

# Caffeine, Attitude, and Dressing for the Job You Want

By Cindy Campbell

I'M NOT MUCH OF A MORNING PERSON. If you know me, you can appreciate what an understatement this is. On a recent business trip, my schedule required me to rise and shine several hours earlier than normal. It was 5 a.m. when I stumbled into the hotel coffee shop for my requisite caffeine infusion.

"Well, good morning," said the smiling young man who greeted me. "My name is James, and I have the honor of serving you this morning. So, what has you up and going so early?" Now, I promise, I really tried to put an intelligent reply together but to no avail. He assured me that most of his customers at that hour of the day were still groggy and in need of a coffee. This young man clearly had my number.



James made sure I had a comfortable seat right next to the coffee station. "You know, we have coffee available all day long for our guests. Come back as often as you'd like. May I show you around the buffet? I'd be happy to." Realizing that I must be giving off a pathetic vibe, I smiled, declined his offer, and thanked him for his kindness.

With breakfast and a sufficient amount of caffeine fortification, it was

time to figure out my transportation options for the day. Once again, I turned to James. He was happy to give me his insider tips on smart commuting around San Francisco. "Are you ready to head out now?" he asked. I told him I was, and with that, he helped me gather my belongings and walked me outside to introduce me to Michael the doorman. "Michael, Ms. Campbell needs our assistance in getting to a meeting this morning. Please take great care of her for me." With that, James shook my hand and told me to come back to see him again soon.

## It's about Attitude

As I hopped into the Uber, I felt, well, special! James went out of his way to make me feel valued and important.

Were all of his efforts just a part of his duties as a café waiter? Hardly. My guess is that like many of us, James has loftier career plans. He was likely living out the old adage about dressing for the job you want, not the job you have. The thing about that saying is that it's not really about clothing; it's about attitude.


In our careers, we sometimes focus on what we don't have, haven't achieved, or what we think we rightfully should have attained "by now." Rather than consistently concentrating on the path to getting there, we feel frustrated and lament our current circumstances. Resentment can creep in when we aren't profession-

ally progressing at the pace we might feel we deserve. When our thoughts and attitudes include a healthy dose of resentment or indignation, we can unintentionally inhibit our ability to progress.

## Playing to Win

Attaining the position you ultimately want is a little like winning the lottery: You've actually got to play to win. It's rare for a lottery winner to hit it big his first time playing. So, are you playing? Are you committed to consistently putting yourself in the best position to be noticed or promoted? Let's face it, not every effort is going to be rewarded, but to be successful, we must consciously set aside our failed attempts and disappointments and not allow them to dissuade us from our goals. Ask yourself: What steps am I taking to improve my chances of achieving my professional goals? Am I willing to apply my knowledge and skill set to a position that may provide me with a better vantage point or afford me an opportunity to attain my ultimate goals?

Thinking about it now, I wish I had the forethought to ask James what his ultimate career goals were. With his attitude and people skills, he would make an awesome parking professional.

Seems logical to me. 



**CINDY CAMPBELL** is IPI's senior training and development specialist. She is available for onsite training and professional development and can be reached at [campbell@parking.org](mailto:campbell@parking.org).