A guide to Appropriate Professional Attire

Hello my name is Lindsey and I am an Intern with the Career Development Center at the University of St. Thomas.

When meeting an employer, dressing appropriately is every bit as important as having solid presentation skills. When an employer meets you for the first time, they will form an immediate impression based on what they see such as what you are wearing and how you present yourself.

We all know how important and powerful the first impression can be. Whether you are meeting an employer at an event such as a job fair, networking reception, panel presentation or during an interview, follow these tips:

Ladies these suggestions are for you:
- Hair should be combed, clean, and away from the face.
- Wear minimal make-up with no sparkles or glitter and avoid flashy jewelry.
- Wear a blouse that is not deep cut.
- Avoid scarves that are distracting.
- Wear a tailored suit. Traditional business attire means a dark, conservative skirt suit or pant suit
- Be sure that skirts are no more than one inch above the knee. Do not wear thigh-high or floor-length skirts.
- Wear nude or black hosiery.
- Wear polished dress pumps.

Gentlemen now it’s your turn:
- Hair should be combed, clean, and neat.
- Clean shaven face or neatly trimmed beard.
- Tie is neatly knotted. Tie should coordinate with the suit.
- Wear a tailored suit. Traditional business attire means a dark, conservative suit with a pressed, long-sleeved shirt.
- Wear polished dress shoes with dark socks.

Both genders should remember to:
- Wear an appropriate watch that is not too bulky, and has no alarms.
- Avoid cologne or perfume.
- Bring a folio with copies of your resume, cover letter, and list of references.
- Do not bring a backpack.
- Turn off your cell-phone.
- And, please do not chew gum!!
These are a few basic professional attire suggestions. If you have additional questions concerning professional attire or any other career related concerns, be sure to visit the University of St. Thomas Career Development Center for additional resources or to meet with a counselor.