

The Importance of Your Appearance in an Interview

Like it or not, you are being judged by how you look, how you dress, and how you carry yourself. According to one internet study, an interviewee's physical attributes influenced employers in the following manner:

Attribute	No influence on the interviewer	Slight influence on the interviewer	Strong influence on the interviewer
Grooming	6%	21%	73%
Non-traditional job attire	13%	38%	49%
Handshake	22%	45%	33%
Body piercing	26%	43%	31%
Obvious tattoos	25%	46%	28%
Non-traditional hair color	26%	46%	28%
Unusual hairstyle	30%	49%	21%
Beard	73%	22%	5%
Mustache	83%	16%	1%

This validates the importance of your appearance throughout the interviewing process. Therefore you need to seriously evaluate your style of dress, grooming habits, and body language.

Style of dress:

- Dress for success; wear clothes that fit the company and its culture.
- Dress one step above how you would dress if you were going to work at that business.
- Avoid denim.
- Do not wear clothes that show ANY underwear (boxer shorts, bras, etc.).
- No spaghetti straps, no tank tops.
- Be conscious of your skirt length; NO short skirts!
- Wear pants that fit at the waist. No sagging pants!
- Wear clothes that fit.
- Clothes need to be clean, have no stains, be wrinkle free, and not worn out.
- Keep jewelry to a minimum; no jingling or dangling distractions.
- Wear shoes that are appropriate for job; NO FLIP FLOPS. Could you work all day in the shoes you wear to the interview?
- Empty your pockets before the interview; no bulges or tinkling coins, keys, etc.
- Take off your hat. Hats are unprofessional and sloppy, plus they give you "hat hair". Do not even put one on before the interview.

Grooming:

- You should be freshly bathed/showered and be sure to use deodorant.
- Use perfumes/colognes *sparingly* or none at all. Your "scent" should **not** linger after you leave the interview.
- Hair needs to be clean, trimmed, and neatly combed or arranged.
- Be freshly shaved; mustache/beard neatly trimmed and groomed.
- Be sure to brush your teeth right before your interview, then do not smoke or eat anything until after the interview.
- Use *light* makeup; no dramatic makeup please.

- Pay attention to your hands... clean your fingernails AND cuticles. If you wear polish be sure you have no chips and the color is not too distracting.
- Remove body piercings, tongue rings, and cover tattoos if possible.

Body Language:

- Demonstrate positive body language from the moment you leave your vehicle until you return to it. Many people forget that they may be observed even after leaving the business.
- Shake hands.
- Remember to smile; with your mouth, face, eyes and gestures.
- Maintain positive eye contact.
- Display good manners (open doors for others, wait to be seated, offer assistance when needed).
- Do not interrupt and or argue!
- Do not chew on gum, candy or smoke at any time during the interview.
- NO cells phone use. Leave your cell phone in the car; do not even take it into the building.
- Maintain positive posture:
 - Positive forms of body language: smile, eye contact, solid posture, active listening, nodding.
 - Negative forms of body language: slouching, looking off in the distance, playing with pen, fidgeting in chair, brushing back hair, touching face, chewing gum, mumbling.