



Image Matters

In this issue, I like to share this interesting discovery about Cufflinks Fengshui when I was doing research for one of my workshops. Fengshui has been around for thousands of years and I'm meeting younger folks who are followers and abide closely to advice dispensed to them. Whether you are a believer or not, I think it makes an interesting read.

Dressing oneself is both an art and science to me, dressing down is especially a delicate exercise ... as one wrong move will undo all the past efforts you have taken to dress professionally from Mondays to Thursdays. So, here you are, some tips on how you can dress to continue to inspire trust even on a Friday.

Last week, I had several young graduate friends asking me via facebook on how they should dress for their scholarship interviews. So, here you go, 5 ways to impress your interviewer so you can secure that long-awaited dream job of yours. Good Luck to all young candidates out there.

Go on, let your image work for you at all times!

Happy Reading!

Guinevere Ho
Principal Image Consultant

What's in this issue?

- ✓ **Cufflinks Fengshui**
- ✓ **Dressing Down with Style**
- ✓ **5 Ways to Make Great First Impressions at Your Interviews**



IMAGE CONSULTING FOR Women & Men



Cufflinks Fengshui

I bet you didn't know. The world's first cufflinks were discovered inside King Tutankhamen's tomb around 1300 BC. The Egyptian King had style. Apart from being a family heirloom, men would traditionally put a strand of hair from a deceased loved one under the glass of the cufflinks as a sign of grief. To this day, no one knows exactly when the cufflink was invented.

Beginning in the 17th century, cufflinks made their official debut as a symbol of fashion, social prestige, and ultimate luxury reserved for the upper class. Prior to that, the folks use ribbons or laces to secure his or her cuffs. It was believed that the late English King (Charles II) made them popular with his style of dress. It wasn't until about the 19th century that cufflinks became the essential male accessory. The new production techniques allow for more intricate designs at affordable prices and were now more accessible to the masses. By the 1840s the double-cuff shirt, or the French cuff, became popular for men, making the cufflinks a fashionable must-haves.

In Singapore, cufflinks and ties are not the norm. But without doubt, cufflinks will certainly be a quintessential accessory in a stylish man's closet. Women have their bling in the form of handbags, accessories, shoes etc.; the ornamental cufflink is a classic man's bling. Other than being functional, it adds a touch of elegance and allows your personality to show through, subtly.

In some countries, cufflinks and fengshui have started to gain popularity. For good fengshui, it is believed

that one should avoid cufflinks with sharp edges as this is a form of (sha-qi) or Killing Energy. Some say it's good to choose colours that go alongside your character - Red for Energy, Blue for a Calming Effect. Cufflinks with the 5 elements - Metal, Wood, Fire, Water, Earth engraved on the surface are also considered to be of good fengshui! The Mystic Knot (three times the infinity symbol) signifies a long and happy life enriched with endless good fortune. It is believed to protect against illness, brings longevity and ensures good health.



Wear this mystic knot cufflinks to attract good fortune and everlasting love into your life

Whatever it is, cufflinks will always be seen as luxurious accessories for men...an epitome of style. The most expensive cufflinks ever sold were a pair given to the soon-to-be King Edward VIII by his later wife Wallis Simpson. These featured diamonds set in platinum were sold at auction for \$440,000. So, if you still don't own one, get one now! It is the little things that count!



IMAGE CONSULTING FOR Women & Men



Dress Down with Style

Business attire, business casual, casual Fridays etc. With so many different guidelines, it's no wonder there is confusion about what is appropriate to wear in a professional work environment today.

When I first graduated in the mid 90s, you do not hear of organizations promoting casual dress codes. In today's work environment, casual Friday has become a norm in many organizations. At the same time, some organisations have had to set stricter standards for the new dress down days because they found that employees were taking the term casual to the extreme. So how do you as a young professional just entering the workforce find a balance between the suit and your favourite pair of jeans or slacks?

Well, follow these guidelines that will help you to inspire trust and you'll soon be on your way to dressing down with style, not a business casualty!

General Guidelines

- Casual clothes does not mean sloppy. They should still be clean and ironed.
- Business casual does not mean sportswear; you should still look like a professional.
- Business casual means more casual fabric choices. Cotton, linen, corduroy, rayon, and even denim can be appropriate.
- You can allow your personality to show a little more meaning a wider range of choices when it comes to colour and pattern, but avoid being too bold, too revealing or flashy.

Guidelines for Men

- Polo-style shirts, golf-type shirts, sweaters, casual shirts with collars are acceptable but avoid shirts or t-shirts without collars.
- There's still no place for scruffy shoes here, shoes should always be clean and polished. I've noticed through all my classes that most Singaporean men do not pay attention to their shoes. They show up in scruffy; over worn shoes that does nothing positive for their professional image.
- You may choose loafers, conservative athletic or walking shoes, leather deck-type shoes or plain oxford in leather or suede. Sport shoes are usually not acceptable for a professional setting so check out the guidelines in your office before making this choice.
- Khakis and corduroys are good choices for slacks. Jeans are fine in some work environments but not all. Ask when in doubt.
- Men should still wear a belt for the most polished appearance.



Business Casual for Men

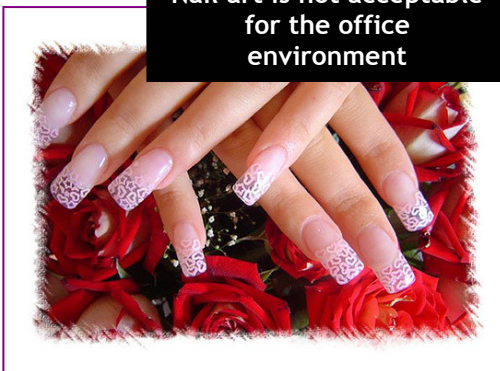


IMAGE CONSULTING FOR Women & Men



Guidelines for Women

- Casual choices for women can seem endless and is a slippery slope if you not careful. Let's start from the top. Casual shirts or blouses, sweaters, turtlenecks are fine, just stay away from shirts/blouses that are too loud, revealing, sleeveless. No plunging neckline or any fabric that is too clingy as modesty is key.
- Pants or skirts? Either is appropriate. Skirts can be a variety of lengths, just no shorter than right above the knee. Style and pattern are a matter of choice although A-line and pencil skirts convey a more professional feel.
- Pants range from khakis on the casual end to wool or wool-blend on the dressier side. If denims are allowed, you can incorporate denim in a variety of ways, such as a denim shirt, dress, or skirt. For jeans, always go for darker denim to give a more professional look. No hot pants or shorts, please.
- Dresses are fine. Select dresses that are not fussy or over-detailed styles, evening styles, like spaghetti-straps, high fashion extremes or anything that is revealing, clingy, see-through or sleeveless. Sundresses are meant for beaches, so keep them away from the office.
- Keep accessories simple.
- Funky nails - nail art, chipped polish, too long and loud colours are not acceptable, even on casual Fridays.



Nail art is not acceptable for the office environment

- Wear comfortable shoes like loafers, low ankle boots, ballet flats, mules, slip-ons or open toe strappy heels. Stay away from our Singaporean favourite, sandals and flip-flops as they can look sloppy. No over-the-knee boots, super chunky high heels or platforms either. Keep your shoes no higher than 3 inches as you must still look professional and be able to move around in them quickly.



WRONG SHOES FOR Business Casual

Contact us at **81638169** or email to guin@imagemasteryint.com if you like to know how to create a successful personal image or to deck out in style!



IMAGE CONSULTING FOR Women & Men



5 Ways to Impress Your Interviewers

You only get one chance to make a great first impression in a job interview, that first impression can make or break your chances of getting a job offer. The interviewer will make judgments about you in those first few seconds so you need to impress or the job goes to your competition who is as qualified and who manages to make a great impression on them.

Here are 5 factors that interviewers will consider.

1. INTERVIEW ATTIRE

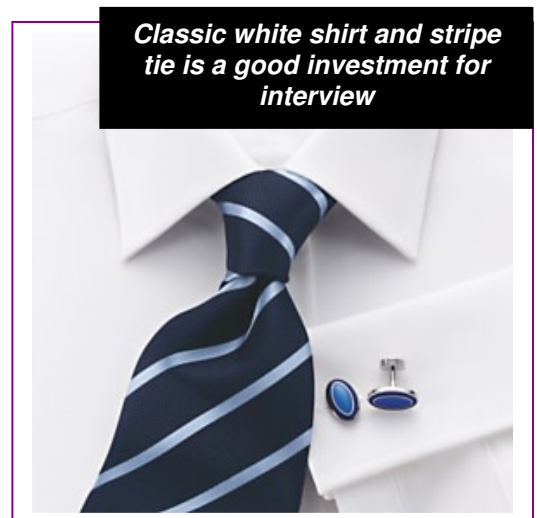
The best style that impresses will be conservative attires and the worse choices are sloppy, revealing or over-the-top attire.

Choose a safe, classic style because it is versatile and a good investment unless you are interviewing for creative jobs such as those in the advertising or fashion industries. Remember to choose a fabric that can still make you look smart after traveling hours in a car or train.

For men, consider if you want to wear a suit or just throw on a shirt, tie and trousers. This will depend on the position that you are applying for. As a rule of thumb, go in a suit (make sure it fits well!) if you are interviewing for a senior or

management position while a tie, formal shirt and pants is the least for anyone interviewing for a white-collar position.

Go for darker suits to project a more authoritative air, but avoid black as it can seem funeral.



With ties, it's always good to play it safe with a formal silk or silk blended tie. Although interviews are about allowing your personality to shine through, but cartoon tie-wearers don't always get the job...



IMAGE CONSULTING FOR Women & Men



Watches, wedding rings, and conservative men's rings are appropriate in any situation. Cover any body art or piercings.

For women, consider if you want to go in a skirt or pant suit - a skirt suit is more formal. Other important considerations are length of skirt, comfort of shoes and neckline. Most industries still prefer a conservative look, so flashing of your cleavage is better kept for the weekends.

Steer clear of overly chunky accessories as it is a distraction while noisy charm bracelets and dangling earrings, convey a more casual look.

Finally, try out your job interview clothes a few days beforehand, to make sure you are comfortable and confident in them.

- No crumpled clothes - iron your clothes properly, don't risk missing out shirt sleeves, hoping you won't have to take your jacket off (yes, we've all seen this one done!).
- Clean, tidy finger nails - you don't need a full manicure; it just means you'll feel more confident shaking hands with the interviewer.
- Polished shoes - many a great suit is let down by scruffy shoes.
- Perfumes and deodorants - it's great to smell nice, but less is more here.
- Fresh breath - think again before you eat that plate of chicken rice! If in doubt, take breath mints with you.

You only get one chance to make a great first impression and you will feel more relaxed if you know you are looking your best.

2. PERSONAL HYGIENE

Personal hygiene is more than just taking a shower. Nobody likes to talk about it, but personal hygiene often leaves more of a lasting impression than your interview performance.

No matter how sharp your job interview clothes make you look, your personal hygiene could let you down.

- No messy hair - Vibrant hair amplifies a professional aura while messy hair disempowers you. Make sure your hair is clean and tidy. Long hair should be pulled away from the face for the most professional look.

3. POSTURE

The way you carry yourself speaks a lot about your attitudes and your current state of mind. Are you sitting and standing confidently or slouching? This might make the interviewers think you're either too nervous or too laid back.

4. HANDSHAKE

Your handshake is one of the most important components of a good first impression. A firm handshake gives you a confident start. If you're not sure about your handshake, ask for feedback from a friend.



IMAGE CONSULTING FOR Women & Men



A firm handshake means a web-to-web strong grip, maintained eye contact & deliberate pumps straight up & down for 2 to 3 secs.

5. SMILE

There are two elements to a smile:

1. Good, relaxed eye contact.
2. A relaxed, confident smile.

Keep eye contact about 70% of the time, if the interviewer feels like your penetrating stare is too much or your grin is uncomfortable, you won't make a great first impression. If you are not sure of your smile, practise in front of a mirror or get feedbacks from trustworthy friends.

Contact us at **81638169** or email to **guin@imagemasteryint.com** if you like to know how to ace your interviews either through image presentation or through polished interview and etiquette skills to land your dream job!

Enquire about our Special promotions for new graduates today.