

OPCD Podcast: Episode 16 - “Dressing for Success” (1/29/2015)

Interview with Ms. Holli Kulp, *Junior in Marketing, Harbert College of Business*

Voiceover: So you’re rockin’ a strong resume and about to interview for your dream job. Or maybe you’ve got the position and that first day as a part of the workforce is coming up. Whatever the case may be, you gotta look the part. Don’t panic, it’s not as hard as it may seem. Sit back and listen up - on today’s episode of the Harbert College OPCD podcast we’ll have you through the basics of professional dress in just 4 minutes.

You’ve heard the saying “dress for the job you want,” and looking your best is emphasized in nearly every situation that involves making or maintaining that good first impression. Curious as to why that is? Well, your appearance speaks volumes about you. It shows prospective employers that you respect them, and their time, and says a lot about your self confidence too. Holli Kulp is a junior in Marketing and, as someone who has been on both sides of the interview process, she offers this advice on dressing for success.

H. Kulp: It is important because you need to back up your resume with how you dress and how professional you are. They need to be able to put that resume with a face and if it doesn't match then you're not going to look the part.

Voiceover: So let’s talk through a few basics: for guys, start by investing in a suit. Jeans of any kind won’t cut it here. Get it tailored if the sleeves or pants aren’t the ideal length and make sure it’s clean and pressed for the most polished look. Go for dark navy or charcoal with a collared shirt underneath, give your shoes a shine and don’t skip wearing socks.

For girls: Some of the same rules apply. Stick with dark and neutral colors, making sure that the suit jacket matches the skirt or pants. Steer clear of tops that are too revealing and hemlines that hit above the knee. And when it comes to makeup and accessories - less is definitely more!

H. Kulp: One thing is a lot of jewelry, especially earrings. If you have more than one earring in your ear it doesn't come off as very professional. Also, a lot of necklaces. I would say keep it simple. One necklace, one very simple necklace is really all that you would need. Don’t wear a lot of bangles or things that clink on your wrist because that can be very distracting during an interview.

Voiceover: And of course some basic rules apply to everyone. Be on the safe side and skip the perfume and cologne. You never know who might be allergic or just simply overwhelmed by the scent. Hairstyles should neat and off the face for girls and a good haircut a week before that interview, or first day, is a safe rule of thumb for guys.

If you’ve got the big picture down when it comes to professional dress but need a little help with the details, keep the following in mind: go for the best quality that your budget allows. Yeah this may be a pricey purchase but remember - this is an investment. Taking advantage of sale prices

is a great way to maximize the resources you do have and ask for help for those last minute questions.

H. Kulp: If you get the people who are working in the store to help you that's a really good thing to do because they kind of know, for the most part, what's going to look good and what you need to look like.

Voiceover: Another quick tip: don't dress down just because you're not interviewing in person.

H. Kulp: Dress in professional wear even when you're doing a Skype interview, because you need to feel confident in what you're wearing and portray that professionalism even through camera. From the waist up, that's what they're going to be seeing. So you need to make sure that you have on a blazer or something that shows that you are still in a professional attire.

Voiceover: Like most things in life, knowing the ins and outs of a polished look does get easier with practice and it'll be second nature before you know it. Lowder 101 is a great place to hone these skills. We've got you covered, whether you just have a quick question or need a more in-depth seminar. A big thank you to Holli for talking with us today and we'll see you next week here on the Harbert College OPCD podcast. See ya then and good luck on those interviews.