



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

## Career Services

Division of Academic Affairs



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## *Interview Attire*

First impressions are crucial during a job interview. Your appearance is part of that important first impression. Put together an appropriate interview look that can be worn through multiple interviews and seasons and allows the interviewer to focus on your knowledge, skills, and abilities. Your culture, religion, and gender identity may influence your choice of attire. It is also important to feel comfortable in your interview clothing.

### **Suit or Jacket and Pants/Skirt/Dress**

- A multi-seasonal, conventional business suit is ideal for most interview situations. Find a suit that is in good condition, is wrinkle free, fits you well, and is as good a quality suit as you can afford.
- Jacket and pants/skirt should match. Solid, dark colors – black, dark gray, navy blue.
- Dress shirt/blouse – conventional colors (beige, white, pastels) for wearing underneath a jacket. Long sleeves. Avoid plunging necklines.
- Tie in colors that complement your outfit. Small or conventional tie patterns keep the focus on your accomplishments.
- Skirts should be knee length.
- You can vary the look of a suit with a different tie, jewelry, or shirt/blouse.

### **Shoes, Socks/Hose**

- Neat and clean dress shoes or closed-toe heels. Shoes should be in good condition.
- Wing tips or brogues (shoes with laces) in a neutral color (black, brown, or navy) project a much more professional look than slip-ons.
- Always wear dark dress socks that cover your legs when you sit down and cross your legs.
- Plain or moderately adorned low-heeled pumps (ideally 1 ½ -2 inches) in a neutral color (black, brown, or navy) are your best choice. No open-heel or open-toe shoes.
- Neutral color hose; your legs should be skin-tone. No runs. Various colored or patterned hose are not recommended.

### **Hair**

- You do not have to choose an ultra-conventional style that just is not you – but you do need to help the recruiter focus on what you are saying rather than your hairstyle, cut, or color.
- Hair should be combed/brushed, clean and pulled back if longer in length.
- Facial hair should be trimmed and well groomed.

### **Accessories**

- Belt should coordinate with your shoes and outfit.
- Anything that jingles, glitters, or otherwise attracts more attention than you do (i.e, facial piercings, ankle bracelets, and over-sized earrings) is not recommended.
- If you choose to wear a non-traditional accessory, be aware some recruiters will feel that non-traditional or non-conventional accessories may not fit their company's image.
- Tattoos – though more common, you want your image to align with the industry/company culture. Consider covering.
- If you carry a portfolio, briefcase, or purse, it must look as tidy and professional as the rest of your outfit. It should ideally be in a neutral color and coordinate with your outfit. At an on-campus interview, it is okay to take your backpack into the session. Recruiters know that in your real life, you are a student and you carry books.

**(Over)**

**Other Considerations (Hygiene, Fragrance, Makeup)**

- Attend to your personal hygiene – your breath should be fresh, teeth clean, you should not have offensive body odor, and your clothes should not smell of smoke.
- Fragrance – Many people are allergic to or offended by strong scents. Heavy fragrances of any kind (perfume/cologne) may prompt your recruiter to cut your interview short.
- Nails – clean, tidy; nail polish should not be chipped; should be neutral in color and design.
- Eyeglasses – spotless/smudge-free.
- Makeup - simple, conventional, natural, professional.