



Got a meeting? In the morning you might just get up, grab something from your wardrobe and head for the door. Have you ever considered that what you are wearing may play a part in the outcome of your meeting?

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#### FIRST IMPRESSIONS COUNT

Make sure your clothes reflect the culture of the company you are meeting (so they want to do business with you), that of your own company, and the mood you want to create.

'Professional' is the image most people strive for. This is best achieved with a classic look which can be personalised with the colour from the tie or blouse. And please whatever you do, stay away from

ties with cartoon characters or reindeers – save them for the Christmas party.

Women tend to have a thing about shoes. Other women's are of particular interest – where did she get them? Aren't they tarty? But they are equally interested in men's. Dirty or old, fake leather or grey will all send shivers down a woman's spine. If you are meeting a woman, head down to Bally first. Shoes maketh the man.

#### COLOUR

The Chinese philosophy of Feng Shui believes colour brings out a person's personality. You wear colours that reflect your mood or the mood you are intending to create. Colours behave in three basic ways. If you remember the basics you can dress to impress!

- i) **Active colours are warm: yellow, orange, red.** They inspire positivity and exude confidence. They inspire conversation and upbeat attitudes.
- ii) **Passive colours are blues and greens.** They pacify and restore harmony. Ideal in situations when you know there is to be confrontation.
- iii) **Neutral colours are beige, grey, white and taupe.** They send a restful message to the brain – they act to de-stress the wearer.

Never shop alone. Women are professional shoppers and always go with a mate – why? A second opinion of course. Men don't tend to do this. But if you have a girlfriend, wife, or sister take her with you. Two pairs of eyes are better than one, particularly when your professional image is at stake.

#### INTERNATIONAL FAUX PAS!

If you travel on business you are in for a real treat. What is considered

appropriate in one country may be the opposite in another. In the Middle East, despite the heat you must cover up, that means high necklines for ladies, sleeves at least to the elbows and hemlines below the knees – better raid Grandma's wardrobe! In India where cows are revered, leather shoes and accessories are likely to cause insult so invest in some smart fabric alternatives.

Here's where it gets

**LEFT** Never shop alone. Women are professional shoppers and always go with a mate!

complicated. Back to colour. Red can be a colour of mourning in parts of Africa while white has the same implication in Asia but yet there red

is considered lucky. Help!!! Yellow is associated with illness in South Korea while green, particularly in hats, implies your spouse is cheating on you in parts of Asia – best not to hand them out at conferences!

So, the long and short of it. Before a meeting, take some time to consider who you are meeting, what are you trying to achieve in that meeting and then dress to impress! ■