

Tips and Tricks of Conference Etiquette

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Tricks to know **before** **your first conference:**

- Use the SPIE Conference and Exhibition App to look for sessions and events in advance:
 - <https://spie.org/spie-conference-app>
- Be prepared to network and have a plan to share your contact information with new connections (whether it be business cards or the SPIE app's "Connect" function)
- Dress in a way that makes you confident and professional
- Go in open-minded, ready to learn and make connections
- Don't be afraid to ask "basic" questions, everyone is coming from different backgrounds and odds are you aren't the only one with that question
- Bring a bag or grab one while supplies last from the badge pickup area or in the exhibition



Etiquette is very important for your first impressions.

Examples of good etiquette are:

- Balancing being friendly and professional
- Helping maintain a learning environment by not being disruptive to speakers or other attendees
- Be a good listener – listen before you speak and ask follow-up questions about other's experiences.
- Make connections while respecting the boundaries of other people
- Dress business casual to business formal (the minimum is well groomed and clean)

When you walk into the conference on the first day, **what might be good to have?**

- Notebook and writing utensils
- Water bottle
- Snacks
- A way to charge your phone – portable battery pack for mobility
- Laptop/Tablet and charger
- Research ahead of time what the weather will be like and bring appropriate weather accessories (like an umbrella, rain jacket, scarf)
- It might be hot outside but air conditioned inside. Consider bringing a layer to stay warm during talks
- Mints
- Lotion
- Chapstick
- Business Cards or LinkedIn QR code ready
- Resumes (if job searching) (Pro Tip: Print on professional stock paper and bring in protective sleeve or folder)

Bad etiquette can distract from your groundbreaking research and your search for new connections for your professional network.

Examples of bad etiquette to avoid are:

- Cutting in lines
- Bad hygiene
- Being loud and distracting – for example, while leaving a session early
- Having a conversation during someone else's presentation
- Talking down someone's research
- Consuming too much alcohol
- Having "tunnel vision" and not respecting the space and needs of people around you

Here are some examples of **appropriate conference attire:**

BUSINESS FORMAL



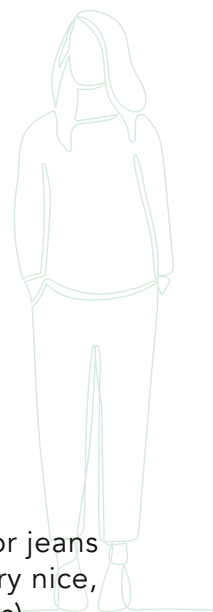
Blazer over a nice shirt or blouse



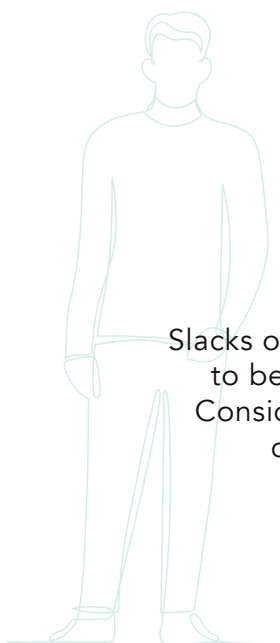
Slacks, not shorts or jeans (unless they are very nice, no-holes jeans)

A shoe with a heel is nice, but make sure it is comfortable to walk in most of the day.

Consider bringing another pair to change into if you get blisters!



BUSINESS CASUAL



Slacks or khakis. Does not have to be expensive or fancy! Consider thrifting for a new conference look.



Button-up, collared shirt with long sleeves

You do not have to wear heels, but do keep your footwear professional. Avoid casual looks like sandals or running shoes.