Tips for Business Professional Dress

(adapted from guidelines suggested by BYU’s Marriott School)

**Men**

* Buy at least two suits at the start of your career (you can purchase more later on).
  + Wool suits last longer, breathe better, and wrinkle less than other types of suits.
  + Keep suit colors basic (gray, dark blue, or black).
* Buy at least seven dress shirts—keep colors basic (white, blues, light colors etc.).
  + Keep in mind the potential dry-cleaning cost—wrinkle free shirts do exist!
  + Purchasing shirts with button-down or spread collars are acceptable (remember to remove the stays when the shirt is first washed).
* Be conservative in your tie selection.
  + Match tie to shirt and suit.
  + Purchase “simple” ties that can be worn with multiple shirt/suit color combinations.
  + Do not wear ties with characters and/or childish imagery.
* Wear clean, respectable and comfortable shoes—polished shoes finish the professional look.

**Women**

* Follow the One Hanger Rule: Your outfit should be comprised of garments meant to be worn together. It is not acceptable to mix and match a skirt or pants with a jacket from a different outfit.
* Buy at least two suits at the start of your career (you can purchase more later on).
  + Wool suits last longer, breathe better and wrinkle less than other types of suits.
  + Keep suit colors basic (black, grey, dark blue etc.) with minimal patterns.
* Keep shirts appropriate—V-necks or any other revealing style is not okay to wear.
  + Keep shirt colors basic to maximize their usage.
* Wear clean, respectable and comfortable shoes—polished shoes finish the professional look.
* Stay away from:
  + open-toed shoes
  + too much perfume
  + high-heels (medium to flat is okay)
  + sleeveless tops
  + excessive jewelry
  + *nothing* in any way revealing

Tips for Business Casual Dress

(adapted from guidelines suggested by BYU’s Marriott School)

While no hard and fast rules exist, the following should be considered:

* Business casual includes the word “business” and implies that work is not the playground—do not wear normal, “every day” clothes.
* Always aim towards achieving a dressy look rather than a casual look (tuck in shirts, do not reveal too much skin, make sure garments are pressed and presentable).
* Business casual is sometimes defined as conservative sportswear: dress pants, skirts, collared shirts, loafers, etc.
* Business casual does not include:
  + t-shirts
  + sweatshirts
  + colored jeans/pants
  + shorts
  + sneakers/casual foot wear

Remember: it is unacceptable to look sloppy.

**Keep in Mind:**

Always overdress for the first day of work—while being overdressed may be slightly embarrassing, being underdressed creates a negative first opinion, which will be even more embarrassing. Look at your colleagues on the first day and decide how casual you can be for the next day. It may be good to buy the majority of your wardrobe after your first day of work once you understand the acceptable dress code worn at the office.

If at any time you look in the mirror, wondering whether your outfit is appropriate for work, it is time to rethink your outfit. Your clothing makes a very lasting impression—you want to dress to impress no matter how business casual the dress code allows. Always ask yourself, “What message am I sending by my choice of dress?”