Men’s Professional Dress Seminar
General Rules

- “A suit is no longer a suit. It’s a statement.”
- When in doubt, err on the side of more formal wear.
- Once you’ve got the job, take your cues from co-workers.
- Big name labels don’t equate to quality and value.
- Stay away from fashions that make you “stand out” from the norm and inappropriately draw attention to you.
- You’ll never go wrong with classics.
Suits

- **Best bet** – 100% worsted wool – they’ll wear longer, dry clean better, and last longer than blends.

- **Blends** – (suits that combine fabrics such as wool & polyester, polyester & cotton, or wool and silk, wool and nylon) – these typically “hold a press” longer (resist wrinkling), but tend to wear out sooner, and tend develop an undesirable “sheen” in certain areas. Blends can be good secondary suits.

- **First suit purchases** – The Four Basics (Year-round suits, 100% wool, Tropical Weights)
  - Navy Solid
  - Navy Pinstripe
  - Charcoal Solid
  - Gray Pinstripe
Suit Do’s and Don’ts

- DON’T wear a pocket square – possibly appropriate for “high-fashion” markets, like New York or LA.
- DON’T get involved with “trendy” looks, such as extreme colors, prints or lapel sizes. Your look should be classic and understated, conveying intelligence, professionalism and a knowledge of how to dress.
- DON’T mix and match suit tops and bottoms.
- DON’T dry clean suits and slacks more than twice a season.
- DON’T order suits from a catalog. Buy from a competent store clerk who can alter the suit in-house.
- DO cuff suit pants and pleated slacks.
- DO purchase two and three-button suits.
- DON’T buy double-breasted suits.
- DO make sure that your sleeve length goes down to the joint in your wrist, so that one-quarter to one-half inch of your shirt sleeve is visible.
Classic Suit Fabrics & Styles

Herringbone  Chalk Stripe  Glen Plaid  Window Pane

Pin Stripe  Birdseye  Houndstooth
Interview Dress DON’T’s!
Shirts

Popular shirt collar types:

- **Oxford button-down.** Typically viewed as the most casual of collar types. Can be worn with sport coats – can be worn with or without a tie.

- **Straight (or Point).** The most common and versatile collar. Considered fairly dressy – can be worn with or without a tie.

- **Spread.** The dressiest collar style of all. A tie should be worn with this collar.

- **Tab collar.** A constrained-looking collar, it is neater but not necessarily dressier than a spread collar. The tab performs the same function as a collar bar, without the showiness of the jewelry.

- **French cuffs.** Not a collar but a sleeve type (foldover cuff worn with cuff links). Usually comes with a spread or straight collar. Considered very dressy, appropriate for formalwear or dressy businesswear. *Not* appropriate for young men.
Shirts – collar types

Button-down

Straight

Spread
Shirt Do’s and Don’ts

- DON’T wear striped shirts with striped, pinstripe or glen plaid suits.
- DON’T wear short sleeve dress shirts.
- DO purchase long sleeve shirts that have a button on the placket.
- DO wear an undershirt under your dress shirt.
- DO wear shirts made of 100% cotton (no-iron).
- DO wash your shirt after each wear, paying special attention to the collar and cuffs.
- DO get rid of the shirt if you get perspiration stains on it.
- DO understand that starch can shorten the life of a shirt by causing the cotton fibers to become brittle.
- DO hang your shirts to dry vs. throwing them in a clothes dryer.
Ties

- DON'T ever wear a clip-on tie.
- DON'T wear tie jewelry such as tie bars and collar bars.
- DON'T wear a striped tie with a striped shirt. Avoid wearing striped shirts with any tie that has lots of geometric lines.
- DON'T wear garish or silly ties.
- DO tie your tie so that the tip of the tie comes approximately down to the center of your belt.
- DO store your ties by hanging them up.
- DO dry clean ties when they become spotted.
- DO untie your tie when you remove it.
- DO be careful when ironing your tie if it becomes wrinkled – silk can be easily ruined by an iron that is too hot.
Shoes & Belts

- DON’T wear a casual belt with a business suit.
- DON’T wear shoes with hardware on them, such as a logo.
- DO wear suspenders or a belt.
- DO wear over-the-calf socks with suits.
- DO wear belts that match your shoe color.
- DO make sure that you own at least one pair of black and one pair of cordovan dress shoes.
- DO make sure that your shoes are darker than your suit.
- DO extend the life of your shoes by keeping them polished.
Dress Belt Do’s and Don’ts
Oxford Shoes

Plain Cap-Toe  Saddle  Plain-Toe Blucher
Oxford & Slip On Shoes

Wing-Tip  Tassel Loafer  Penny Loafer
Outerwear

Two types: Trench coats and top coats.

- DO NOT wear a short coat (e.g., ski parka, etc.) with a suit or sport coat.
- Make sure these coats fit comfortably over your suit or sport coat.

Trench coats

- Liners can be removed for use as a raincoat in warmer weather.

Top coats

- A more formal look worn in colder climates
- Usually 100% wool or a cashmere-wool blend
- Typical colors are navy, charcoal or black in single- or double-breasted.
Outerwear
Other Appearance Issues

- Jewelry (e.g., earrings, lapel pins, etc.)
  - *Wedding band + watch – period!*
- Briefcase
- Watches
  - *No sports watches for interviews*
- Facial hair
- Physical fitness and weight
- Tanning
- Personal hygiene