Office Etiquette: How to Dress and Talk in the Workplace

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Unless your job requires you to wear a uniform, choosing professional attire can be difficult. Of course, there are industry standards, such as the navy blue suit for accontants and attonerys. However, if you are in an industry for which there aren't straightforward rules like there are in fields like those, you may be wondering how to dress for work and job interviews.

If you work in an industry that allows casual attire, you probably have even more questions. For example, how do you keep from crossing the line from informal to sloppy? How should you dress for job interviews? Should you try to "fit in" with your (hopefully) future colleagues or should you lean toward looking your professional best?

7 Tips for Workplace Attire

First, here are some pointers to help you figure out what you should or shouldn't wear, regardless of whether you work in a formal or casual workplace:

1. No matter what the dress code is in your organization—business suits or jeans and t-shirts—your clothes should always be neat and clean.
2. Keep your shoes in good condition. Polish them and take them to a shoemaker for repairs if necessary.
3. Don't wear heels that are too high and make it difficult for you to get around.
4. Your hair should be neatly styled. Bring a comb and duck into a restroom for a quick touchup if necessary before you begin your workday.
5. Keep makeup, if you choose to wear it, subtle.
6. Nails should be clean and neat. Make sure they aren't overly long.
7. Dress for the job you want. If you aspire to be a manager, dress like the managers in your company.

Rules for Casual Dress at Work

Although most people love the idea of not having to wear a suit to work every day, in theory, casual dress policies can be confusing. If your employer's policy doesn't go into much detail, you may wonder how informal your attire can be. The best source for this information is the human resources department or your manager, but here are some general rules you can follow until you can learn more:

- Dressing casually doesn't mean you have a license to be sloppy. Don't wear your old, faded jeans and t-shirts to work.
- Do not, under any circumstances, wear t-shirts with inappropriate things printed on them or that say anything that might make others uncomfortable. For instance, don't wear your politics on

your sleeve, literally, for the same reasons you should avoid discussing politics at work.

- Save your beachwear for days you are off from work. Short-shorts and tank tops are off-limits. Flip flops are also a no-no.
- You can't go wrong with khakis and a sports shirt, sweater, or blouse.
- If you are going to a meeting or making a presentation, professional attire maybe for the occasion.

How to Dress for a Job Interview

In addition to following the general rules for workplace attire, heed this advice before you dress for a job interview:

- Adhere to the prospective employer's dress code, if there is one, or learn about the typical attire. Talk to people in your network who work at the company or know someone who does. Another trick is to hang out in the parking lot or near the building entrance before the workday begins to observe employees arriving for work. If you can't manage to get there before work, you can try to watch people when they leave at the end of the day but don't be fooled. People often change their clothes to get ready for their after-work activities.
- You should always dress slightly better for a job interview than you would if you were an employee. For example, if the company dress code doesn't require suits, you may want to wear one anyway. If very casual clothing is allowed, for example, jeans and t-shirts, you should take it up a notch and instead, put on a nice pair of pants and a button-down shirt. After all, this is a special occasion, and you always want to look your best.
- Cover up tattoos and remove body jewellery until you know whether they are acceptable at that particular workplace. If you dye your hair unusual colours, you may want to go back to your natural hair colour for a little while too. For many people, the ability to express their individuality. through their attire, tattoos, piercings and hair colour is extremely important. If that describes you, take it into consideration when deciding whether a particular work environment is right for you.

Communicating effectively in the office may sound like a no-brainer but it can make or break your entire work experience. Knowing how to approach each individual in the workplace is the key to finding your place in a new office.

Building relationships are essential to communicating in the office Don't be the grump in the corner. Be the person that people actually want to talk to.

Effective communication makes any job much easier.Teamwork only works if your members have clear communication and if you know how they operate. Even if things don't work out and you don't necessarily like your co-workers, a clear line of professionalism is expected and necessary in order for your success and company growth. Maybe you will find out that you have a lot in common with a co-worker and you can build a relationship outside of work. Who knows what great communication can lead to!

Communicate with co-workers may be tricky so you always have to think ahead. It all depends on the environment, there is a difference in communication style depending on your work environment. No matter what, always be professional and think before you speak. I have found that having bad relationships with coworkers truly affects the dynamic of my work and job experience. Stay away from sticky topics that may interrupt your flow. If there is a conflict between you and another coworker, read here for how to properly deal with confrontations at work. Understand that everyone is different a good way to start communicating with coworkers is by asking them out for lunch. You never know how much you have in common!

1. Be professional
2. Understand their form of communication
3. Remember, they're your co-workers first then maybe a friend
4. Do not let personal biases get in the way of your work

When speaking to your superiors, there's a fine line between being professional and being disrespectful. Understanding the right time to communicate with superiors will be beneficial to your success with the company. Everyone doesn't get to talk to their superiors and sometimes you only get to communicate with them via email. Practice your email etiquette, fix your tone, and get ready for business. Understand when you can be relaxed and when it's time to be serious. Understand that you may not always get to speak to your superiors but they are always watching. Always leave a good impression every time you see them and understand that they are busy. Consistency is key when speaking to your Superior. Have a clear voice and don't be nervous. Understand that superiors are people too and most of the time, they want to help. Speak confidently and think about your long-term success.

The best way to practice speaking with coworkers or superiors is to join a project. We all make mistakes with communication but with the right amount of practice, you can be a pro.

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