

Dress For Success! Lisa Quast's Top Tips

What follows is an excerpt from Lisa Quast's newly released book "Your Career, Your Way".

People Do Judge Books By Their Covers: Your work ethic might show that you're hard working and knowledgeable, but attire that implies laziness and sloppiness can very easily overshadow your achievements. If your wardrobe implies anything other than professionalism, your boss will likely overlook you for promotions and choose someone clients and other team members can take more seriously.

One Style Doesn't Fit All: Appropriate work attire varies among industries. Wearing a navy blue suit, minimal makeup and no jewelry would make a woman working at a design firm seem uncreative, but that same outfit would be ideal for a position at a law firm. Observe others in your company or attend a networking event to see what successful women in your field are wearing.

Dress For the Job You Want: Look two to three levels above your current position and begin building your appearance to match that higher level. As you improve your skill set to obtain the job you want, your bosses will already be able to envision you filling that role.

It's Not Just About Clothes: Don't forget about hair and makeup when creating your professional appearance. Spending time and energy to update both conveys you take pride in yourself and that you stay on top of current trends, which are both important qualities to employers.

Ask for Help: If you feel lost on how to start building a professional wardrobe, ask for help! Go to a large department store and request a personal shopper. They're trained to help you choose items that best fit your career, body type and lifestyle, and often they're available at no extra charge

Don't Be Afraid to Stand Out: Women often think professional attire has to be boring. That is not the case! Let your personality shine through by adding some interest to a dark suit with a printed blouse, working in a pop of color with bright but sensible shoes or wearing a piece of statement jewelry.

Step Up Casual Friday: Even where you're given the option to dress casually for work, take it up a notch from your weekend wear. If wearing jeans, choose a dark wash with a trouser cut. Instead of t-shirts opt for a silk blouse, and always have a third piece like a blazer or cardigan, which helps give your outfit that extra bit of polish.



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Be Prepared: I recommend keeping a nice blazer and pair of shoes at your desk. This way, you'll be ready to walk into an impromptu meeting with clients or the higher-ups with confidence.

Lisa Quast is a frequently sought after woman's career expert and founder of Career Woman, Inc., a consulting agency that helps women reach their professional goals. She's also the author of the award winning book *Your Career, Your Way* and a regular contributor to *Forbes.com*.



Career Woman, Inc.