

Cheat Sheet: The Look

THE BASICS:

- Stay away from sheer clothing, low-cut shirts, and anything that shows your belly. Short skirts do not work. Provocative is not professional.
- Get rid of visible body piercings and cover up tattoos. It might seem unfair, but the fact is you could be overlooked for a job because of a tongue stud or tattoo.
- Forget casual wear and worn, torn shoes. Use some shoe polish to shine up your look, or if you can afford to buy new shoes, do.
- Think conservative. Think black, navy or dark brown business suit. It's better to be overdressed than underdressed. If you're not sure what appropriate dress is at the company, call the human resource department and ask.
- Make sure your clothing fits. Uncomfortable clothing is distracting. Your focus should be on what you are saying, not on what you are wearing.
- When you are shopping for interview suits, consider buying a more expensive outfit if it has classic lines and good fabric. It will wear better than a trendier, less expensive suit. You can always add new tops and accessories to freshen your look.
- Stick with solid, dark colors: navy, brown or black.
- You can add style and flare to a black suit with a brightly colored blouse. Keep jewelry and makeup to a minimum.
- Think about your field. If you are going into banking, play it safe with conservative suits. Those in other fields, like fashion or art, can stray a little farther from the most conservative clothing. Those companies may even want you to show your fashion sense. Do some research so you know what clothing is typical of your industry.

The Look Cont.d)

- Keep your skirt length at the knee. Check yourself by sitting down in front of a mirror.
- Make sure your shoes are closed toe with a conservative heel. Wear pantyhose.
- Go easy on the perfume. You don't want to offend anyone.
- Get rid of gum, candy or cigarettes.
- Trim and clean your fingernails.
- Wash and fix your hair in a professional manner. Check your makeup, hair and clothing just before you enter an interview.