

- A Pair work** Do you agree that people judge others by the way they dress? Discuss and share your ideas with the class.

A Clothes Encounter in the Business World

The Queen of England reportedly told Prince Charles, “Dress gives one the outward sign from which people can judge the inward state of mind.” Clearly, she was saying what many are reluctant to accept: that people judge us by the way we dress, especially in the business world, where one’s choice of apparel reflects professional behavior and credibility. Therefore, keep these points in mind when deciding what to wear to work.

Professional Dress for Men

- Choose a conservative suit in a dark color such as navy, black, or gray. When you add pattern and color, the focus is on your clothing, rather than your professionalism.
- Ties should be made of silk or a silklike fabric and should be simple and subtle.
- Socks should be calf-length or above. Make sure they match not only what you are wearing, but also each other.
- Shoes should be conservative, clean, and polished.
- Keep jewelry to a minimum. Limit yourself to a conservative watch, a wedding band, and maybe a college ring.
- Don’t wear too much aftershave or cologne.

Professional Dress for Women

- Start with a skirted suit or pants suit. Skirts should be knee-length or slightly below. Pants should break at the top of the foot or shoe. Blouses and sweaters provide color and variety.
- Neutral or flesh-tone stockings are most appropriate in the business world. Never wear dark hose with light-colored clothing or shoes.
- Choose conservative shoes. A low heel is most appropriate. Open-toed shoes are not office attire.
- Keep jewelry simple: one ring per hand, one earring per ear. Accessories should reflect your personality, not diminish your credibility.

Finally, for those who think it’s not what you wear but who you are that creates success, give that some more thought. It’s true that business skills and experience count, but not unless your choice of attire makes a good first impression.

Source: “A Clothes Encounter in the Business World,” by Lydia Ramsey, www.studiomatrix.com.

- B** Is the advice given in the article for men (*M*), women (*W*), or for men and women (*MW*)? Write the correct letter.

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| _____ 1. Wear dark colors. | _____ 4. Wear colorful sweaters. |
| _____ 2. Choose a low heel. | _____ 5. Don’t choose patterned clothes. |
| _____ 3. Don’t wear too much jewelry. | _____ 6. Don’t mix dark and light colors. |

- C Group work** Discuss these questions. Then share your answers with the class.

1. Which suggestions in the article do you agree with most and least?
2. Do you think younger businesspeople should wear the same kind of clothes as older people in the same profession? Why or why not?