

The Polished Professional

How would you feel if your real estate agent greeted you wearing blue lipstick? Your Tahari suit was dry cleaned by a woman in curlers? The undertaker embalming Great Grandpa Freddie looking like Medusa? I know how I would feel. If they don't look the part, don't use them.

First impressions say a lot so, when they talk, let them speak, not shout.

A few common workplace problems have easy fixes that can set the perfect tone for lasting impressions and keep you looking like a polished professional.



The Problem: Overpowering perfume

The Fix: Eau de toilette

Over-dosed perfume can give an unsuspecting co-worker the same face-crinkling reaction as if it were flatulence. If you're passionate about gardenias, don't assume that everyone around you is too. Be aware that if people suddenly seem to make a quick exit at your presence and you didn't eat beans for lunch, you might be a walking mushroom cloud of fragrance.

Pure perfume has the highest concentration of oil compound, 20-50%, where as an eau de toilette has the least, 3-8%. You'll still have the pleasure of smelling your favorite scent but the key is that YOU have the pleasure, not everyone else.

Try: Carolina Herrera 212 eau de toilette, www.sephora.com.

Insider Tip: Hair is odor-absorbing so give your locks a light mist and your fragrance will last all day.

The Problem: Damp dead hair

The Fix: A professional hairdryer

There is nothing tackier than seeing someone stroll into the office with wet hair.



Thank you for letting us all know that you just showered but that messy, fresh-from-the-beach look is acceptable in Aruba, not in the boardroom.

If time is an issue, invest in a salon quality dryer. It has a stronger airflow and more heat than the drugstore brands and that can cut drying time in half. A pro-dryer might set you back a few bucks but it's well worth the cost compared to sacrificing your co-workers to re-living your days riding the waves. Gnarly dude.

Try: TWIN TURBO 2800 professional dryer, www.shopping.com

Insider Tip: Always use a nozzle at the end of the dryer to concentrate the heat and air. This helps to prevent dry, fuzzy fly-aways.

The Problem: Yesterday's hair

The Fix: Pomade or a ponytail

Some mornings you wish you had time to wash your hair but after slamming the snooze button like a butcher pounding a pork loin, you're lucky if you have time to dress! No one in the office needs to know it's a low-hygiene day so don't let your uncoiffed hair spill the beans.

For short styles, pomade can thwart a bed head look. Add a touch to the ends of your hair to give your style purposeful texture and wave. For long hair it's all about a ponytail that doesn't look like you're in preschool. Have your ponytail sit at the base of your neck. Take a small section of hair from underneath the pony, wrap it around the elastic and secure it with a bobby pin.



Try: Frederic Fekkai POMADE CRISTAL, www.fredericfek kai.com

Insider Tip: Use the product on your fingertips and apply onto small sections of hair.

The Problem: Too much makeup

The Fix: Tinted moisturizer

If you're spending 10 minutes or more in front of the mirror, you're wearing too much makeup. It may have been your hidden desire to star in a Vegas lounge show but if Wayne Newton isn't your boss, cut back on the face goo.

A tinted moisturizer will give you hydration as well as even out your skin tone for a



fresh, daytime look. Keep the part of your personality that has you wanting to spend quality time in front of the mirror, but ditch the done up spackle that has co-workers wondering when the show starts.

Try: md skincare ALL-IN-ONE TINTED MOISTURIZER, www.sephora.com

Insider Tip: There are six different shades to match every skin color. The types are light, light/med, medium, med/dark, dark, and deep. Sample them to see which color matches your skin tone best.



The Problem: The zero effort look

The Fix: A tasty lip-gloss

Just because you work in a cubicle doesn't mean you have to box yourself into being a dead end blah! If you feel like your people skills are tanking, you might want to take a look in the mirror and see what torpedo is being launched from your lackluster mug.

Imagine how great you would feel if at any given moment of the day you merely licked your lips and tasted cotton candy or vanilla cake? Yummy! A flavored lip-gloss could even have Scrooge smiling! And the best part, no calories! You may not love your job but tasty lips might just talk you into a more scrumptious career.

Try: Beauty Rush Lip Gloss, www.victori-assecret.com

Insider Tip: With 23 different flavors like *I want candy* and *toasty almond* you're bound to find something worth licking your lips for.

Whether you're a housekeeper or the CEO of a Fortune 500, give yourself the respect you deserve and show the world what it means to be professionally polished. Everybody works hard, but luckily looking good on the job isn't hard work.

Hollywood make-up artist **Janice Bremec** can be seen on ABC's *Extreme Makeover*. She is the host of an upcoming make-up show for TVWeekly.com and has a make-up book releasing soon. You can get more tips from Janice at www.jancebremec.com.