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Dressing to Impress

Reason #13 of Why You Didn't Get the Job

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Last week, we spoke about reasons that one may not have been selected for the position. Today, we are going to drill down on reason number 13. Inappropriate hygiene or interview attire.

I am here, to tell you, your resume and phone screen is what got you in the door. What is going to get you the new position, is how you present yourself.

Do you recall the old adage, remember when you are interviewing dress for the position you want, not the position you have. Then once you get a new position, dress for your next position. Meaning, you will need to step it up. Unless the company culture is jeans, t-shirt and yoga pants, no one has ever been faulted for dressing to impress.

Did you know, your clothing is a form of nonverbal communication and is a direct reflection of you?

Your presentation and clothing selection says a lot about you: Your values, individual style, personality, creativity and even economic status. When one is interviewing, how do you express your style and personality all the while trying to demonstrate you may be a fit for your potential new employer?

Keep it classy, business snappy, and professional. Please avoid like the plague the following: Wrinkled, soiled, torn, frayed, stained, skin tight, too baggy, bold colored patterns, and revealing clothing. Flashy jewelry is frowned upon as is visible tattoo's, piercings and non-natural hair color and styles.

WHERE ARE MY LADIES AT?

Ladies, we know, you like to dress to impress a lot of the time. When interviewing, we have some specific items we care to share with you. Gentlemen, please feel free to continue to read, it is ladies first around here.

LET US GO BACK TO THE BASICS

Did you ever hear, less is more? Interviewing is not a time to pull out the hot pants, big hoop earrings, and LulaRoe dress. If you feel comfortable wearing it out to a bar or grocery shopping on an everyday basis, the rule of thumb would be not to wear it for your interview. Neutral colors are a great canvas to start with. Tan, black and or gray is excellent choices for a suit. Conservative suits with a classic cut or flare are acceptable. Regardless of the company culture and you have heard of people wearing exercise apparel all day, it is ill-advised for you to show up in a similar outfit. Skirts should be at knee length, with a neutral toned hose, even if it 95 degrees outside. Coordinating with most primary color blouse or shirt is acceptable. Make sure you mind the cut of the blouse as no one is going to tip you out at the end of the interview for what you may be showing.

DANCING QUEEN

True story. One time, we had an employer call us about one of our candidates. She chose to wear clear, lucite, platform stiletto's that were 7 inches. All the interviewer could come up with was her pants may have been long. She too did not get the job. Keep the heel length no more than 3 inches. Closed toed or Peep-toed shoes are acceptable. Again, make sure they match your outfit in a very conservative form. Showing up in a black suit and bright pink stiletto's isn't the look you should be going for.

CAN WE MAKEUP?

Understated beauty is a lost art. It is not necessary to walk into an interview with smokey raccoon eyes. Nor is it a requirement to put on the 1-inch mink false lashes. Go for the classic look and again, neutral colors to enhance your natural beauty! Did you know there are some people that are allergic to perfume? It can be distracting if you smell like you just walked out of a department store and tried on 10 fragrances. The simple recommendation would be to use a lightly scented bath soap and a LITTLE bit of lotion. Please wear deodorant. You never know how sensitive your interviewer's nose is. While you may think you don't smell of body odor, you may smell like week old gym clothes with a hint of garlic.

NINE-INCH NAILS?

No, not the band. Let's talk about this. If you can pick a lock with our nails, or use your nails for a toothpick; they are simply too long for an interview. We are not certain who started the coffin, scalpel, or razor like the point nails that can be considered a deadly weapon, but let me assure you none of those are acceptable. Nor is it ok to have sparkles, dead insects, or floating fish in your nails with glitter. Go solicit the help of your local nail salon and get a nice neutral pink, sheer or red nail polish. It is highly recommended that your nails be no longer than ¼ inch long. Period. One employer shared feedback with us that a lady tapped her nails on his desk and cheese or Cheeto crust fell out of her nails and onto the desk. Needless to say, she did not get the job. It is wise to also use an old toothbrush and clean out your nails prior to the interview

HAIR BANDS

Freshly washed, clean, well-kept hair is imperative. You can have it in a bun, side knot, down, curled, but please for all that is good, do not put flowers, large bows, or anything too flashy in your hair. If you choose to wear a scarf for medical and or religious reasons, that is absolutely acceptable. Wearing a bandana is not.

BOUNCING BANGLES BATMAN

Are you getting this? Simple. Pearls, a pair of stud earrings or very small hoops are ok. If your bracelets are jingling like Santa's sleigh bells, leave them at home.

GENTLEMAN

Guys, it is pretty easy and not as in depth to keep it real for you, on dressing to impress. Did you know dressing appropriately for your interview gives one more self-confidence and credibility?

THAT DOESN'T IMPRESS ME MUCH?

Wearing a Robert Graham limited edition shirt to your first interview along with turquoise jewelry and a big belt buckle is not the way to go. Yes, that actually happened. It is also advisable not to wear a pair of Dickies with faded out knees. Nor is it advisable to wear your favorite band shirt under your dress shirt. You never know what may show through.

WHAT SUITS YOU BEST?

A solid gray, black, navy or tan suit that FITS is preferred. Suits are not made for individual body styles, it is recommended to get it tailored. Most department store and or men's specialty stores offer free or significantly discounted tailoring. Your button down shirt should be blue, white, navy, gray or light in color to coordinate with your suit. Leather shoes that complement your suit is also a good idea. Remember, match your belt to your shoes.

HAIR TODAY, GONE TOMORROW

Gentlemen, it really is easy. Get a fresh haircut and clean shave. Some employers are good with facial hair, just keep it clean, trimmed and well groomed. It is expected for you to have clean nails. If you are working in a shop and turning wrenches, get the Gojo Orange hand cleaner and degreaser, do the best you can.

I PUT A SMELL ON YOU

Your significant other may love your cologne, but it may not be for everyone. Keep your spritz very limited. Deodorant is a necessity. Your interviewer would not be thrilled to smell body odor or onions for that matter. Fresh breath, that is a plus. No one needs to know about your Halitosis. Make sure you floss and brush your teeth. Chew on a mint, prior to walking in for your interview.

In closing, we are not trying to oppress your style or be stuffy conservatives. We understand your clothing is a reflection of you. Remember, your appearance makes a statement, be sure it is the one you want to leave an employer with.

