

# Super Seminar Tips & Tricks<sup>®</sup> by Frank Maselli

Episode 2:

## Dress The Part!

In keeping with the recent holiday season...consider Santa Claus. We all know what Santa is supposed to look like. Red suit, white fur, beard & Santa hat.

We have a very clear expectation of Old Saint Nick, and anything else would be inappropriate or shocking. Imagine Santa in shorts and a tank top sporting a mullet. You can't. And if anyone dressed like that comes knocking at midnight...call 9-1-1.

This holds true for financial professionals delivering a seminar. The audience expects you to look like an expert who solves serious problems for wealthy people in need. That puts you on the same level as a top physician or attorney, and you need to look like you belong in that company.

### Way too casual

Many advisors today are doing workshops dressed like they just got off the golf course or home from the gym. They seem to believe that they don't need to dress up to impress an audience...but I think that's a serious mistake!

People make snap decisions about a presenter, and they may infer by your casual look that you're simply not as professional as they would expect you to be. That may not be a fair judgment, but it's human nature.

You could probably overcome that negative impression by your exceptional intelligence and superior delivery. But why start from an unnecessary perception deficit? Dressing too casually could be hurting your business results.

What's worse is that you will never know it! Attendees won't put on the evaluation form that they thought you looked unprofessional. They simply won't set an appointment or take your follow-up calls.

### What to wear?

For men, the bare minimum is a blazer or sports jacket, dress pants and a button-down shirt. I'd much rather see a suit and tie, but that might be asking too much. Golf or casual knit shirts are out. Jeans or khakis are absurd.

For women, I asked my wife, and she says a business suit, a skirt and jacket, or even a nice dress would be fine. I trust her judgement.

In simplest terms: dress like a serious and successful professional. Not like one of the crowd...but a couple of notches above.

### ***"But my audience is super casual!"***

Some advisors worry about appearing overdressed for their market. I get that. Maybe it's a part of the country where a suit would be too much. So start formal and step it down as you go. Take off the jacket, loosen the tie, and roll up your sleeves. You can downshift from a formal to a casual look, but you can't go the other way.

### Look lawyerly!

There's a funny scene in the great comedy, *"My Cousin Vinny"* where the judge, (Fred Gwynne), reprimands Vinny (Joe Pesci) for his casual leather-jacketed outfit. He says sternly,

***"Next time you come into my courtroom, you will look lawyerly! You will wear a suit and tie. And that suit better be made of some kind of...cloth."***

Folks, in a seminar, there is no "next time." You only get one shot to impress those "judges" and to earn their respect. Your attire and indeed, your overall appearance, is a major piece of that process...so DRESS THE PART!