



## Nurse Leader

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The Career Coaching Corner

# Dress Code Expectations and Working from Home

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## Section snippets

### It's About the Signals Sent

Dressing professionally continues to hold value within any workforce because it gives employees credibility and demonstrates how they fit in with their work environment and business culture. In previous columns, I've discussed signaling theory; the signals you send infer inobservable information (e.g., professionalism) from observable attributes (e.g., attire). By dressing appropriately for meetings, even when those meetings are via Zoom or Skype video calls, employees can successfully...

## What to Wear

Whatever one's position on the issue of the appropriateness of dress codes in general, many aren't at all sure how to make the right impression on Zoom and Skype, presenting to their own team, delivering a presentation to a senior leadership group, attending a conference, or interviewing for a job. Like it or not, your appearance is going to say a lot about you before you've even had a chance to speak. You want to make sure you're dressed appropriate to your meeting's purpose and its audience.

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## Personal Grooming

If you know that your organization has relaxed the dress code standards during the pandemic, the rule of thumb is that you still need to neatly present yourself. That baseball hat or 2 days of beard growth is probably not signaling what you intend. This means attention to grooming. Showering, combing your hair, washing your face, brushing your teeth, applying make-up, and wearing clean, unwrinkled clothes are a must. Having attended a virtual conference, wake, wedding, and innumerable virtual...

## Professional Etiquette

Business meetings held in virtual settings come with some familiar rules along with some rules that are going to be different, and you would be well advised to remember your professional etiquette. For some, these new workplace environments with less direct face-to-face interactions and remote supervision may seem like an ideal opportunity to kick back and avoid work, multitask while on a call, miss deadlines, or be late to meetings. But it takes even more discipline and commitment to stay...

## Setting

Think carefully about where to conduct virtual meetings. A home office is ideal, but in the absence of a home office, try to find a quiet corner of a room in which to work (which can be difficult if children are home!), then select one of the virtual backgrounds provided by the meeting software platforms that project a professional image. Virtual backgrounds will prevent others from being distracted by family members and pets that may move into camera view and will keep your home private. If...

## Conclusion

By dressing the part and sending personal grooming signals to coworkers, colleagues, and clients, they will continue to see you as the professional that you are and want to be seen as. For you personally, creating a work-like environment and adhering to professional etiquette will be demonstrating a conscious effort to remain focused. The new virtual work realities will be a great reminder for you that although your work setting may have changed, you are still at work....

Beth A. Brooks, PhD, RN, FACHE, was presented with AONE's Mentor Award in 2017. Dr. Brooks is President & CEO of The Brooks Group, LLC, a Chicago-based career coaching, personal brand, and consulting firm. She can be reached at [bethbrooks@thebrooksgroupllc.net](mailto:bethbrooks@thebrooksgroupllc.net) ↗....

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