

# What Does Being “Professional” Mean?



Professionalism is defined by the Meriam-Webster Dictionary as, “the skill, good judgment, and polite behavior that is expected from a person who is trained to do a job well.”<sup>1</sup>

The acronym, **PROFESSIONAL** below, outlines the attributes of a professional:<sup>2</sup>

- P** - Precise, Exact, Detailed.
- R** - Responsive to Clients and the Public.
- O** - Objective in Thought, Free of Prejudice and Preconceived Notions.
- F** - Factual in all Reporting Processes, Honest.
- E** - Ethical.
- S** - Sincere About Doing the Best Job Possible.
- S** - Striving for Perfection by Constantly Trying to Improve One’s Job Performance.
- I** - Informed about Events and Trends within one’s Profession.
- O** - Observant of People and the Work Environment.
- N** - Neat and Orderly in Dress and Work.
- A** - Accommodating and Helpful to Others.
- L** - Loyal to One’s Employer, Clients, and Profession.

We started this paper with the word “**Professional**” for a reason. At the recent ASIS International Seminar in Dallas, TX, we heard for the very first time at a security seminar a discussion about professional dress, and the fact that the bar has slipped or in some cases has completely fallen. Right or wrong, many times others make decisions about our capabilities and knowledge by the “way we look” or in other words, the way we dress. Look at “**N**” in the above acronym: **N - neat and orderly in dress and work.** Why is this important? The answer is simple; because you’re a “Security Professional.” The author of the acronym above goes on to say, “**Department: How one carries oneself, bearing, outward manifestation of attitude, and image.**” A few things to bear in mind about department are:

- Dress should be neat, precise, and conservative.
- Shoes should match belt.
- No purses or large bags for women.
- Socks should always match the pants and cover the calf.
- Conservative ties, properly tied; silk is a good choice of material.
- Jewelry worn judiciously.
- “Less is more,” with makeup and cologne.
- Uniforms should be worn “uniformly.” All officers should have the same placement of insignia and equipment.

**If the information above doesn’t apply to you, then you’re already a PROFESSIONAL.**

**Congratulations and possibly you need to mentor others about appropriate dress.**

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/professionalism>

<sup>2</sup> The Professional Protection Officer, IFPO, Elsevier Publishers, 2010, p. 571