

Hints on personal impact and presentation

This information will help you prepare for your job or apprenticeship interview and understand how to make a good impression. Remember, you never get a second chance to make a first impression!

Step 1: Prior to the interview – preparation

- Always confirm that you will be attending by phone, email (or in some cases letter).
- Do your research on the job/apprenticeship and company and practice your interview technique, perhaps with a friend or family member.
- Make a practice trip to the interview location so you know where you are going and approximately how long it will take to get there. If you are travelling by public transport, remember to factor in time for delays!
- Save a contact number in your phone, in case you are delayed and need to let the interviewer know.

Step 2: Prior to the interview – plan what to wear

This is a job interview so do **not** wear anything that you would wear for a night out with your friends.

- No jeans, no tights, no sports-wear, no shorts
- Vans, flip flops, open toed shoes, Ugg boots, espadrilles, crocs and trainers are not suitable footwear.
- Take a look at what the contestants wear on *The Apprentice*. They are dressed for business but will impress any interviewer for any job.

The rule of thumb – interview clothes should be smarter than anyone would wear to work there. Your dress sense is clearly very personal and individual to you; however, these guidelines might help:

For Men	For Women
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 piece suit – light grey to dark colors, shirt with collar and tie, proper shoes and socks. • Or smart dark plain pants, plain sweater/pullover or contrasting jacket and shirt with collar and tie, shoes and socks. • You could substitute collar and tie for smart plain polo shirt or short-sleeved shirt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skirt or pants (any colour) with blouse/shirt and proper shoes and tights (very high heels are a bad idea). • Or a plain, smart dress with proper shoes/sandals and tights (if wearing a skirt). • Or skirt/pants, sweater/pullover, shirt/blouse and shoes.
<p><i>Remember you are best to go for the most formal look, even if you think the job will not need you to dress that way or provides a uniform.</i></p>	<p><i>Never wear flip-flop type sandals and if wearing a skirt make sure it is long enough to be comfortable and professional.</i></p>

Everyone:

- Your clothes must be clean, fresh and ironed; shoes should also be clean too.
- No offensive logos on display, minimal jewelry and make-up (unfortunately some people are still negative about piercings so take them out).
- Remember, some jobs may mean that long nails and nail polish are not allowed, for example nurse/career/caterer.
- Whatever the fashion, please keep underwear under clothes; plunging necklines, visible bra straps or visible boxers can give the wrong impression.

Step 3: Ensure you are clean and freshly showered/bathed

- Don't overuse the 'fragrances' but clean hair, nails and breath is vital.

Step 4: On arriving at your interview

- Arrive 10 minutes early.
- Smile and be polite to everyone.
- Remember to shake hands and look people in the eye.

Step 5: Speech and voice

- Speak clearly and always say 'please' and 'thank you'.
- Never use rude, offensive or swear words. If a bad word pops out by mistake, apologise immediately. After all, you were nervous.

Step 6: Saying goodbye

- Thank the interviewer for their time and shake their hands.
- Leave them with an impression that will make them want to call you back!

What do employers say?

As part of research conducted by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), employers said that they noticed the following things, in terms of impact and presentation, when they interviewed some young people:

- Difficulties in scheduling interviews with candidates – people not turning up, or if a phone interview, not giving any availability during the day
- A lack of confidence and young people are often intimidated by the workplace environment
- General lack of understanding of expectations – punctuality, what to wear, how to present themselves and how to interact
- Young people seeming 'blasé' or not interested/motivated in an interview
- Little knowledge of basic work behavior and etiquette
- A lack of understanding about the organisation that is interviewing them

However, if you prepare properly and follow the simple steps above, you will be putting yourself in the best possible position to succeed during your interview.