

A "Secret Weapon" for Getting or Staying Employed- **Project a Professional Image**



Hear what the Human Resources Professionals say in a survey:

- **No. 1 mistake of Job Interviewees: Dress Inappropriately**
- **Women who Dress Inappropriately for work: 95%**

Dressing inappropriately in today's turbulent & competitive job market may cost you your job. This is because your actions and motives which are largely reflected in your dressing, are constantly under scrutiny by your employers, customers & business partners.

Manage Your Own Professional Image Before Others Do It for You

According to professor Laura Morgan Roberts from Harvard Business School:

"People are constantly observing your behavior and forming theories about your competence, character and commitment...it is only wise to add voice in framing others' theories about who you are and what you accomplish."

Taking a strategic & pro-active approach in managing your image will increase your chances of success in your career.

Start with the following steps in managing your professional image.

Steps to Manage Your Own Professional Image

1) Identify the Important Trait(s) that You Want People to Associate with You

The traits that you want people to associate with you will largely depend on your profession, the occasion and your goals. This is your "desired professional image."

For e.g., if you are selling healthcare products, you need to look robust and radiant to convince others about the effectiveness of your products. If you are giving a talk or demonstration on the products, you may wish to wear a jacket to increase your credibility factor. If your goals are to build rapport with the audience during the talk, you may wish to wear lighter colours to look more friendly and approachable.

A "Secret Weapon" for Getting or Staying Employed- Project a Professional Image (cont'd)

2) Assess Your Current Image

How do others currently perceive you? Ask your close friends, colleagues, bosses or business associates who are willing to give you a frank opinion. Be open to feedback and ask questions why they perceive you in that manner. Do a self-evaluation to reflect on what they have told you. This is your current image.

3) Take Steps to Improve Your Image

When there is a gap between your desired and your current image, take proactive steps to improve it.

You could attend image-related courses or engage a professional image consultant for a personal one-to-one consultation.

Projecting a Professional Image is an On-going Commitment

A lot of working professionals make the common mistake of dressing their best only for the job interview or the first few months/years in the company. After settling down in their job, they start to neglect their image and dress inappropriately for work.

You need to convey consistent messages in your image. Just like your career, your professional image needs to be sustained and constantly improved. This commitment towards projecting a professional image is the "secret weapon" that every successful professional needs to have.



Alexis Wan, a highly sought after speaker and professional image consultant, is the founder of D' New Image Chapter, a leading image consultancy firm. She has conducted several image workshops, talks and consultations for corporations, schools and individuals in the areas of grooming, deportment, manners & etiquette.

She is also an image course lecturer at Shines Education Group and has helped to develop and pioneer the image course syllabus.

For more information on upcoming D'NIC workshops, please visit <http://www.dnic.com.sg/event.html> or email alexis@dnic.com.sg

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