



Interview Etiquette and Importance of Appearance

How shall I dress for my interview?

Your attire plays an important supporting role. It supports your image as a person who takes the interview process seriously. It reflects the maturity necessary to make the decision to become a doctor, a professional worthy of a patient's trust. It shows respect for SCCO and the standards we uphold.

Business attire is a must for the interview. Optometry is a profession where you must make first impressions every day with your patients. In a venue such as this, appearance is very important and we expect you to know this.

Your attire should be noticed as being appropriate and well-fitting, but it should not take center stage. If you are primarily remembered for your interview attire, this is probably because you made an error in judgment! Dressing nicely and appropriately is a compliment to the person you meet, so if in doubt, err on the side of dressing better than you might need to.

Women, a solid, neutral colored pant or skirt suit works best. Opt for moderate shoes with closed toes. No bare legs, opting for neutral hosiery or non-pattered colored hosiery. Limit the jewelry. A neat, professional hairstyle works best. Make-up should be natural and be careful not to wear too much perfume. Manicured, clean nails are important for a health care provider. Avoid big purses and leave your back packs at home. A small leather briefcase or portfolio would be a better choice. Definite "don'ts" are short skirts, low necklines, bare mid-drifts, tennis shoes, open toed-shoes, leggings, jeans or see-through fabrics. Cover visible tattoos.

Men, solid neutral colors work best. A suit is a nice touch, but slacks and sport coat is fine. A dress shirt with conservative tie is a must. Make sure your clothes are freshly pressed. Opt for dark socks with professional, clean shoes. Very limited to no jewelry. Go for the neat, professional hairstyle. Take it easy on the aftershave and make sure your fingernails are neatly trimmed and clean. Leave your backpacks at home. A small leather briefcase or portfolio is a better choice. Definite "don'ts" are knit or short sleeve shirts, neck jewelry, tennis shoes or a trendy hair do. Cover visible tattoos.

Do shake hands firmly. **Don't** have a limp or clammy handshake. Women, for you especially, **don't** offer just the tips of your fingers for a handshake. Business etiquette describes a firm handshake as being "web to web" (the web of your palm). **Do** make good eye contact with all interview panel members no matter which one asked the question. **Don't** be soft-spoken. A forceful voice projects confidence. **Do** have a high confidence and energy level, but **don't** be overly aggressive.

The way you look and act determines what people think about you. If you smile, people think you are receptive and interested. If you wear wrinkled clothing, people think you do not care. How you feel about yourself on the inside should show on the outside.

If we want an interviewer to respond to us in a positive way, we must look and act positively!

“The Medical School Interview—Secrets and a System for Success” by Jeremiah Fleenor, M.D. is a book with an excellent chapter about dressing for the interview. You can get the book on Amazon: http://www.amazon.com/Medical-School-Interview-Secrets-Success/dp/097795594X/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1307731841&sr=1-1

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