

How to give the best first impression in a Job Interview – part 1

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First impression does count, especially in a job interview. The interview is not all about answering the questions right; you also need to make an unforgettable appearance. To help you succeed with the latter we have spoken to experts in different fields such as HR, personal styling, body language and beauty.

Impress with your appearance



With twenty years of HR Management, Sandra Beale at [SJ Beale HR Consult Ltd](#) has plenty of experience in employee relationships and seen many people attending job interviews.

How much does appearance affect the result of an interview? What should and are employers really looking for?

Appearance is really important when attending an interview. [Research from Monster](#) has shown that interviewers make up their mind about a person within the first seconds of meeting them during an interview so first impressions count.

What would you suggest women and men should wear to make a great first impression? Does this change depending on what job you're applying for?

I would always recommend being smartly dressed no matter what the role.

What do you see as not acceptable to wear in an interview?

Never wear jeans and trainers even if the interviewers have indicated casual attire which sometimes happens.

A survey from makeup brand Escentual showed that two thirds of UK bosses wouldn't hire a woman without makeup in the interview. Is this discrimination?

I don't consider the makeup issue to be discrimination. It is all about being presentable and there is the notion that make up can improve someone's appearance and shows they take pride in their appearance.

Have you seen similar results for men wearing full on beard for example?

There is a recent increasing trend for men to have beards, but in an interview process they can be off putting. I always recommend clean shaven, unless the person has a beard for religious purposes.

Your top 3 tips for a successful interview!

1. Be prepared by doing research on the company and the job you're applying for
2. Be presentable
3. You've only got one chance so sell yourself!

Be aware of your body language



Mo Shapiro is a managing partner of [INFORM Training & Communication](#) who specialises in coaching individuals to present and perform to their maximum ability.

Job interviews can be a nervous situation for many, how does this affect your body language?

Some people's voices might go squeaky or some go quiet. It's also common to lose eye contact which can give the impression of interviewees to appear distracted or unfocused. Fidgeting is also a normal trait in nervous people and some want to make themselves look smaller by hunching up.

How should you act in order to give a positive and "I'm the right person for this job" attitude using body language?

Walk and sit tall with your head up to show that you are someone who wants to be heard. Your handshake should be firm, not like a sloppy fish but you don't want to hurt your future employer either. Make sure to keep eye contact, nod your head when you're agreeing to something and try not to cross your arms. Practise so that you know which body language to use when answering certain questions. Notice positive body language in others which you can copy.

How much does your body language affect the result of the interview? What are and should interviewers look for?

Your nervousness happens unconsciously and so does the perception of it. Some people might notice but they might not really register. Most people interviewing will give you a chance and disregard the nervous body language as it is common in these situations. For people looking to hire within the fashion industry it's fair to say they look for outgoing and confident people and that needs to show in your body language and your outfit.

Your top 3 tips for a successful interview!

1. Ready my books, '[Successful Interviews](#)' for example.
2. People notice your body language before your words so try to have matching, consistent messages. If you say you are confident but look down on your toes whilst saying it the message is that you're not.
3. Be aware of your first impression.

Look smart to show respect



Adam Walker has always been passionate about male fashion and grooming and to help and educate men about the growing options concerning male grooming and men's fashion he designed [The Male Stylist](#).

What would you suggest men should wear to make a great first impression?

You should always turn up to an interview looking smart; it's a sign of respect to the interviewer and shows you've made an effort. It also shows that you want the job and are keen to impress.

Does this change depending on what job you're applying for?

In finance or law you should always wear a good suit, shirt and tie combo keeping it simple but sharp. For something more creatively focused you can afford to add a little flair like patterned shirts, casual blazers and variety in colour.

No matter what the job is for though, make sure you look smart and feel confident. When you feel comfortable and confident it shows to those around you so make your outfit your own.



This kind of outfit is smart yet has a good contrast that adds character and won't make you fade in with the rest of the candidate crowd. A good outfit is easy to put together, but a great outfit is made in the details. Pocket squares and tie slides are great ways of adding details that complement an outfit beautifully.

What would you recommend men to think about regarding their grooming?

Keep it tidy, for both your hair and beard.

How should you keep your beard?

If you don't have a beard, make sure you're freshly clean shaven so you look sharp, 5 o'clock shadow is not a good look for interviews.

For men with beards or designer stubble, make sure it's trimmed and tidy. A well groomed beard adds a level of gravitas to your look, whilst a dishevelled one looks lazy and unprofessional.

Do you think employers would think of men differently if they are wearing a full on beard compared to being clean shaved?

As a man who stays clean shaven I think it can make me look younger which isn't necessarily desirable if you're going for a serious or senior role. At the same time I know that beards can be frowned upon by employers because they believe them to be untidy.

<http://blog.bonprix.co.uk/blog/fashion-2/give-best-first-impression-job-interview-part-1/>

Your best bet is to make sure that you are groomed well and look your best; again it's about feeling comfortable and confident.

Your top 3 tips for a successful interview!

1. Look your best.
2. Shine your shoes. Nothing says "lacks attention to detail" like scuffed, muddy footwear.
3. Don't forget to smell good. A subtle fragrance can really be a great way to make a good impression in an interview.