

7 Style Tips for Business Travel

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Business travel is some of the most important travel you can do because it is presumably making you money. Do it right and you return home with a big reward. Do it poorly and you and your company will lose a lot of money. All too often, the difference between success and failure comes down to personal style. Here are a few style tips that will get you closer to the win, and a few to avoid:

- **Keep It Trim and Neat**

It should go without saying that [beard trimmer kits](#) are a must for men's business travel. We tried the 5 o'clock shadow made famous by actors who had no business to conduct. We learned that there is a fine line between looking casual and looking unkempt. You don't have to be clean-shaven to look professional. But you do have to keep your facial hair trim and neat at all times. An untidy appearance indicates someone who doesn't care about the details. It will definitely cost you some business.

- **Cut It Short**

Dealing with your hair [while traveling between climates](#) can be tricky. The easiest way to deal with the issue for both men and women is to cut your hair short so that it is more manageable in any climate and appropriate for all situations. That doesn't mean you have to shave it all off. But shorter hair means that you will need to travel with fewer products, have fewer bad hair days, and take much less time preparing for the big meeting.

- **Avoid Bright Colors**

Avoid red and yellow, and treat other bright colors with moderation. You might want to be even more conservative with [colors you choose for business](#) travel versus those you choose for your daily office work. You do not want to show up for a meeting looking like you are there for a vacation. If you want to be taken seriously, you have to dress in a way that your hosts deem serious. If you are unsure of what that might be, play it safe and dress conservatively. Being a little bland in your dress is much better than being too flamboyant.

- **Wear a Mechanical Watch**

Don't make the mistake of wearing a Fitbit to a business meeting. It is like wearing sneakers instead of dress shoes. Instead, buy a mechanical watch that is not constantly distracting you with data. Smartwatches are no better than smartphones when it comes to distraction. Wear something more professional and you will be treated more professionally.

- **Look Powerful (But Not Sexy!)**

No one denies that you are a sexy beast. But leaning into that harms your business prospects. People who make the big deals don't make the cover of fashion magazines. They fill the pages of publications highlighting the most powerful people in the world. Look sexy for your nightlife. Look powerful for your business meeting.

- **Blend In**

When in Rome, do as the Romans do. That is just as true today as it was a thousand years ago. You don't want to stand out too much from the other people in the room on account of what you are wearing. Do a little research and determine how business people typically dress where you are going. Then do likewise to the extent possible.

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- **Bring Extras**

Do you really want to lose a client because you showed up with a mustard stain on your blouse? You might not want to eat a hotdog, or anything else that can cause a stain, just prior to your big meeting.

The best thing you can do is pack an extra dress shirt or blouse in your work bag so that you have something clean to change into in the event of a luncheon disaster. Ties are stain magnets. Fortunately, they are small and light and easy to pack in any size bag.

It is not just food. When you are in a high-level negotiation session, you never want to let them see you sweat. Extra shirts and undershirts are a must.

Business travel is not the same as vacation travel. With vacation travel, you are there to spend money. With business travel, you are there to make money. When you are traveling with the express purpose of making money, it is vitally important that you look the part.