

## **Gain the Image Advantage in a Job Interview**

Preparing for a job interview can be stressful. Today, there are most likely many people applying for one singular position. In order to give yourself every advantage, it is important to take advantage of your image.

Studies have been done that prove hiring managers will decide who they are not going to hire in the first two minutes of a job interview. These quick decisions are based entirely on visual cues since the candidate's qualifications have not yet been discussed.

Follow these ten helpful image tips to ensure you are giving yourself a competitive edge:

1. Strive to look as if you belong. Go to the place of business prior to your scheduled interview and watch employees coming and going. Note what they are wearing and dress as the best of them dress.
2. Be aware of the industry standards where you are applying and dress appropriately. A position in a technical support industry requires a different look from a position in customer service.
3. Wear a jacket or 3rd layering piece to project credibility and authority. A matched suit is not always the best choice. If a casual look is more appropriate, add a sweater or shrug, rather than wearing a suit jacket.
4. Make sure your clothes fit well; ill-fitting clothes make you appear unpolished and unsure of yourself.
5. Don't neglect personal grooming; an unkempt or outdated appearance tells others you are lazy and lack confidence.
6. Don't assume others will remember you if meeting for the second time; remind the other person of your earlier meeting and provide your name again.
7. Develop a firm handshake and learn to maintain strong eye contact.
8. Don't use slang or "fillers" such as "um", "er", "ah", "you know" and "like". These are credibility robbers.
9. Ensure your body language projects a professional image. Don't slump; maintain good posture and strive to project confidence and energy. Smile!
10. Look organized. Be organized. Have a business card ready and available to hand

out. Keep a clean copy of your resume in a portfolio or briefcase. Have a pen and paper handy to take notes. Don't dig through handbags or pockets looking for these things.