

Dressing for success starts with job interview

By SUSAN DEMAGGIO
STAFF WRITER

Don't wear an earring to a job interview, fellas.

And gals, don't walk into the employment office wearing colored hosiery.

Skip the hot-pink paper for resumes, grads. Use gray or cream-colored instead.

"Avoid doing, saying, or looking any way that might offend an employer," warned Joyce Knudsen, president of The ImageMaker Inc.

"Human resource people are trained to read body language, spot revealing nuances and ask probing interview questions. The old adage really holds true: Dress for the position you want, not the position you have."

Codes have changed

Knudsen, who counsels men and women on career and image-building, had a lot to say about interviewing in the 1990s.

"Although dress codes for the corporate world have softened in the last few years, corporate is still corporate and business is still business," she said.

"You must present yourself as smart, professional, yet add touches that say you have flair, some creativity."

One way to do this, according to Knudsen, is through color.

"The navy blue suit with a white blouse or shirt, isn't necessarily the best thing to wear on a job interview anymore," she said. "Neutrals are safe. And would you believe, red and teal are considered neutrals these days? A purple suit can look regal on a woman. Guys can always depend on charcoal gray."

Details, details

For women, Knudsen insisted, a professional haircut, light makeup, and investment clothing (garments of wool, silk and linen) are absolute musts. Shoes, bags and briefcases

Pre-interview checklist

Before you head out the door for that make-it/break-it interview, stand in front of a full-length mirror and run down this checklist:

GUYS

- Is your tie at your belt buckle?
- Are your socks over-the-calf?
- Are you clean-shaven?

- Are your nails well-groomed?
- Shoes polished?
- GALS**
- Is your slip showing?
- Is your hair styled off your face?
- Is your make-up properly applied?
- Do your clothes properly fit your figure-type?
- Are your nails well-groomed?



You're hired: Dressed for success and wearing a smile, Christy appears confident, poised and professional.



All wrong: Sherri Christy, a June high school graduate, won't land the job if she goes on an interview looking like this.

should be leather, not cloth.

If a woman carries a briefcase, she must skip the purse.

Jewelry should be tasteful and kept to a minimum. No large, dangling earrings, no several chains of gold. Do not wear more than one or two rings.

Women should avoid colored hosiery, but not go bare-legged, no matter how hot the temperatures of summer.

"Guys should be clean shaven.

Even trimmed mustaches can distract from an interview," Knudsen said.

"Nails should also be clean and well-groomed. Shoes, belts, briefcases and portfolios should be leather. A well-fitted, well-pressed suit should be worn along with a crisp, light-colored shirt and a 'tasteful, non-distracting tie. You want to be the focus of attention at an interview, not your outfit."

Knudsen also advised job empli-



Helping out: Image-maker Joyce Knudsen, left, adds a bit of blusher to Christy's nose. "A woman should always wear some make-up to a job interview," she advised. "It looks more together for the business world."

dates to watch their posture, be on time, not sit down until invited to, practice a firm handshake, and

send follow-up thank-you notes the day after an interview.

"Don't listen to bad news about

the job market," she urged graduates. "Go after what you want and don't stop until you get it."

Marketing called the key to successful job-hunting

By SUSAN DEMAGGIO
STAFF WRITER

If the June grad in your life still isn't gainfully employed, take heart; yours is not alone.

Record numbers of undergraduate degrees were conferred in Michigan this spring, the same year campus recruitment by Fortune 500 companies was down 30 percent.

Human resource directors have a few tips for job-seekers, but agree that patience and perseverance are the important.

"The grad that lands the rare, full-time job with benefits these days knows how to market himself — that's the key," said Marjorie Buhrer, assistant director of placement at Walsh College in Troy.

Walsh awarded 400 business degrees in June, its largest class ever.

At Michigan State University in Lansing, more than 4,000 students earned undergraduate degrees, another record.

At Wayne State University in Detroit and Oakland University in Rochester, about 1,600 bachelor degrees were recently awarded; both unusually large classes according to the registrars.

Word of mouth

Robert Thomas, director of Placement and Student Services at OU suggested that drastic times call for drastic measures.

"As the traditional recruitment channels dry up, graduates need to search out other means of breaking into the job market," he advised. "Medium-sized and small companies (where the jobs are) tend to be entrepreneurial. They don't use the standard methods of recruiting. They tend to hire through word-of-mouth."

"Graduates need to link up with chamber of commerce and economic development offices," he continued. "They need to network. Leave their resumes around town. Cold calling is also important. It's hard. It's frustrating. But every once in awhile it leads to a job tip."

Mark Angott, president of Management Recruiters of Rochester,

■ 'As the traditional recruitment channels dry up, graduates need to search out other means of breaking into the job market.'

Robert Thomas

director, Placement and Student Services, Oakland University

has been in the employment business since 1967. He's watched the job market ebb and flow.

"These days employers are looking for people with foreign language skills and a global perspective," he said. "Any internships are positive. There are quite a few jobs in specialized medical professions and specialized engineering and product areas. Employers want to see candidates with excellent verbal and written skills, and people that have goals and are successful."

David Leeds, director of Human Resources with the international accounting firm, Ernst and Young, said resumes with high grade point averages and lots of community involvement, get a second look.

"We want to know that a graduate has the sports, but that they did more than sit in a library all day," he said. "As an accountant you must have technical skills as well as people skills because you deal with clients and peers."

Leeds said there are entry-level positions available in accounting but not as many as in the past due to mergers at several firms.

Serious resumes

If a job in the corporate world is the goal, stay away from gimmicky, off-beat resumes on chartreuse paper with balloons and whistles inside.

"Unless you're looking for a job in advertising, television or the theater, those kinds of resumes send a turn-off message to an employer," OU's Thomas said. "However, in the creative fields, these type of resumes may be expected."

Resumes should contain concise synopsis of education, experience, and related skills, no matter what

field a job applicant hopes to break into.

"The bottom line is, does this resume indicate that this person can effectively communicate?" said Shelley Dwanly, associate dean of student affairs at the Center for Creative Studies in Detroit. "Even for an artsy job, an employer wants to know that a prospective employee has a sense of organization."

Dwanly said she cautions fine-art graduates to become savvy business people because employers tend to under pay or worse, refuse to pay, for creative services.

"I guess people feel that art work is 'fun' so artists, photographers and designers, shouldn't receive compensation for their services," she said. "And also because fine art employment tends to be freelance work, graduates don't insist on contracts before hand."

For "creative" grads to have an edge, computer and marketing skills are a must.

"So much is done on computers in the design field these days," she pointed out.

"That goes for just about every field," Thomas insisted. "We just had a gal who missed out on a great job at General Motors because even though she was in the educational field, she would have had to input and extract computer data and she did not know how."

Walsh College, following its own advice on marketing, offered its grads free alumni newsletter space to print brief-resumes.

"We know how hard jobs are to come by so we offered grads the chance to submit 50-word bios. Our newsletter goes out to 8,000 corporate sponsors," Van Buhrer explained. "We sort of copied off Crain's Business News which also started offering bios of job seekers."

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