

Wear Professional Attire

Unit: Preparing Foods

Problem Area: Becoming a Kitchen Professional

Lesson: Wear Professional Attire

- **Student Learning Objectives.** Instruction in this lesson should result in students achieving the following objectives:

- 1 Identify professional attire for the kitchen.**
- 2 Identify professional attire for customer service.**

- **Resources.** The following resources may be useful in teaching this lesson:

Chaney, Lillian H., and Jeanette S. Martin. *The Essential Guide to Business Etiquette*. Praeger, 2007.

Heathfield, Susan M. "Dress for Work Success: A Business Casual Dress Code," *About.com*. Accessed Aug. 30, 2010. <http://humanresources.about.com/od/workrelationships/a/dress_code.htm>.

National Restaurant Association Foundation. *ProStart Year 2: Becoming a Foodservice Professional*, 2nd ed. National Restaurant Association Education Foundation, 2005.

Sabath, Ann Marie. *Beyond Business Casual: What to Wear to Work if You Want to Get Ahead*, 2nd ed. Career Press, 2004.

Shonfeld, Jane. "Appropriate vs. Inappropriate Clothing in the Workplace," *Cape Business News*. Accessed Aug. 30, 2010. <<http://www.cbn.co.za/press/fullstory.php?newsid=359&office=janeshonfeld>>.



■ Equipment, Tools, Supplies, and Facilities

- ✓ Overhead or PowerPoint projector
- ✓ Visual(s) from accompanying master(s)
- ✓ Copies of sample test, lab sheet(s), and/or other items designed for duplication
- ✓ Materials listed on duplicated items
- ✓ Computers with printers and Internet access
- ✓ Classroom resource and reference materials

■ Key Terms. The following terms are presented in this lesson (shown in bold italics):

- ▶ apron
- ▶ attire
- ▶ back of the house
- ▶ baggy chef pants
- ▶ bib apron
- ▶ chef coats
- ▶ chef pants
- ▶ clogs
- ▶ closed-toe shoes
- ▶ customer service
- ▶ front of the house
- ▶ hairnets
- ▶ ID
- ▶ neckerchief
- ▶ polo shirt
- ▶ professional
- ▶ side towel
- ▶ slacks
- ▶ sport coats
- ▶ toque
- ▶ uniform

■ Interest Approach. Use an interest approach that will prepare the students for the lesson. Teachers often develop approaches for their unique class and student situations. A possible approach is included here.

Assuming that the teacher/student atmosphere is reasonable and comfortable, choose a student who is comfortable being put on the spot to participate in a demonstration. (You may wish to discuss the type of demonstration you are planning with the student ahead of time and ask him or her to dress casually that day—perhaps shorts, a shirt with printing on it, sandals, etc.) As an

alternative, this activity could be conducted via magazine or other print images of a typical casually dressed teen.

Invite the selected demo student to stand at the front of the class. Ask the remainder of the class to take out a sheet of paper and a pencil and then to observe the student for a minute. Tell the class they should write down the jobs they believe the demo student is currently dressed to obtain. (You may need to remind the class that this demo is all in good fun as an in-class experiment.) No names should be written on these sheets of paper.

Collect the sheets, mix them up, and pass them back randomly to students, having each read aloud what is on the paper.

Ask the class why the suggestions were so limited. Ask how they would feel if the demo student greeted them as the host in a restaurant or as the front desk clerk in a hotel. Encourage honesty and decorum. Based on the results (which may be blunt), ask what their expectations of appearance are for various hospitality jobs.

CONTENT SUMMARY AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1: Identify professional attire for the kitchen.

Anticipated Problem: What is standard professional attire in a kitchen setting?

- I. Professional kitchen attire
 - A. Regardless of job title or position, most employees have a basic requirement to dress appropriately on the job, and most jobs require that specific attire be worn to work. **Attire** is the group of clothing items typically worn at one time—from hats to shirts to shoes. Proper attire in one situation (e.g., on vacation) may be completely inappropriate in another. Employers and people who come in contact with employees have an expectation that people will be dressed correctly for the job held at work. This basic standard of dressing appropriately in the workplace is one element of being called a professional or exhibiting professionalism. A **professional** is a person who conducts himself or herself in a manner consistent with the characteristics of the business or workplace. In the culinary industry, several elements characterize a professional:
 1. Knowledge of the hospitality industry and the culinary arts
 2. Creativity
 3. Organizational skills, including buying

4. Knowledge of nutrition, diet, and menu planning
 5. Instructional abilities
 6. Knowledge of kitchen layout and traffic patterns
 7. Knowledge of customer service
 8. Knowledge of sanitation and hygiene practices
 9. Appropriate dress and demeanor
- B. Different establishments will have different clothing requirements, but it is a safe assumption that all kitchens and dining areas will have, at a minimum, basic uniform requirements. A **uniform** is the prescribed or required attire for a job and usually serves to identify a group within an organization. A uniform may extend beyond clothing. For example, in some front of the house establishments, no employees may have facial hair. In most cases, a uniform is a specific set of clothing pieces worn on the job; the clothing would look inappropriate worn in public in a non-work setting (e.g., police or fire uniform or surgical gowns). The most professional environments have the highest standards in attire requirements. In a professional kitchen, the uniform is donned (put on) after arrival at work. Wearing a uniform in the car, on the bus, or walking to work compromises sanitation standards. The hospitality industry tends to separate departments and employees by how directly each employee deals with the public. Those employees who work in areas in which the public is not permitted are **back of the house** employees or kitchen staff.
1. **Chef coats** are comfortable and lightweight double-breasted jackets that have traditional cloth knotted buttons, plastic buttons, or plastic “studs” running down the front. Cloth knotted buttons continue to be the most durable button type as they withstand numerous washings and frequent abuse from pots and pans, splatters, and equipment. Double-breasted jackets are still the norm as they allow the chef to reverse a soiled jacket side for a clean one. The industry standard is white to make dirt stand out, making necessary cleaning more identifiable. Other colors, however, are available. Marie-Antoine Carême is credited with making white—for cleanliness—the kitchen standard. Escoffier also thought that the cleanliness of a chef’s uniform was important and that it served the profession positively.
 - a. It is common for an employee’s name and title to be embroidered or sewn onto the coat over the single front pocket.
 - b. Sleeve length should extend down to the wrist, but shorter sleeves are available.
 - c. The material should be washable, durable, and comfortable.
 - d. The highest importance goes to wearing a clean, unstained coat to start each day.

2. **Chef pants (baggy chef pants)** are slightly oversized and baggy attire, coupled with an elastic waistband. The design is intentional and helps to ensure the highest comfort available to employees in hectic jobs with long hours. Industry standard colors are black or black and white hound's tooth check, though other colors and patterns are becoming more acceptable.
 - a. Pants should be properly fitted and never worn as “low riders,” with the waistband worn lower than the actual waist.
 - b. Pants must be professionally hemmed and should never be rolled up or cuffed.
 - c. Pant legs dragging on the floor compromise health and sanitation standards of foodservice facilities.
 - d. Freshly laundered pants should be worn daily.
3. All back of the house staff wear head coverings when in the kitchen. Head covers prevent hair from falling into food and prevent hands from coming in contact with hair. The highest standard of professionalism—and perhaps the most distinguishable part of the chef's uniform—is the chef hat or toque. A traditional **toque** (toque blanche) is a brimless cylindrically shaped hat adorned with vertical folds all around. Other chef hats are soft and floppy, and some establishments provide stiff, tall, and round paper hats in a cylinder shape for one-time usage. Clean head coverings are donned each day.
 - a. **Hairnets** are single-use head coverings made of a stretchy mesh material placed over all the hair on the head.
 - b. Beard nets are often required for men with facial hair.
 - c. More relaxed kitchens may allow ball caps as head coverings, and others may use short paper “cook” hats.
4. Regardless of the position, an apron is a standard part of the kitchen uniform. An **apron** is a large, rectangular piece of cloth with a string waistband to be tied over clothing at the waist. An apron with an extension designed to partially cover the front top of a chef coat, with a string going around the neck to hold it in place is a **bib apron**. The purpose of both styles is to protect the uniform underneath from becoming dirty with food splatter or other debris. Again, white is the industry standard to make dirt stand out and to encourage workers to change aprons regularly.
5. Safety concerns require all kitchen workers to wear closed-toe shoes as professional footwear. **Closed-toe shoes** are shoes that cover the toes. Sandals or any form of open footwear is forbidden. Shoes must be clean and free of holes or damage. Professional kitchens require standard leather shoes for the best protection, which includes non-skid and oil-resistant soles.
 - a. Some employers may permit gym or tennis shoes, depending on area health regulations and the type of equipment in the foodservice.
 - b. **Clogs** are common professional kitchen shoes designed to lift the heel up and move weight forward on the foot. Clogs are designed to provide comfort to people who work long hours on their feet. Clogs come open or closed heel (which is not an issue of safety) and are available in leather or human-made materials. Black is traditional.

6. Some kitchens require—and some employees simply choose to wear—neckerchiefs as an element of professionalism. A **neckerchief** is an item worn around the neck and tied into a knot under or to the side of the throat. It is similar in shape to a handkerchief. Even though it is a traditional aesthetic part of a professional chef’s uniform, a neckerchief can be colorful. The original purpose was to absorb any sweat running down the face or collecting around the neck. It is a throwback to the days of blazing hot kitchens without air conditioning.
 7. Professional kitchen attire should include a **side towel**, which is a hand towel worn on the side of the uniform, positioned over the edge of an apron. It is a natural response to wipe hands on an apron, which is absolutely inappropriate and unsanitary. Wearing a towel at the side as part of a uniform completes the chef’s attire and makes hand wiping (or a makeshift hot pad) readily accessible.
- C. An **ID** (identification badge) is appropriate, professional, and often required in the workplace. It usually includes a photo of the employee and his or her job title. It may include the date printed and imprinted bar code information. IDs are commonly worn around the neck on a chain or clipped onto the front of a coat or jacket. An employee name badge is a simple and small pin-on plastic or metal badge with the employee name and/or employee number. It is worn on the front of a jacket or shirt. An ID is typically larger than a name badge. In certain instances, part of the professional uniform may require the name badge or ID to be worn visibly at all times when on the job.
- D. Employees should avoid wearing most jewelry in kitchens. Aside from simple wedding bands and possibly wristwatches, all other visible jewelry is generally considered unprofessional as well as unsanitary.

Teaching Strategy: Use VM–A to illustrate three types of back of the house attire.

Objective 2: Identify professional attire for customer service.

Anticipated Problem: What is standard professional attire for customer service jobs?

II. Professional customer service attire

- A. Professional attire for customer service has a number of variables, but the constant is that a standard uniform is required. Positions in **customer service** are jobs in which employees have direct interaction with customers (e.g., servers, managers, hosts/hostesses, front desk clerks, housekeepers, bartenders, valet attendants, and bellhops). Employees who work in areas in which the public is permitted are **front of the house** employees or customer service staff. Regardless of the position, a standard of professional attire is required.
- B. As with back of the house staff, customer service employees are required to wear closed-toe shoes. However, these employees are not permitted to wear clogs or

tennis shoes because they would be inappropriate. Proper work or dress shoes are required. Name badges or IDs are also generally required at all times.

- C. Certain employees (e.g., housekeepers, bellhops, valets, servers, and front desk clerks) may have formalized and specific uniforms that identify them by job tasks. The uniform may be a specific style shirt or vest—designed in a specific color or pattern—and may include specific headgear (e.g., a cap). These uniforms are job specific and would not be worn in public when not on the job. When aprons are worn, the style and color would be determined by the business. In some cases, there may be just one element of clothing that is job identifying. For example:
1. A knit shirt with a collar is a **polo shirt**, and it may have the company logo embroidered on it, but the employee may wear any **slacks** (dress pants) of his or her choosing.
 2. Jeans or other casual pants, shorts, or shirts would not be professional.
 3. All front of the house uniforms should be clean and neat at the start of every work day.
- D. People in management positions typically dress at a higher level to elicit the professional standard of their jobs. Hosts in high-end restaurants, desk clerks in major hotels, and managers in most settings may be required to wear a suit and tie as their required uniform. In many cases, these clothes may be from their own wardrobe. **Sport coats** are items sold individually, without matching slacks. They still provide a professional look and are slightly less formal than suits, allowing the wearer flexibility in matching the coat with different colored slacks. In some jobs, the company may provide sport coats to employees so all employees are in matching coats, often times with company logos applied.
1. Suits, sport coats, slacks, and ties are not gender specific. For instance, male and female front desk clerks in hotels may be required to wear sport coats. It is perfectly appropriate, however, for women to wear dresses, skirts, blouses, and nylon stockings, depending on the job and employer requirements.
 2. Employees who wear suits or sport coats are typically required to wear button down shirts and neckties (or bow ties) as directed by the employer. Coats, shirts, and slacks must be neat, clean, and properly fitting for a professional appearance. For instance, a badly wrinkled suit would look as unprofessional (or more so) than no suit at all!
 3. Typical attire and appearance standards for male employees would include dress shoes and socks, no visible piercings, and no extraneous jewelry. In addition, men should be clean shaven, have a proper haircut, and have clean hands and fingernails.
 4. Typical attire for female employees would include a necktie where appropriate, dress shoes or high heels and nylons, no visible piercings aside from simple earrings and/or minimal jewelry, appropriate makeup, a proper haircut, and clean hands and fingernails.
 5. When employees are required to dress in business attire chosen from their own wardrobe, appropriate colors are often mandatory: dark formal colors or

neutral colors (e.g., beige, brown, or blue). Bright, loud, or pastel colors are not appropriate.

- E. Jewelry should be kept to a minimum. Simple necklaces, bracelets, and rings are generally acceptable within company guidelines. Visible piercings should be avoided or kept to simple earrings at most. A heavy use of jewelry and/or multiple or inappropriate piercings are generally frowned upon and are considered unprofessional.

Teaching Strategy: *During the discussion of front of the house attire, encourage students to provide examples of the required dress on their jobs or good examples they have observed in the workplace. Use VM–B to help guide the discussion. Assign LS–A.*

- **Review/Summary.** Use the student learning objectives to summarize the lesson. Have students explain the content associated with each objective. Student responses can be used in determining which objectives need to be reviewed or taught from a different angle. Questions at the ends of chapters in the textbook may also be used in the review/summary.
- **Application.** Along with class discussion and lecture, use the included visual master(s) and lab sheet(s) to apply the information presented in the lesson.
- **Evaluation.** Evaluation should focus on student achievement of the objectives for the lesson. Various techniques can be used, such as student performance on the application activities. A sample written test is provided.

■ **Answers to Sample Test:**

Part One: Multiple Choice

1. b
2. c
3. a
4. b
5. c
6. d

Part Two: True/False

1. T
2. F
3. T
4. F
5. T
6. T

Part Three: Completion

1. slacks
2. back
3. neckerchief
4. professional
5. polo
6. dark formal colors, neutral

Wear Professional Attire

► Part One: Multiple Choice

Instructions: Circle the letter of the correct answer.

- ____ 1. Back of the house employees include all of the following except a ____.
- a. cook
 - b. server
 - c. chef
 - d. dishwasher
- ____ 2. The shoes that would be the best choice for Sally to wear as a front of the house manager are ____.
- a. clogs
 - b. tennis shoes
 - c. leather heels
 - d. flip flop sandals
- ____ 3. All employees should wear a/an ____ at all times.
- a. ID
 - b. hat
 - c. necktie
 - d. sport coat
- ____ 4. Typical attire and appearance standards for male employees include dress shoes and socks, no extraneous jewelry, a proper haircut, and ____.
- a. a beard
 - b. no visible piercings
 - c. a tie clip
 - d. None of the above



- ____ 5. A ____ does *not* meet the standard of professional attire.
- hairnet
 - toque
 - dirty apron
 - blue dress

- ____ 6. Chef pants must be properly fitted and ____.
- worn lower than the actual waist
 - rolled up to the correct length
 - cuffed
 - hemmed

► Part Two: True/False

Instructions: Write *T* for true or *F* for false.

- ____ 1. Chef coats and aprons are typically white in color to make dirt stand out.
- ____ 2. Name tags and IDs are the same thing.
- ____ 3. Safety is the major reason kitchen employees are required to wear closed-toe shoes.
- ____ 4. Dressy sandals are acceptable footwear in the workplace.
- ____ 5. A professional appearance for someone wearing a suit coat or sport coat would include a necktie.
- ____ 6. It is acceptable for a restaurant hostess to wear small gold hoop earrings.

► Part Three: Completion

Instructions: Provide the word or words to complete the following statements.

- Another name for front of the house dress pants is _____.
- People who work in kitchens are considered _____ of the house employees.
- Some chefs wear a knotted cloth around their neck called a _____.
- A manager wearing slacks, a button down shirt, a necktie, and a sport coat is in _____ attire.
- An acceptable uniform for a dinner server would be slacks and a knit shirt with a collar, called a _____ shirt.
- When employees dress in business attire selected from their own wardrobe, they must usually choose clothes that are either _____ or _____.

PROFESSIONAL ATTIRE: BACK OF THE HOUSE



This chef is wearing a classic professional uniform including a toque, a double-breasted chef coat, an apron, and a neckerchief.



This back of the house employee is wearing a bib-style apron and floppy chef's hat. Does she look professional?



As a pizza delivery uniform, this attire is appropriate. Would this uniform look inappropriate if it was worn in a non-work setting?

PROFESSIONAL ATTIRE: FRONT OF THE HOUSE

Each of these foodservice employees is dressed in uniform and is dressed professionally. However, their specific jobs require different attire. Which of the following jobs does each person perform?

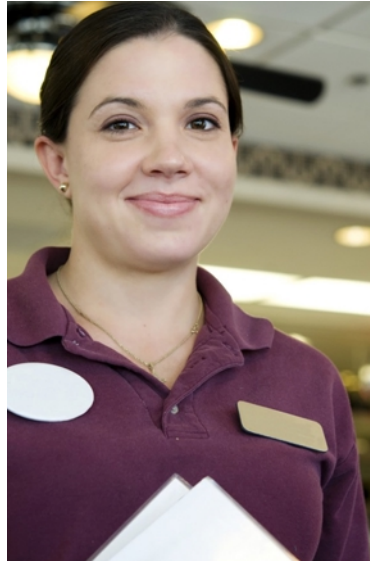
- ◆ Wait staff at a high-end restaurant
- ◆ Wine steward in an upscale hotel
- ◆ Wait staff in a German restaurant



PROFESSIONAL ATTIRE: FRONT OF THE HOUSE

Each of the wait staff pictured work in a different restaurant setting. Describe the appropriate setting for each employee.

Look carefully at the wait staff in the red apron. How would you assess her attire? Would you make any changes if you owned the restaurant where she works?



PROFESSIONAL ATTIRE: FRONT OF THE HOUSE

This woman is a manager at a high-end restaurant. How would you rate her attire and appearance?



These people are all hotel management staff. Do they meet the standards of professionalism?

Assess and Describe Professional Attire

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to practice evaluating written descriptions of foodservice attire and creating a written description of the attire and appearance necessary to obtain a management position.

Objectives

1. Assess and analyze two written descriptions of hospitality employee attire.
2. In writing, describe the desired attire and appearance for a given job.

Materials

- ◆ lab sheet
- ◆ writing utensil

Procedure

1. Read the two case study descriptions below. Each describes the attire of a different hospitality employee. On a separate sheet of paper, write your assessment of Dave and Lisa's outfits. Pay particular attention to errors and omissions in the attire required for back of the house and front of the house employees. Write complete sentences, and be specific in your critique.

Case Study A

Dave is a waiter at a country club and has arrived a bit late for the Friday evening dinner rush. He is wearing new black jeans and the red polo shirt with the country club logo all servers wear. His new white Nike tennis shoes look great against the black jeans. Dave's gold bracelet



clinks lightly against his watch, and his new nose ring matches the piercing in his tongue. To save time and because guests are waiting, Dave grabs a used apron from the lunch shift and goes right to work.

Case Study B

Lisa is beginning her eight-hour shift as a hotel maid. She is wearing white “nurse style” walking shoes, white socks, gray slacks, and a matching gray smock (or top) that buttons down the front and has the hotel logo imprinted on the left side. The collar of her smock has a black edging around it, and it fits neatly around her neck. Her ID badge is clipped onto her collar. Lisa is wearing a black apron with pockets where she keeps some working supplies (e.g., pens and a paper checklist of rooms to be cleaned). Her long hair is tied into a “bun” at the back of her head and is kept in place by small clips. Her wedding band and wristwatch finish her appearance.

2. There is a manager’s position open at the upscale hotel that you own. Write a detailed description of the attire and appearance you require from applicants for the position. Consider acceptable attire for men and women in your description. Write your description in the space provided, and write using complete sentences. OPTIONAL: Name the hotel, and provide a brief description of the atmosphere. When an employer writes a job description, it is often accompanied by details of the establishment.
3. Participate in a class discussion of an assessment of Dave and Lisa’s attire. Volunteer to read your description of the management attire requirements at your upscale hotel.
4. Turn in your completed lab sheet to your instructor.

Assess and Describe Professional Attire

1. **Case Study A.** Answers will vary. However, most students will criticize the following choices that Dave made:

- a. Black jeans rather than slacks is generally inappropriate for front of the house employees.
- b. Tennis shoes are generally inappropriate for front of the house employees.
- c. A gold bracelet, nose ring, and pierced tongue are all safety and sanitation hazards.
- d. The used apron is a sanitation hazard and is unacceptable.
- e. Dave is not wearing a name badge.

Case Study B. Answers will vary. However, there is not a single error in Lisa's attire. She is dressed appropriately for her shift as a maid.

2. **Attire and Appearance Description:** Answers may vary widely. In some cases, students may relate their description to the local atmosphere and name of the upscale hotel. Basic expectations of attire and appearance would be:

Men:

- a. Clean pressed suit or slacks and sport coat
- b. Button down shirt and appropriate necktie
- c. Dress shoes, dress socks, no visible piercings, no extra jewelry, clean shaven, proper haircut, and clean hands and fingernails

Women:

- a. Clean pressed suit, dress, or blouse and skirt
- b. Necktie where appropriate
- c. Dress shoes or high heels and nylons
- d. No visible piercings aside from simple earrings and/or minimal jewelry
- e. Appropriate makeup, hair, and clean hands and fingernails