlawn, Ohio
330-864-8774

Don's Shoe Hospital
1655 W. Market Street, Suite 120, Akron, Ohio
330-836-7655

Clothing

- **Macy's** - (www.macys.com) - Offers complimentary business-wear personal shopper services, by appointment

Chapel Hill Shopping Center
2000 Brittain Road
Akron, OH 44310
330-633-0800

Summit Mall
3265 West Market Street
Akron, OH 44313
330-867-8888

- **Dillard's** – (www.dillards.com)

Summit Mall
3265 West Market Street
Akron, OH 44333
330-867-3300

Belden Village
4400 Belden Village Mall
Canton, OH 44718
330-494-3050

- **Men's Wearhouse** (www.menswearhouse.com)

Chapel Center
1906 Buchholzer
Blvd., #08
Akron, OH 44310
330- 633-3667

Office Max Plaza
3757- A West Market Street
Fairlawn, OH 44333
330-666-7162

The Strip
6674 Strip Ave, NW
North Canton, OH 44720-9204
330-494-8130

- **T.J. Maxx** (www.tjmaxx.com)

The Plaza at Chapel Hill
330 Howe Avenue
Akron, OH 44221
330-928-7520

West Market Plaza
3897 Medina Road
Fairlawn, OH 44333
330-666-1195

4800 Everhard Road
Canton, OH 44718
330-494-2549

- **Lodi Station Outlets** (www.lodioutlets.net)

9911 Avon Lake Road
Burbank, OH 44214

Over 60 outlet stores including: Van Heusen, Bass, Pendleton, Christopher & Banks

- **Jos. A. Banks (men's clothing)** (www.josbanks.com)

Summit Mall
3265 West Market Street, Space 191
Akron, OH 44333
330-836-2331

Westfield Shopping Town Belden Village
4131 Belden Village Mall
Canton, OH 44718
330-244-0158

- **Ann Taylor Loft**

3265 West Market Street
Fairlawn, OH 44333
330-865-3689

4155 Belden Village Mall
Canton, OH 44718
330-494-3926

- **Burlington Coat Factory (men's and women's)**

510 Howe Avenue
Cuyahoga Falls, OH
330-920-4213

4790 Everhard Road Northwest
Canton, OH
330-497-8353

Tip: Sometimes you can order online, and have items sent to the store for no delivery fee. Some of these retailers run on-line specials that are not available in their stores.

ON-LINE COUPONS OR DISCOUNTS

Below are websites that offer discounts for on-line shopping. You may find a coupon or discount code that could reduce the cost of professional shoes and or clothing.

www.retailmenot.com

www.couponcabin.com

www.currentcodes.com

www.couponcode.com