

WHAT TO WEAR WHEN IT COMES TO HAIR

SOME HAIR TIPS TO FOLLOW... ON THE DAYS WE AREN'T ALREADY STRUGGLING WITH A BAD HAIR DAY

By Joanne Blake, AICI CIP

WHEN YOU LOOK AFTER a business' finances or someone's personal affairs, clients expect you to look trustworthy. Accountants who present themselves in a neat and professional manner are perceived to be organized, intelligent, and articulate. If you take care of your personal brand, clients will extrapolate from that and assume you will take good care of theirs.

Corporate image consultants are fielding more questions than ever about the suitability of beards, avant-garde hairstyles, and bold hair colour at the office.

While the rules have relaxed somewhat in recent years, accounting has always been a conservative profession. You need to balance your own personal style with the expectations of your clients.

Below are some tips to consider:

Tip 1 Know your industry

Our career advice is to look around at the leaders in your organization. How do they wear their hair? Do any of the men have a beard? Exercise caution if you are younger and less established in the organization or with a client. There is often an unwritten dress code, which can have more impact on your career and upward mobility than a written dress code. As a career-enhancing move, we advise professionals emulate the dress of the movers and shakers in your company. The same advice goes for facial hair, beards, hairstyle, and colour.



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Tip 2 Hairstyles

Your choice of hairstyle will depend on your personality, the texture of your hair, the effort required to maintain it, and what actually suits you. When it comes to colour, you want the focus to be on your skills and talents rather than on your vibrant blue or purple hair. Choose colours and highlights that are not extreme, yet define your style. For the best effect, choose a shade that harmonizes with your skin tone and your natural hair colour.

Hairstyle tips for women

If your hair is long or worn in a high ponytail, it can make you look less experienced. While hair does not have to be short, it should appear well-managed and controlled. Book a styling lesson with your salon and they will be happy to show you sophisticated and modern ways to wear it off your face while still looking professional. A hairstyle that never goes out of style for women is the bob. Graduated bobs work well and there is also a new style called the "lob," which is a bit of a longer bob and is attractive on most women.

Hairstyle tips for men

Ask your stylist to recommend hair products that are especially suited for your hair type and texture. If your hair is very fine or thinning, a shorter cut will look more distinguished. The 'hipster' look that is currently in vogue (closely cropped sides and fuller on the top) is attractive on young and youthful men, but take caution that it's not too extreme.

Tip 3 Beards for men

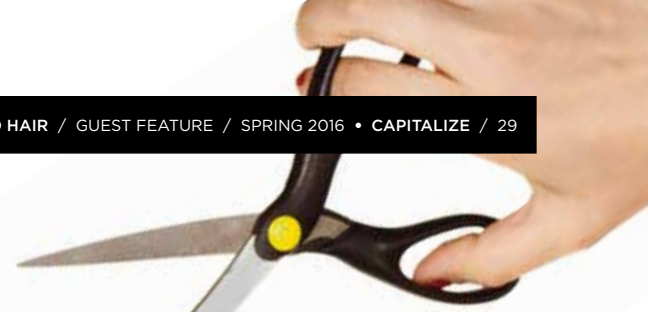
Many managers and senior staff are conflicted about the appropriateness of beards. This is an especially important consideration if your position involves frequent interaction with clients.

Here are some tips and advice if you want to sport a beard at the office:

- Keep it well trimmed.
- If you have very dark hair, a beard may make you look stern and unapproachable.
- In conservative industries, stubble can be perceived as if you had a rough night out and forgot to shave.
- To avoid that awkward in-between phase of starting a beard and getting it to a presentable stage, you might want to start growing your beard while you are on vacation.

In summary

When it comes to your personal brand, it's all about making informed choices. Ask yourself these three questions: does it make you look better, does it support your professional image, and does it support your organization's brand? ☑



Joanne Blake, AICI CIP, is the founder of Style for Success, Canada's premier team of corporate image consultants, business etiquette experts, and 'savvy not stuffy' speakers and trainers. They work with organizations and leaders who recognize the importance of a professional image and business etiquette skills in building brand and meeting client expectations to generate trust, credibility, and profit.