

Professional Business Women: *Three Ways to Tune Up Your Image and Accelerate Your Success*

by Joy Kent



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On Jan. 4, Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi made history when she was elected Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives. It marked the first time that a woman had been elected to the position that is only "two heartbeats" away from the office of President. Susan Bulkeley Butler, who was hired as the first female employee at Arthur Andersen Consulting and then, in 1979, was named the first female partner for Andersen said, "Although women now make up 51 percent of the population and an equally close percent of the work force, only nine women have made it to become CEO's of Fortune 500 companies. Butler added, "Nancy Pelosi should be an inspiration to women of all ages, regardless of their political affiliation. Women can do whatever they set their mind to, and above all, need to believe in themselves and their dreams."

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-Susan Bulkeley Butler

If belief and self confidence are key, one of the surest confidence builders is also the easiest: ***Create a winning professional image.*** Because 55% of our communication is physical and visual and only 7% is verbal, your image can powerfully convey credibility and confidence even before you say a word. ***More than any other single factor, your clothing shapes your image.***

Here are three ways you can tune up your image and accelerate your success by adjusting your wardrobe:

1: Wear clothing that fits and compliments your body.

When determining if clothes fit your body, look not only at whether they are too big or too small, but also at whether they enhance your body type and body portions. Clothes that compliment you will:

- Emphasize your assets
- Skim over your problem area(s)
- Be in proportion to your body

For a quick 10-point clothing self-assessment that covers your coloring, the shape of your face and waist, and the importance of lines, see my free special report ***Your Style 101.*** Download this free special report from the home page of www.designwithjoy.com .

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2: Wear clothing that fits and compliments your personality.

Are you a casual person? Are you playful? Are you more on the serious side? While wearing clothing that fits and compliments your personality, you will feel natural and right, you will subconsciously convey this to others, and your overall image will therefore convey integrity and support your professional goals. On the other hand, if your clothing does ***not*** fit your personality you will tend to convey dissonance, discomfort and lack of overall integrity.

- **Are you more conservative by nature?** Clothing with design detail and more neutral colors may be the better fit.
- **Do you have an outgoing, flashy personality? Do you love being the center of**

- attention?** Clothing with simple lines, flashy bright colors (hot pinks, blues, reds, oranges, yellows) and bling (elaborate ostentatious jewelry) may be the better fit.
- **Do you have a creative personality?** You may be looking at more edgy clothing with cutting edge detail and colors that slightly break the rules.
 - Go to my website and download my free special report: **3 Steps to Identifying Clothes that Fit and Compliment your Personality** www.designwithjoy.com

Clothes that compliment your personality will convey overall integrity of character.
-Joy Kent

3: Wear clothing that fits and compliments the setting and your audience.

Your goal here is to make your audience (clients, bosses, colleagues) feel comfortable and at ease. The more comfortable they are with you, the more quickly they will identify, connect and develop the kind of "positive regard" upon which successful business relationships are based.

Guiding factors include:

- **The type of profession you represent.**
 - Professions in the **financial industry** (banking, financial planning, insurance, accounting...) tend to be more conservative and call for a more conservative wardrobe. The look is more classic and formal—like a banker's suit. A jacket with vertical lines conveys power. Clothing that casts you as a sexual object gives away your power.
 - On the other hand, **the more "creative" professions** (interior design, graphic art, advertising...) tend to be more cutting edge in color and style (refer to what I said above regarding the "creative personality").
- **The professions your clients represent.** Do your clients tend to be in the more conservative or in the more creative professions? Once again, refer to what I said above about the clothing that is a fit for these professions.
- **The setting:** Is it a big office building down town or a small office in the country? Are you attending an off-site meeting or meeting in your client's home or office? Large office buildings tend to be more formal, off-site meetings more casual. I know of sales people who carry multiple changes of clothing in their car enabling them to adjust their appearance to fit the various clients they will be visiting throughout the day.
- **Socioeconomic considerations:** Are your clients wealthy, upper middle class, lower middle class? Dress in a way that makes them feel comfortable. Your guide is to observe how they dress, and then dress up slightly—just a notch.
- **Business Casual:** With so many business settings going casual, knowing what "business casual" requires can be more puzzling. View my special report: **Going Business Casual.** Download this special report in PDF format from the home page of www.designwithjoy.com

Remember, women can do whatever they set their mind to, and above all, need to believe in themselves and their dreams. There is no greater, more natural and easy confidence builder than creating a winning professional image by wearing clothing that fits your body, your personality and your audience. --Joy Kent

At the beginning of your work day, do you stand in front of your closet trying to figure out what to wear? When you go clothes shopping do you have a hard time figuring out what to buy? Learn how to create your own winning business professional and casual wardrobe. Call or email me for a **Professional Wardrobe Assessment.**

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