

Show you care

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Whether you're in sales or property management, your image is a powerful tool in building relationships. One of the most effective ways to show you care about your customers is to show you care about yourself. Elena Reed explains how to increase your "care factor" by the way you dress.

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For most people their home is the most expensive possession of their lifetimes. When you're dressed well and groomed appropriately, you show your clients you have pride in your profession, respect their needs and that you are going to take care of their best interests. On the other hand, being treated by someone who did not bother to iron his shirt or put her makeup on, makes a customer question the ability of that salesperson to "get it all together" when it comes to looking after their precious home.

Attention to detail

Do not let ignorance ruin your chances for success. Take time to learn what styles work for your body shape and what colours flatter your skin tone. Keep your wardrobe up- to- date and implement a regular maintenance system that works for your schedule and budget. When you deal with premium real estate, you have to look expensive. Your attention to detail will say that you are an agent who knows quality. Be congruent with the services that you provide – if you claim to be first class, look the part.

The perfect suit – Perfectly tailored suits were seen on most fashion runways this year. Dark colours give you more authority but trade your staple black for a cool charcoal – a popular colour for 2010.

Go natural – No matter what your budget, buy the best suits you can afford. Wool is a natural fibre that lets air in and out. Most synthetics won't do that. Every professional should own at the very minimum one quality suit. Plan well and you'll buy right.

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Build credibility – Do dry clean your quality suits regularly and replace them every three years. A little wear and tear goes a long way in souring your credibility and dressing from mismatched items of clothing adds nothing to your credibility either.

Tied to the big picture – For men, wearing a tie is back in fashion. Be sure your tie is of the correct length. It also needs to colour- coordinate with your suit and shirt. If your tie is less than impressive, your look screams out, “I- have- no- clue- when- it- comes- to- ties”. Do not let little things take away from the big picture of your professional competence.

Send the right message – The best garments are the ones that fit you perfectly. When your trousers are tight, it implies you have put on weight. When your jacket is shapeless or oversized, you’ll look inexpensive. The fabric should glide over your body without clinging, pinching or bulging.

It’s all about sole – Your shoes should always be comfortable. Leather uppers and soles are more breathable than synthetics; they’re more natural, and they don’t trap sweat.

The face of success – Finish it off by putting your best face forward. Easy- care hairstyles are your best bet. Always use a good grooming product but not too much of it. Ask your trusted hair professional for their advice.

When you’re groomed immaculately, you are wearing appropriate shoes and your clothes fit well, you leave nothing to chance. You need to take care of yourself in order to take care of your clients. Show you care and you’ll maximise your chances for success.

Elena Reed is a speaker and stylist specialising in image and business etiquette. She runs regular webinars for professionals to help them create a winning image for career and personal success. Meet Elena at www.elelareed.com.au