

Personal Impact Guide To

UPWARDLY MOBILE CLOTHING

for upwardly
mobile men

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INTRODUCTION



Makeup and fashion have been my passion ever since I was a little girl. Growing up, one of my favourite things to do was play dress-up in my mother's clothes. My friend's mother was the local Avon Lady (as they were called in the 1960s) and one day my friend showed me her mother's make-up kit. Fascinated by all the colours and textures, we decided to try them out. With the make-up and clothes, our looks were complete! I was in heaven. At least until our mothers found out.

Over the years, my interest in personal presence expanded. What is it that makes some people stand out? Is it just makeup and clothing, or is there more to it? The search for these answers took me on a journey down many roads over the years. I became fascinated by image and

perception. Following my passion, I completed the John Casablancas Professional Modeling Program, the Vancouver Community College Esthetician School Program, the John Casablancas Professional Make-up Artistry Diploma as well as the Marketing & Public Relations Program at the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT). Combining all my talents and interests, I was honoured to become the first certified image professional (AICI, CIP) in Western Canada through the Association of Image Consultants International.

As the founder of Personal Impact, International, I have over 25 years' experience in the arenas of Personal Appearance, Personal Branding and Professional Marketing. My clientele is varied and ranges from stay-at-home moms to business executives. I offer a broad range of experience and in-depth knowledge to men and women of all ages, in all industries. I am committed to helping others improve their quality of life through self-awareness, personal change and affirmative growth.

In today's fast paced world, there is no second chance to make a good first impression. Even though most of us would like to be judged solely on our merit, our ability and our personality, the reality is that we are initially judged by the image we present. And this perception will affect how others react and respond to us. I have learned that anyone can have a great image and presence. With a little tweaking in one or more of the areas that represent personal image, you can make a more positive impact on others.

There are 8 special reports in this series that cover personal care, makeup, wardrobe planning, business dress, dining etiquette, communication and manners. Throughout this series, I will show you how to reach your personal and professional best in an upbeat, non-threatening manner. I hope you enjoy learning about these topics as much as I have.

WELCOME TO UPWARDLY MOBILE CLOTHING FOR UPWARDLY MOBILE MEN

Research has shown that how one appears is directly connected to one's thoughts, feelings and behaviour... *and the reactions and responses of others.* ~ Judith Rasband, AICI CIM.

In today's fast-paced world, you don't get a second chance to make a first good impression. As a real estate professional in the late 1980's, I quickly learned that first impressions really do count. A quality matched business suit, known as the power suit, was my greatest ally. The power suit told the world that I meant business. If you look successful, potential clients generally assume that you are.

However, the rules on business dress have changed. Since the dawn of 'business casual' in the 1990's, companies continue to shift their requirements on what to wear at work. Some have established dress codes with specific guidelines, while others leave it open for their employees to determine what's appropriate. Without defined guidelines, dressing for work can be very confusing. When you're competing for sales, jobs or promotions, professional polish can be your competitive edge. I have learned that anyone can have great image and presence. With a little tweaking in one or more of the areas that represent personal image, you can make a more positive impact on others. In 'Upwardly Mobile Clothing for Upwardly Mobile Men' I will show you how to make your work clothes work for you!

WHY IS IMAGE IMPORTANT?

Image is based on:

Verbal Communication:	The words we use and the tone of our voice.
Non-verbal Communication:	Body language, our actions and posture.
Visual Communication:	Our physical features and grooming practices. The clothing we wear and how we wear it.

- How we appear accounts for more than half of the impression we make.
- People who use their image as a business tool have an advantage over their competitors.

Have you ever wondered why some people move up the corporate ladder quickly, while others consistently get passed over for promotion? Or why certain people do so well in sales? Yes, education, talent and people skills are major factors; but image also plays a major role.

Did you know?

"Image determines how you see yourself and ultimately how the world sees you. This means that your entire life depends on the clarity, consistency, and quality of your image. When you cultivate this image, doors will open before you." ~ Lauren Solomon, AICI CIP

Most companies spend a lot of money each year developing and maintaining their company image. As a representative of your company, it's up to you to reinforce this image by presenting yourself in a way that's consistent with the company brand. Let's face it – when we meet someone for the first time, whether we like it or not, we instantly form an impression about them. If the impression matches what they are trying to communicate, we are more likely to trust them. Once trust is established, it's easier to build rapport and strong business relationships.

Benefits of a positive image

- Potential clients are much more likely to believe in the product or service you are selling.
- Current clients will see consistency between you and the company brand, therefore building trust.
- People will take you more seriously.
- You will look like you fit in.
- Employers will see you as a team player dedicated to the business, which may lead to opportunities for advancement.
- By dressing for the job you want in the organization, employers are more likely to believe you have what it takes to do the job.

WHAT TO WEAR – WHEN

Appropriate business dress depends on the industry, the company culture and your position. Before deciding what to wear consider the following:

Industry

- ☑ The first step is to look at the industry. What is the standard of dress in your industry? Is it generally more conservative or more fashionable?

Company Culture

- ☑ Next, look at the company culture. Is your company traditional or contemporary? Is the standard of dress formal, casual or fashion-forward? Do the standards vary between departments?

Did you know?

"How one looks on the job is the single most important factor in a person's professional success." ~ John Molloy

Your Position

- ☑ What is your business position or rank in the company? (Entry level, Middle Management, Senior Management, etc.?)
- ☑ Who will see you and how will they be dressed? (Clients, coworkers, nobody, etc.?)
- ☑ What do you do? (Sales, Technical, Finance, Customer Service, etc?)
- ☑ How do you want to be perceived by the public, your clients, and your employer? (Do you want to come across as Authoritative, Creative, Original, Functional, Stable, etc.?)
- ☑ What is your activity and purpose each day? Will you be at a sales call or a business mixer? Will you be in the back room counting inventory or out on a construction site? Prepare according to where you'll be and what you'll be doing.

What you do, who you see, and the industry you are in will dictate how you should dress. Some of us wear many hats and may need to dress differently for various occasions. However, it is still important to maintain a certain level of consistency.

Four Categories of Business Dress

There are 4 categories of Professional Dress. If we think of them on a continuum, the most formal category is Formal Business Attire, the next is Semi-Formal Business Attire, followed by Informal Business Attire and then Casual Work Attire. *Casual Work attire is only acceptable for specific work environments and situations.*

- **Formal Business Attire** – most formal
 - ☑ Tailored design details
 - ☑ Matching jacket and trousers

- **Semi-Formal Business Attire**
 - ☑ Always includes a tailored style jacket
 - ☑ Coordinated garments that are mainly tailored with some untailored details to soften the look

- **Informal Business Attire**
 - ☑ A mixture of tailored and untailored details
 - ☑ No jacket

- **Casual Work Attire** – most casual
 - ☑ One or more clothing layers
 - ☑ Mainly untailored design details

WHEN TO WEAR FORMAL BUSINESS ATTIRE

When you want to appear authoritative, credible, powerful, classic, stable, influential, conservative, formal or precise, choose formal business attire. This category includes **multiple layers** that are **tailored**. Tailored details are:

Structured	Matching / Neutral Colours / Dark Light Contrast
Angular Shapes	Firm and Smooth Textures / Matching Fabrics
Straight Lines	Small Prints & Patterns
Form Fitted	Collar or Lapel

The most formal work attire is: **the Matched Business Suit.**

Most Formal:

No print (solid) or small print
A necktie
Collared dress shirt

More Informal:

Medium prints
No necktie
Polo style shirt or uncollared top (only if permitted by dress code)

A Matched Business Suit is best when:

- presenting yourself as a Leader, an Expert or an Authority figure
- it matches your industry or the industry of your client
- attending important meetings
- at a job interview
- negotiating a deal
- doing international work
- making a presentation
- you need flexibility in your clothing categories

Did You Know?

The structure of the suit with its square shoulders and the extended bottom of the jacket, create the illusion of greater upper body strength and size.

Although each industry and company has its own culture and policies for acceptable standards of dress, you may want to consider this category for the following:

Executive, Legal, Upper Management, Business Administration & Finance

WHEN TO WEAR SEMI-FORMAL BUSINESS ATTIRE

When you want to appear more approachable, receptive and current, while still appearing influential, capable, credible, dependable and polished, choose semi-formal business attire. This category includes multiple layers that are **predominantly tailored** mixed with some **untailored** details.

The key garment for Semi-formal Business Attire is: **the Tailored Jacket (Sport Coat / Blazer)**.

- When worn with a coordinating / non-matching tailored style pant, the tailored jacket creates a softly tailored unmatched suit.
- In Canada and the U.S., this is the highest level of Business Casual attire and the most relaxed Formal Business Attire.

Bring it Up a Notch with:

No print (solid), small print
A necktie
Collared dress shirt
Trousers or slacks

Bring it Down a Notch with:

Medium to large prints
No necktie
Golf or Polo style shirt, uncollared top
Khaki's, dark jeans or cords (only if permitted by dress code)

Sport Coat or Blazer is best when:

- the company dress expectations are Formal to Business Casual
- you are presenting yourself as more approachable, yet still knowledgeable and efficient
- you are in a formal or semi-formal business situation
- it fits with client's company culture
- Semi-formal business attire is expected and you need to make your best impression
- you are attending conventions or conferences
- you need flexibility in your clothing categories

Did You Know?

Since 2001, the trend has been moving away from business casual attire. Many companies are now moving back to formal or relaxed formal dress.

Although each industry and company has its own culture and policies for acceptable standards of dress, you may want to consider this category for the following:

Communications, Sales, Reception; Job Interviews for Service, Retail or Hospitality Management

WHEN TO WEAR INFORMAL BUSINESS ATTIRE

When you want to appear functional, informal, easy-going, unofficial, approachable, relaxed, agreeable and comfortable, choose informal business attire. This category includes one or more layers that are **predominantly untailored**, mixed with some **tailored** details.

Informal Business Attire usually means: **a collared shirt and slacks with NO Jacket.**

Bring it Up a Notch with:

A necktie
Collared dress shirt
Trousers or slacks
Coordinating vest or cardigan
No print (solid) or small print

Bring it Down a Notch with:

No necktie
Golf or Polo style shirt
Khaki's, jeans or cords (only if permitted)
No vest or cardigan
Medium to large prints

Slacks with a Collared Shirt is best when:

- your company is informal
- it fits with the client's company culture
- you want to appear accessible, approachable, informal or relaxed
- you need functional clothing
- you are attending casual business socials, off-site retreats, or casual time at conventions

Although each industry and company has its own culture and policies for acceptable standards of dress you may want to consider this category for the following:

Retail, Technician, Trades, Creative Sales or Management, Food Service & Job Interviews (entry level only)

Still not sure what to wear? Notice what your boss and your clients typically wear. To impress your boss, dress at the same level or *slightly* more casual. If your boss wears a jacket, so should you. To impress your client, dress at the same level or a little more formal. If your clients always wear jeans, you might want to leave the jacket and jeans at home. Dress for Success with a pair of slacks and a collared top.

WHEN TO WEAR CASUAL WORK ATTIRE

This category does not conform to the ‘IITTI International Standard’ and is only applicable in the following circumstances: When you want to appear very casual, artistic, relaxed, comfortable, task oriented, free and easy or unstructured, choose casual work attire. This category includes **one or more layers** that are **untailored**. Untailored details are:

Unstructured	Not Matching / Colour Contrast
Curved Lines	Rounded Shapes
Loose or Tight Fit	Rough and Soft Textures
No Collar or Lapel	Larger Patterns / Novelty Prints

The most casual work attire is: **Jeans and a T-shirt** or **Cords and a crew neck sweater**.

Casual Work clothing is best when:

- your company has approved this category of dress
- your company and clients are extremely casual
- you need extremely functional clothing that will likely get very dirty or ruined
- you want to appear extremely relaxed, laid back, unconventional
- you are attending casual off-site retreats (i.e. picnics or camping)

Although each industry and company has its own culture and policies for acceptable standards of dress, this category may be appropriate for the following:

Casual Labour, Creative Environments & Behind the Scenes
(NOTE: **this category is not acceptable for a job interview*)

TAILORING TIPS FOR BUSINESS

When it comes to achieving a professional appearance, the traditional rules of dressing apply. The following tips may help:

General Tips

- ☑ Choose up-to-date classics, not fads. Use accessories to accentuate personal style.
- ☑ Fit is important – have garments altered to fit you.

Fabrics

- ☑ Choose natural fabrics like wool, cotton and silk or quality blends of natural and synthetic fabrics.
- ☑ Outer layers (pants and jackets) appear most professional in structured fabrics and tailored designs.
- ☑ Traditional men's wear prints and patterns are most appropriate (checks, plaids, stripes, paisley, foulards, etc.). As an alternative, small, non-descriptive patterns work well.

Jackets

- ☑ Bottom button is always left open.
- ☑ Hemline covers the seat.

Did you know?

It pays to be prepared, even on casual days. Keep a coordinating jacket handy for unexpected meetings with the boss or conservative clients.

Pants

- ☑ Waistband is worn between the waist and navel. Jeans are the only exception.
- ☑ Traditional style trouser legs fall in a straight line to the top of the heel and a slight break in front.

Dress Shirts

- ☑ Choose 100% cotton with high thread count for best quality, look and feel.
- ☑ Cotton with a small percentage of polyester or Lycra wrinkles less and travels well.
- ☑ Shirt cuff fits wrist.
- ☑ An undershirt may be worn for a smoother look.

Knit Shirts & Sweaters

- ☑ Refined fabric and blends are more professional than cotton knits, which can appear too casual.
- ☑ Choose well-made, quality pieces.
- ☑ Coordinate colours with key garments.
- ☑ Collared styles appear more formal.
- ☑ Un-collared styles should only be worn under a tailored style jacket.
- ☑ Neutral colours appear more serious.

Shoes

- ☑ Choose quality leather or suede shoes.
- ☑ Updated classic styles with thinner soles are most professional.
- ☑ Thicker soles are more casual.
- ☑ Choose neutral colours.
- ☑ Shoes should be the same tone or darker than your pant hemline.

Socks

- ☑ Avoid bright colours and dramatic designs.
- ☑ Neutral tones that blend with your hemline are best.
- ☑ Thicker socks are more casual. Avoid sports socks for work.
- ☑ Socks should cover shins when sitting (no skin showing).

Did You Know?

Women interviewers tend to consider a wider variety of colours to be appropriate in the workplace than men.

Accessories

- ☑ Silk ties are best! Coordinate your tie with the colours in your shirt, jacket or both.
- ☑ Braces and belts are worn separately, not simultaneously.
- ☑ Watches should be in classic, analogue style.
- ☑ Remove jewellery from visible body piercings.
- ☑ Metals should match metals, leathers should match leathers.
- ☑ Briefcases should be quality leather in a functional style. (Black is the most traditional colour for a briefcase)
- ☑ Laptops are transported in carry-cases not backpacks. Cases for mobile phones and other electronic devices should communicate professionalism. Black is most conservative.

HOW TO BUY A QUALITY SUIT

When buying a suit, the label and price tag aren't always the best way to judge value. By evaluating the construction details before you buy, you will make a wiser investment that will add to your professional image.

- ☑ The suit should look and feel comfortable. 100% wool is still considered the best quality for a business suit. The smoother the texture, the more refined the suit will appear. For moderate and warmer climates, "tropical weight" or "four seasons weight" fabrics will give you the most versatility.
 - ☑ Check for flaws in the fabric such as holes, weakened or thinning areas. This is an indication of poor quality fabric. Avoid buying a suit made with recycled fibers.
 - ☑ Watch out for loose threads or crooked stitching. All threads, including topstitching, should match the fabric unless designed for contrast. However, contrast stitching is seldom appropriate for a man's business suit.
 - ☑ Fully-lined jackets drape best and look more finished. Check to see that the lining is smooth. Although a half-lined jacket will feel more comfortable in warmer climates, it will only be appropriate for a relaxed work environment.
- Did you know?*
The bottom button of the suit jacket, sport coat and waist coat are always left open.
- ☑ Lined trousers drape best. For comfort in warmer weather, pants may be lined to the knee.
 - ☑ Patterns, such as stripes, checks and plaids, should match up at the seams.
 - ☑ Check all buttons and fasteners to make sure they are securely sewn on. Additional buttons should be included in your purchase.
 - ☑ Edges and corners should lie flat without bulk or puckering. Hems are secure and invisible from the outside.

A quality suit that is well maintained will look great for many years. Learn to make the most of your purchase by judging the quality of 'those little details' before you buy.

IMAGE MAKERS

When it comes to your personal appearance, it's the little things that count. Good grooming really does make a big difference. **You** and **your clothing** should be in tip-top condition.

- Yes, it is possible to look professional on a budget. Choose quality over quantity. Buy quality fabrics and timeless styles – *the best you can afford*. Choose all-season fabrics such as lightweight wools, fine cottons, and silks. Natural fibres look and feel more expensive and can be worn all year round.
- Make small alterations to the sleeves, hemline and waistline or simply change the buttons to make your clothing look custom tailored. You will look like a million bucks.
- In business it's better to be over-dressed than under-dressed, especially if you are trying to make a good impression. Keep in mind that consistency is very important. If one day you are wearing a business suit and the next day you show up in jeans and a t-shirt, co-workers and clients will be confused. The basis of image is consistency.
- Hair is the finishing touch for a polished professional look. Choose your style carefully to appear healthy, up-to-date and put-together. Understated hairstyles are best, unless your industry is fashion-forward.
- Facial hair should be tidy and clean.
- Well groomed hands and nails are a must.
- Use good posture. It really does make a difference. Clothing will drape better, giving you more presence. See '*Presence & Poise, the Communication Factor*'.

If something doesn't seem quite right, it probably isn't. Using common sense and good judgment can create positive impressions that will help you soar to the top.

WHAT ARE JEANS?

When Levi Straus & Jacob Davis brought farmers and factory workers dungarees made of rugged indigo denim, reinforced seams and rivets in the late 1800's, they may not have realised at the time that they were really onto something. Although in the beginning jeans were meant to be workpants that would work hard and survive under strain, we have James Dean to thank for bringing them to the fashion scene as a symbol of youth rebellion in the 1950's movie, **Rebel without a Cause**. After the launch of the movie, teens everywhere wore jeans as a sign of youth and rebellion. During the 1960's, jeans became more popular as a statement of non-conformity; in the 1970's, jeans became generally accepted for the most casual occasions. Today, they are the mainstream uniform for casual wear.

So, what are jeans? Today, jeans are very complex. Although jeans technically fall into the category of pants, they have enough personality on their own to be categorised as a specific garment.

Jeans today conform in many ways to current fashion. Fabrics, leg styles and details change as fashion changes. In some years jeans have a sense of glamour, and in other years the popular look is grunge. However, for jeans to be Jeans, they must appear relaxed, comfortable (even if they are not), and flexible to move around in. But more importantly, they must have one or more visible elements of durability and practicality:

Although when we think of jeans the first thing that often comes to mind is the durable fabric called Denim, since the Disco days of the mid-late 1970's we have seen jeans in every type of fabric from satin & plastic to stone washed & distressed denim. However, although satin is great for dancing to the tunes of Donna Summer or the Bee Gees, I wouldn't call it durable. Without other elements of durability and practicality, they would not qualify as jeans.

So what would the non-denim elements of durability and practicality look like? When Levi Straus and Jacob Davis went to work designing jeans, they had one thing in mind – How do we make a pair of pants last in harsh conditions, and how do we make them practical?

Although denim jeans of today are typically practical wash-and-wear material, Levi Straus and Jacob Davis took it a step further by considering functional design details like fly-front, western style pockets in the front and patch pockets in the back – all additional details that make jeans practical.

They also went to work on durability. The answer – rivets, top-stitching and a 'V' shaped yoke at the back to reinforce the points of strain. Although these details were originally incorporated into jeans for durability, these details have become signature details in not only jeans, but now also many other casual clothing styles today.

While jeans were originally created for work, they were worn only for very specific types of work. Then came the 1990's – the 'business casual' era. It started off slow in the early 1990's, with only a few hi-tech companies at first, and then came Jeans Day (in Canada/USA) and then Casual Friday and then Casual Every Day. Then businesses began to feel that they weren't being taken seriously. In an effort to regain their credibility and to be taken seriously again by their clients, many employers took action and abolished the lower levels of business casual. Since the year 2001, times are changing again. More and more companies are now creating and adopting policies around acceptable business casual wardrobes.

In general today, jeans are only accepted for the purpose jeans were originally intended – the most casual work environments, or on specially designated days.

I recently read an online forum asking the question, “Are jeans too casual?” Although there were many great comments, there was one that stood out for me. “To me no matter how expensive jeans are they are casual wear, just like a t-shirt. It's a matter of perception in our culture. In my opinion, if you are not sure and the fact that this question pops in your mind then you'll be safer going with a more dressy option, especially if you want to produce a certain impression.” *Anonymous*. Employers see this issue the same way.

IMAGE BREAKERS

There are times when I get up in the morning and I don't care how I look. I think everyone has those days. We throw on the first thing that looks comfortable. However, this can sometimes get us in trouble. As an image consultant, I have made a few embarrassing mistakes of my own. One day, I ran down to the grocery store to grab a few things. Wearing sweats and not bothering with my hair, I ran into a prospective client. Oops! You never know where or when you might bump into someone important. Even though there are days when I would rather not dress for success, I have learned the hard way that you really do need to look the part.

Every outfit has a time and place. However, certain items do not belong in the work place, even on Casual Day. For business, leave the following at home:

- Anything denim or corduroy (unless it is accepted by the company)
- Wrinkled or stained clothing
- Mismatched clothing (colours or styles)
- Clothing and shoes that are worn out or in poor condition
- Clothing that needs repair: missing buttons, fallen hems, spots, etc.

Did You Know?

The texture of fabric influences the brightness of a colour – i.e. Bright Hot Purple in a satin compared to the same colour in a dense, woven wool. Satin reflects light, while wool absorbs it.

- Digital watches
- Brightly coloured hair or extreme styles
- Extreme prints and patterns
- Athletic shoes or clothing
- Fad accessories such as novelty ties
- Visible tattoos

- Visible piercings with jewellery, gauges and fad body accessories
- Logos or slogans on clothing (unless it is your company logo)

In other words... **avoid anything that might be distracting!** The focus should be on you, not your garments.

COLOUR COMMUNICATES

Have you ever wondered why the traditional navy or grey suit worn with a white shirt and bright red tie became known as “The Power Suit”? The light-dark contrast draws attention to the face, adding authority and presence. For a strong, professional presence, combine a dark, light and bright colour.

You can never go wrong wearing colours that suit you close to your face – such as with a necktie, pocket square, shirt or jacket. They will make you look healthier and more attractive.

Colour can also add or take away from the effectiveness of your wardrobe. It’s been proven that everyone has a physiological and psychological response to colour. So, as well as wearing suitable clothing styles for business, it’s important to dress in appropriate colours based on what you want to achieve.

Formal | Mature | Authoritative | Confident

Darker shades of most colours convey formality. They help you appear authoritative, confident and mature. When you wear dark colours such as navy or charcoal grey people will assume you can handle the job. Black is the most formal and authoritative colour; just be aware that too much black can be intimidating. When worn alone, dark shades are dramatic and unapproachable. For a confident and authoritative look, a dark suit with a light dress shirt and a brightly coloured tie are most effective.

Caring | Reassuring | Calming | Gentle

Lighter colours, especially pastels, send the message that you care. These are great colours to wear when you want to be perceived as reassuring or gentle. They also have a calming effect on others. For this effect a lower contrast or monochromatic combination (suit, shirt and tie) in lighter colours works well.

Did You Know?

If you use too many colours in a combination it confuses the eye. Usually three colours in unequal proportions is the most you can use successfully. A good rule to follow in putting combinations together is: ONE DARK, ONE LIGHT, ONE BRIGHT

Team Player | Approachable | Dependable | Trustworthy

Medium muted colours and neutrals are more approachable than dark colours, yet still appear serious. People will assume you are a dependable team player who can get the job done. Warm colours such as earth tones come across as friendly and approachable. These colours work well for networking. Cooler neutrals such as grey and muted blue come across as more serious and trustworthy than warmer colours. These are effective when worn with a monochromatic shirt and tie or a lighter shirt. Combine with a richer coloured tie or one in the same tone.

Energetic | Enthusiastic | Youthful

Bright colours such as blue, yellow, apple green and even pink bring up the energy and increase brain activity. Of all the bright colours, red has the greatest impact which makes it a very powerful colour. Bright colours are great for getting and keeping attention. Although men’s business wear doesn’t usually include brightly coloured garments other than shirts and ties, they can work well as accent colours. Ties are a great example of this. A brightly coloured tie will draw focus to the face and keep the attention of the listener.

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TRAVEL

When travelling for business, research dress guidelines before you pack. Although business dress guidelines for men are fairly consistent worldwide, guidelines vary. When in doubt, dress in quality clothing in classic, conservative styles.

Canada & U.S.

Dress according to the corporate culture of the organization. In Canada and the U.S., Business Dress on the east coast tends to be more formal than the west coast. Urban areas tend to be more formal than rural areas.

Latin America

Dress and grooming are indicators of status. You can't go wrong with a high quality or custom made matched suit in tropical weight wool, in traditional business colours worn with a light coloured shirt and traditional tie. Urban areas are more formal than rural areas. Although some industries allow business casual, dress up for the first meeting. Impeccable grooming, well-maintained clothing and polished shoes are always a must.

South East Asia

Although conservative in government offices and larger traditional companies, many companies are becoming less formal. However, the traditional suit with a light coloured dress shirt and a traditional tie is always appropriate. Lighter-weight fabrics are most comfortable. In warmer seasons, jackets may be removed in some regions. Although some countries are more fashion-forward and influenced by Europe and North America, conservative, professional attire is always the safest choice.

Western Europe

Business men tend to be very polished and well put together, even in a Business Casual environment. Quality and style is very important. The way you are dressed is considered evidence of your social status and success. Men wear European cut suits of the highest quality in dark traditional or muted colours with a shirt and silk tie. The use of fragrance and accessories varies from one country to another. Shoes should be high quality leather, fashionable, and well maintained. In Europe, Business Casual means high quality, tastefully coordinated clothing. Always dress formally for the first meeting.

Eastern Europe

Business Dress tends to be traditional and understated. You will never be caught off guard in formal business attire with traditional accessories.

Middle East & North Africa

Modesty is the key. **Cover up** – the more, the better. The amount of expected modesty depends on the country and region. A suit, long sleeved dress shirt and tie are required for most business meetings. Avoid wearing jewellery other than a wedding band.

South Africa

A conservative tropical weight matched suit is always appropriate.

CAREER WARDROBE PLANNER

Use the checklist in the column on the left to determine how you want to be perceived at work. Once completed, the centre column will provide you with suggestions on the appropriate business wardrobe category and how to get the look.

Desired Image Checklist <i>How would you Like to be perceived?</i>	Clothing Suggestions	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Traditional <input type="checkbox"/> Formal <input type="checkbox"/> Authoritative <input type="checkbox"/> Influential <input type="checkbox"/> Credible <input type="checkbox"/> Powerful <input type="checkbox"/> Precise <input type="checkbox"/> Consistent <input type="checkbox"/> Conservative <input type="checkbox"/> Classic <input type="checkbox"/> Stable <input type="checkbox"/> Official <input type="checkbox"/> Polished <input type="checkbox"/> Dependable <input type="checkbox"/> Structured 	<p>Business - Formal Tailored style business suits with coordinating shirt or blouse and appropriate accessories</p> <p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Matched pant suit / dress shirt (French-cuffs) / tie / thin sole oxfords / gold cufflinks / gold watch ▪ Matched pant suit / dress shirt (open collar) / thin sole slip on dress shoes 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Polished <input type="checkbox"/> Less formal <input type="checkbox"/> Credible <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-approachable <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-authoritative <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-formal <input type="checkbox"/> Influential <input type="checkbox"/> Dependable <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible <input type="checkbox"/> Capable <input type="checkbox"/> Business Casual <input type="checkbox"/> Receptive <input type="checkbox"/> Stable <input type="checkbox"/> Effective 	<p>Business – Semi-Formal Blazer or sport coat with coordinated business separates & accessories</p> <p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sport coat / collared dress shirt / tie / trousers / thin-sole oxfords ▪ Sport coat / mock-neck / slacks / thin sole dress boots 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Informal <input type="checkbox"/> Relaxed <input type="checkbox"/> Casual <input type="checkbox"/> Business Casual <input type="checkbox"/> Receptive <input type="checkbox"/> Relaxed <input type="checkbox"/> Unofficial <input type="checkbox"/> Comfortable <input type="checkbox"/> Task-Oriented <input type="checkbox"/> Free & Easy <input type="checkbox"/> Unstructured <input type="checkbox"/> Easy-going <input type="checkbox"/> Functional <input type="checkbox"/> Approachable <input type="checkbox"/> Agreeable 	<p>Business – Informal 2+ piece coordinated business separates and business appropriate accessories</p> <p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collared dress shirt / tie / slacks / belt / thin sole slip-on shoes ▪ Collared shirt / light-weight pull over sweater / slacks / thin sole dress boots 	

PROFESSIONAL POLISH AT A GLANCE

Category of Dress	What to Wear	When to Wear It	What Your Outfit Says	Relax Your Look	Add Some Impact
Formal Business Attire	Business Suit with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collared or un-collared shirts, knit shirts, light-weight sweaters ▪ <i>Optional:</i> Necktie ▪ Foot Wear: Classic – thin soled slip-on or lace-up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Company culture demands high level of professionalism • Situations require credibility, authority or high level professional image • Important meetings • Overseas work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional • Formal • Authoritative • Influential • Credible • Precise • Consistent • Conservative • Classic • Powerful 	If this is your day-to-day dress category, take it a step down with a coordinating tailored jacket.	Add impact to this level by choosing a dark or dull coloured suit with a light-coloured shirt for contrast. Don't forget the tie.
Semi-Formal Business Attire	Tailored Jacket with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Trousers or slacks and collared or un-collared top ▪ <i>Optional:</i> Necktie ▪ Foot Wear: Up-to-date classic ▪ Thinner soles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day to day business situations – <i>except high level executive meetings</i> • Meeting with someone dressed more casual • Conferences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contemporary • Less Formal • Flexible • Capable • Credible • Polished • Approachable • Receptive • Dependable 	If this is your day-to-day category, take it a step down by removing your jacket and adding a collared shirt.	If the Blazer is your day-to-day dress, take it a step up with a matched suit for added impact.
Informal Business Attire	Collared Top with Tailored Bottom: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shirt or sweater ▪ Cotton, fine-gauge knits, cashmere, wool, silk blend ▪ Slacks, trouser or khakis ▪ <i>Optional:</i> Necktie 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office casual • Casual business social events • Management level – trades, outdoor work • Business sports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional • Informal • Easy Going • Approachable • Agreeable • Comfortable 	For most corporate situations, this is your most relaxed look.	If the collar is your day-to-day look, take it a step up with a jacket for added impact.
Casual Work Attire	Untailored Top and Bottom Relaxed Casual Wear: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Casual pants, jeans ▪ No Collar – casual tops, sweaters, creative combinations, active sports wear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trades • Outdoor work • Artistic work (messy) • Business sports • Casual business events • Retreats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task Oriented • Very Casual • Artistic • Relaxed • Unofficial • Free & Easy • Unstructured 	*Only recommended for work if warranted by activity or circumstances.	If this is your day-to-day look, take it a step up to Business Casual with a collar or tailored bottom.

SUGGESTED READING

Managing Your Image Potential: Creating Good Impressions in Business,
Catherine Graham Bell

Business Casual Made Easy, *Ilene Amiel & Angie Michael*

Dress Casually for Success, Men *Mark Weber & The Van Heusen Creative Design Group*

Dressing the Man, Mastering the Art of Permanent Fashion, *Alan Flusser*

Training and Resources:

Personal One on One Coaching & Consulting

Seminars | eLearning | Lunch-n-Learns

Focused Consulting & Coaching

Colour Analysis

Make-up

Personal Style Analysis

Wardrobe Planning

Business Casual Wardrobe Evaluation

Shopping Strategy and Excursion

Etiquette

IITTI Business Etiquette Certification Training

Publications Available Through Our Website

Bushido Business

Image Power

Formal Dining for informal People

Minding Your Manners Everyday Matters

Presence & Poise the Communication Factor

Upwardly Mobile Clothing for Upwardly Mobile Men

Upwardly Mobile Clothing for Upwardly Mobile Women

Wardrobe Wizardry Working Magic in Your Closet

Personal Care from Feet to Hair

Masterful Make-up in Minutes

Image Matters Newsletter (Complimentary)

Kimberly Law Profile:

Kimberly Law, AICI CIP is a Certified Image & Etiquette Consultant and principal of Personal Impact International founded in 1999. She is an author, speaker and works with companies, men and women helping them refine their look from head to toe and enhance professional communication, increasing confidence and personal effectiveness. In other words... *she does extreme makeovers without taking extreme measures, to help her clients look and act their very best, always!*

Kimberly has demonstrated her expertise across Canada through local and national media such as: Global Television News, Vancouver; CityTV Breakfast Television and News, Vancouver; VTV Breakfast, Vancouver; and has been interviewed on CKWX and CKNW, Vancouver as an Image Expert. Her achievements have been written about in publications such as The Burnaby Now, Vancouver Sun, Edmonton Journal and the Financial Post. She is one of one fewer than **200 consultants, world-wide** and the first in Western Canada to receive international recognition as a Certified Image Professional (CIP) through the Association of Image Consultants International (AICI) (www.aici.org). She is Past President of AICI, having served as AICI's International President 2011-2013. She is also a Founding Director for the Institute of Image Training and Testing International (www.iitti.org).

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