

Illinois University Council for Career and Technical Education
Awards for Innovation

Final Report
Work and School Readiness: The Role of Appearance Management

Submitted by:

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1. The strand addressed by the project

Southern Illinois University's Department of Workforce Education and Development (WED) proposed to address the strand of curriculum development initiatives for CTE with the purpose of creating awareness of the role of appearance management in readiness for work and school.

2. Rationale for the project

Whether planning to enter the workforce or continue schooling in a higher education program or workforce training program, high school students need a level of readiness for a variety of skills. Math and reading skills are essential for both work and continued schooling (ACT, 2006). In addition, research has repeatedly shown that appearance has a very strong and immediate effect on individuals in a broad range of contexts (Johnson & Lennon, 1999). Proper appearance is related to positive evaluation of job performance (Freeburg, 2006) and perceptions of high competency of higher education students (Rainey, 2006). Thus, determining appropriate appearance for different contexts is an important life skill for young adults and is teachable. The first step in building these skills is awareness of the relationship between appearance and success at work or school. High school students can build an appearance management plan for various contexts that does not violate their desire for individuality. Appearance management includes behaviors such as dieting, exercise, cosmetics use, hair grooming, use of clothing, and cosmetic surgery (Rudd & Lennon, 1999).

3. Objectives of the project

Project objectives are as follows:

- a. Design an instrument to measure awareness of appearance management in readiness for work and school.
- b. Design and develop a unit of instruction containing three individual lessons related to appearance management for work and school.
- c. Provide two pre-service teachers (Family and Consumer Science and/or Business Education) an opportunity to assist in the design and development of curricular materials in an Illinois Public High School.
- d. Implement the unit of instruction in a pilot study (n=130 students) in an Illinois Public High School using two classroom teachers and two pre-service teachers.
- e. Evaluate effectiveness of instruction by:
 - i. Comparing pretest and posttest results; and
 - ii. Conducting post interviews with 13 students (10% of population).
- f. Disseminate the unit of instruction electronically to groups of Family and Consumer Science and/or Business Education teachers in Illinois Public High Schools who teach the graduation-required course, Consumer Education.

4. Results/Deliverables of the project.

Objectives	Results/Deliverables
<p>a. Design an instrument to measure awareness of appearance management in readiness for work and school.</p>	<p><i>Appearance Management Survey</i> is in Appendix A.</p>
<p>b. Design and develop a unit of instruction containing three individual lessons related to appearance management for work and school.</p>	<p>The deliverable products were a unit of instruction with four lessons, including objectives, learning activities, and evaluation instruments/activities. The purpose was: <i>Increase awareness of the role of appearance management in readiness for work and school.</i> The lessons are on a publicly available website (http://lifekills.wed.siu.edu/). They are also in Appendix B.</p>
<p>c. Provide two pre-service teachers (Family and Consumer Science and/or Business Education) an opportunity to assist in the design and development of curricular materials in an Illinois Public High School.</p>	<p>Two pre-service FCS teachers worked with the Subject Matter Expert/Curriculum Designer to develop and deliver the four lessons. Both reported a very positive and rewarding early field experience. Both used to experience to confirm their teacher career choice.</p>
<p>d. Implement the unit of instruction in a pilot study (n=130 students) in an Illinois Public High School using two classroom teachers and two pre-service teachers.</p>	<p>Unit of instruction was delivered on early December 2006 at Pinckneyville, IL Community High School. Student projects are available at http://lifekills.wed.siu.edu/Sample%20Student%20Products/Sample%20Student%20Products.htm They are also available in Appendix B</p>
Objectives	Results/Deliverables
<p>e. Evaluate effectiveness of instruction by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Comparing pretest and posttest results; and ii. Conducting post interviews with 13 students (10% of population). 	<p>Two manuscripts were written are under review.</p> <p>Freeburg, B.W., & Arnett, S. E. (under review). Work and school readiness: The role of appearance management. <i>Career and Technical Education Research Journal</i></p> <p>Arnett, S.E., & Freeburg, B.W. (under review). Family & consumer sciences pre-service teachers: Impact of an early field experience. <i>Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences Education.</i></p>
<p>f. Disseminate the unit of instruction electronically to groups of Family and Consumer Science and/or Business Education teachers in Illinois Public High Schools who teach the graduation-required course, Consumer Education.</p>	<p>The unit of instruction with lessons was disseminated to 25 people in paper form at the Connections Conference in St. Charles, IL, at a seminar for 35 students in Carbondale, IL, and on a publicly available website http://lifekills.wed.siu.edu The lessons were also distributed electronically to a group of CTE teachers in the Chicago Public School System.</p>

References

- ACT. (2006). *Ready for College and Ready for Work: Same or Different?* Iowa City, IA: Author.
- Freeburg, B.W. (2005, October). *Lake County 2005 Summer Youth Evaluation Project: Lake County Funded Youth Participants Final Report*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Department of Workforce Education and Development.
- Rudd, N.A., & Lennon, S.J. (1999). Social power and appearance management among women. In K.K.P Johnson & S.J. Lennon (Eds.), *Appearance and Power*. (1st ed., pp. 153-172). Gordonsville, VA: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Johnson, K.K.P., & Lennon, S.J. (Eds.). (1999). *Appearance and Power*. Gordonsville, VA: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Rainey, A. (2006). Tress for Success. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 52(24), A6.

Appendix A
Appearance Management Survey

Appearance Management Survey

Part 1 -- Information about you...

Directions: Please complete each of the 8 questions below by placing an X by the answer that best describes you.

1. What grade are you in high school?

- _____ a. Freshman
- _____ b. Sophomore
- _____ c. Junior
- _____ d. Senior

2. What is your ethnicity?

- _____ a. White
- _____ b. Black
- _____ c. Hispanic
- _____ d. Native American
- _____ e. Asian
- _____ f. Other (please identify) _____

3. What are your plans after high school?

- _____ a. Attend a community college
- _____ b. Attend a 4-year college/university
- _____ c. Go to work
- _____ d. Other (please describe) _____

4. What is your gender?

- _____ a. Male
- _____ b. Female

5. How old are you?

- _____ a. 14
- _____ b. 15
- _____ c. 16
- _____ d. 17
- _____ e. 18
- _____ f. 19
- _____ g. Other (please identify) _____

6. Do you currently have a job?

- _____ a. Yes
- _____ b. No

7. If you have a job, how many hours do you work each week?
- _____ a. 0-5 hours per week
 - _____ b. 6-10 hours per week
 - _____ c. 11-15 hours per week
 - _____ d. 16-20 hours per week
 - _____ e. More than 20 hours per week
8. If you have a job, what are you required to wear to work?
- _____ a. A uniform
 - _____ b. Casual clothes
 - _____ c. Professional clothes
 - _____ d. Other (please describe) _____

Part 2 – You opinions about appearance management at school and work...

Directions: Please rate each of the 8 statements below by placing an X by the answer that best describes your opinion.

9. My school dress code is very strict.
- _____ a. Strongly Agree
 - _____ b. Agree
 - _____ c. Not sure
 - _____ d. Disagree
 - _____ e. Strongly Disagree
10. My school dress code allows me to wear what ever I want to wear to school.
- _____ a. Strongly Agree
 - _____ b. Agree
 - _____ c. Not sure
 - _____ d. Disagree
 - _____ e. Strongly Disagree
11. How I dress affects the quality of my work at school.
- _____ a. Strongly Agree
 - _____ b. Agree
 - _____ c. Not sure
 - _____ d. Disagree
 - _____ e. Strongly Disagree
12. Dress affects the quality of performance in the workplace.
- _____ a. Strongly Agree
 - _____ b. Agree
 - _____ c. Not sure
 - _____ d. Disagree
 - _____ e. Strongly Disagree

13. Casual dress in the workplace negatively affects the quality of work.

- _____ a. Strongly Agree
- _____ b. Agree
- _____ c. Not sure
- _____ d. Disagree
- _____ e. Strongly Disagree

14. Dress codes are necessary for ensuring a professional performance at work.

- _____ a. Strongly Agree
- _____ b. Agree
- _____ c. Not sure
- _____ d. Disagree
- _____ e. Strongly Disagree

15. Professional dress promotes efficiency in performing tasks.

- _____ a. Strongly Agree
- _____ b. Agree
- _____ c. Not sure
- _____ d. Disagree
- _____ e. Strongly Disagree

16. Work performance is not affected by the required level of dress formality (that is uniform, casual dress, professional dress).

- _____ a. Strongly Agree
- _____ b. Agree
- _____ c. Not sure
- _____ d. Disagree
- _____ e. Strongly Disagree

Thanks for helping us with this important research project by completing the Appearance Management Survey!

Appendix B
Instructional Materials and Samples of Student Work

Purpose of Appearance Management Curriculum

The purpose is: *Increase awareness of the role of appearance management in readiness for work and school.*

Rationale for Appearance Management Curriculum

Whether planning to enter the workforce or continue schooling in a higher education program or workforce training program, high school students need a level of readiness for a variety of skills. Math and reading skills are essential for both work and continued schooling (ACT, 2006). In addition, research has repeatedly shown that appearance has a very strong and immediate effect on individuals in a broad range of contexts (Johnson & Lennon, 1999).

Proper appearance is related to positive evaluation of job performance (Freeburg, 2006) and perceptions of high competency of higher education students (Rainey, 2006). Thus, determining appropriate appearance for different contexts is an important life skills for young adults and is teachable.

The first step in building these skills is awareness of the relationship between appearance and success at work or school. High school students can build an appearance management plan for various contexts that does not violate their desire for individuality. Appearance management includes behaviors such as dieting, exercise, cosmetics use, hair grooming, use of clothing, and cosmetic surgery (Rudd & Lennon, 1999).



Lesson Components

This teacher's manual contains a unit of instruction with four lessons, including objectives, workplace skills & career development competencies, teaching instructions, learning activities, worksheets, handouts, and evaluation instruments.

Lesson 1 – Appearance Management Basics (75 minutes):

Students will gain background information regarding appropriate appearance at work and school. Students will participate in discussion topics regarding basic appearance terms and issues, the importance of appropriate appearance, situational dress codes, and how perceptions of dress influence behavior towards individuals.

Lesson 2 & 3 - Readiness for Work and School (150 minutes):

Students will develop practical skills in learning to identify appropriate appearance and apply this knowledge to the educational and workplace environments. Students will research dress-related topics and demonstrate their understanding of these concepts through simulated workplace activities.

Lesson 4 – Developing an Appearance Management Plan (150 minutes):

Students will develop an appearance management plan by compiling individualized wardrobes related to their future specific goals, as well as appropriate clothing styles and selections for other occupations and professional roles. By developing this plan, students will document their understanding that appropriate dress is a transferable skill instrumental in workplace and personal success.



Lesson 1: Appearance Management

Objectives

- Students will be able to define conceptual clothing terminology.
- Students will be able to understand the importance of appropriate dress for the workplace.
- Students will be able to recognize how perceptions of dress influence behavior towards individuals.

Workplace Skills & Career Development Competencies

1.C.4c, 1.C.4d, 15.A.2b, 1.A.5a

Materials Needed Pictures, catalogs, glue sticks, scissors, paper, markers

Instruction

1. Introduction: "Clothes say a lot about you" scenario [discuss]
2. *Display* pictures and have students identify job occupations based on clothes, [leading into first impressions & perceptions]; have students brainstorm different clothing required by different professions [health care, food service, work industry, etc.] [1.1]
3. *Discuss* first impressions and perceptions; why is it important
4. *Define* appearance terminology [1.2]
5. Ask students, "How does appearance relate to job readiness?"
 - Discuss performance, task efficiency, quality of work, dress codes, casual dress, etc. in relation to school and work
6. *Discuss* "How to Dress for an Interview" [1.3]
 - a. Distribute "Appropriate Men & Women's Wear" sheet
 - b. Discuss what is appropriate and inappropriate dress; provide examples
 - c. Discuss grooming, body adornment, and personal hygiene
7. *Explain* how to build a professional wardrobe. Identify pieces of clothing and demonstrate how to mix and match.
8. Distribute "What Not To Wear." Pairing up, have students work on identifying appropriate dress/appearance, discuss student observations. [1.4]
9. Evaluation: "Appropriate Attire for Interviewing" worksheet [1.5]

Extending the Content

- ✓ Invite a cosmetic representative to class for advice and demonstration of face appearance for an interview
- ✓ Demonstrate how to "tie-a-tie"
- ✓ Discuss care and maintenance of clothing
- ✓ Invite a tailor to demonstrate how clothing should fit properly and how to measure body seams
- ✓ Invite a school nurse to address personal hygiene and grooming habits

What do the pictures below tell you?



How to Dress for an Interview

The first impression you make on a potential employer is the most important one. The first judgment an interviewer makes is going to be based on how you look and what you are wearing. That's why it's always important to dress professionally for a job interview, even if the work environment is casual.

Men's Interview Attire

- Suit (solid color- navy or dark grey)
- Long sleeve shirt (white or coordinated with the suit)
- Belt
- Tie
- Dark socks, conservative leather shoes
- Little or no jewelry
- Neat, professional hairstyle
- Neatly trimmed nails
- Limit the aftershave or cologne

Women's Interview Attire

- Suit (navy, black, or dark grey)
- The suit skirt should be long enough so you can sit down comfortably
- Coordinated blouse
- Conservative shoes
- Limited jewelry (no dangling earrings or arms full of bracelets)
- Professional hairstyle
- Neutral pantyhose
- Light make-up and perfume
- Neatly manicured clean nails

What NOT to Bring to the Interview

- Gum
- Cell phone
- Ipod
- Coffee or soda
- If you have lots of piercing, leave your rings at home
- Cover tattoos

Interview Attire Tips

- Before you even think about going on an interview, make sure you have appropriate interview attire and everything fits correctly
- Get your clothes ready the night before
- Polish your shoes

<http://jobsearch.about.com/od/interviewattire/a/interviewdress.htm>



Examples of Potential Interview Dress for Men
Least Recommended to Most Recommended

Examples of Potential Interview Dress for Women
Least Recommended to Most Recommended



What Not to Wear

Name _____

Directions: Look at the pictures below. Is the clothing appropriate to wear on the occasion listed? If not, what is wrong with it?

	
Church	Job Interview



Winter Ball



First Date



Job Interview



Job Interview

APPROPRIATE ATTIRE FOR INTERVIEWING

Based on class discussion on appropriate attire for dressing for an interview, examine each individual and identify why each are dressed inappropriately.



Lesson 2: *Readiness for Work and School*

Objectives

- Students will be able to identify appropriate dress for the workplace.
- Students will be able to demonstrate their understanding of appropriate dress through conducting research on dress-related topics.

Workplace Skills & Career Development Competencies

15.A.2b, 15.B.4a, 14.C.1, 18.B.1a

Materials Needed

Trunk, articles of clothing

Instruction

1. Introduction: Distribute "What to Wear." Form small groups and discuss. Reach a consensus and then report your reasons for your choices to the whole class. [2.1]
2. *Explain "Trunk Show" activity*
 - a. Groups of 3, distribute a scenario card to each group for dressing for an interview for a specific occupation
 - b. Based on given occupation, coordinate an outfit from the "Trunk" that is suitable for the job interview
 - c. Present student "model" to class and explain why and how group coordinated outfit
 - d. Distribute differing situational dress situation scenarios to each group
 - e. Based on the situation, coordinate an outfit suitable for that situation
 - f. Present student "model" to class and explain why and how group coordinated outfit
3. Evaluation: 1) by groups modeling and explaining their chosen coordinated outfit
2) "The Right Clothes for the Occasion" [2.2]

Lesson 3: *Readiness for Work and School*

Objectives

- Students will be able to identify appropriate dress for the workplace.
- Students will be able to demonstrate their understanding of appropriate dress through conducting research on dress-related topics.

Workplace Skills & Career Development Competencies

27.A.1b, 27.A.5, 15.A.2b, 5.A.2a

Materials Needed

Computers, catalogs, markers, glue sticks, poster board

Instruction

- 1) **Introduction:** *Scenario:* Jennifer is employed after school by a company for which she would later like to work on a permanent basis. She is surprised by the very casual dress of the other part-time employees. If you were in Jen's situation, how would you dress for work? Why? [Dressing more professionally to make a good impression could help her employment chances later.]
(*Critical Thinking of Understanding Cause and Effect*)
- 2) **Explain** to students that there are many facets to appearance management.
 - Discuss performance, efficiency, quality in relation to dress for school and work
- 3) **Activity:** "Appearance Management Goes Visual." Pairing students, create posters (visual) through researching on the following dress-related topics [internet, textbook, books, catalogs] [distribute direction sheet]
 - Dress Codes
 - Casual Dress
 - Professional Dress
 - First Impression & Perceptions
 - Building a Professional Wardrobe
 - Dressing for Success
- 4) **Evaluation:** Present and display dress-related topics [generate discussion]
[3.1]

Lesson 4: *Developing an Appearance Management Plan*

Objectives

- Students will be able to understand that appropriate dress is a transferable skill instrumental in workplace and personal success.
- Students will be able to develop an appearance management plan by compiling an appropriate wardrobe related to future career goals.
- Students will be able to integrate mathematics by budgeting for appropriate work attire in developing an appearance management plan.

Workplace Skills & Career Development Competencies

5.A.2a, 6.B.4, 27.A.1b

Materials Needed

Computers, scissors, glue sticks, paper

Instruction

- 1) Introduction: Display 2 pictures, (1) a slovenly dressed person and (2) appropriate dressed person; students point out differences between the two individuals; discuss observations
- 2) Activity: Appearance Management Plan
 - a. Using the internet, research clothing retailers to select and create a wardrobe inventory to identify clothing needs related to future career goals.
 - b. Budget of \$1000 to dress appropriate for 5 days of work, 1 casual dress, and 1 dinner business meeting outfit
 - c. In addition, include a one-page report explaining (1) "Appearance Management" in relation to school and job readiness and (2) how appearance promotes job success. (Suggestions: promote professionalism, quality of work, promote efficiency, etc.)
- 3) Evaluation: Appearance Management Plan product [4.1]

Extending the Content

- ✓ FCCLA Connection. Dressing to meet expectations by using the Power of One activity. <http://www.fcclainc.org>