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Paula Molino gives a talk about fashion at the Lower Bucks Chamber of Commerce Tuesday.
HARRY SIRCELY / COURIER TIMES

Dress to achieve

By **CRISSA SHOEMAKER**
COURIER TIMES

Ladies, it's time to ditch the suit jacket with the shoulder pads you bought in 1989. And gentlemen, there's no such thing as a short-sleeved dress shirt.

So says Paula Molino, a fashion consultant who has helped hundreds of people dress better through her company, Fashion Fix. Dressing well, she said, is the first step to being successful.

"Whether you're interviewing for a new job, re-entering the job market, acquiring a business loan or presenting a proposal to a prospective client, you need to send a clear-cut message through your dress," said Molino of Yardley. "You project a confident professional image that could land you the job, grant you the loan or secure that new client."

Molino showed about a dozen businesspeople what to wear — and not to wear — during a presentation Tuesday at the Lower Bucks Chamber of Commerce in Bristol Township.

"If your clothes are 10 years old, it's time to go shopping," said Molino, who wore a classy black dress suit with tiny white polka dots, accessorized by black pumps, a sparkly brooch and her mother's pearls.

Molino knows a bit about fashion. She worked for Macy's

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Seven deadly style sins

- **Inappropriate dress.** Do your clothes match your business? Are you wearing clothes that are too young — or too old — for you? Are you wearing velvet in June?
- **Mismatched look.** Don't mismatch colors. And don't underestimate the power of the right shoes.
- **Ill-fitting clothes.** Know your limitations and body shape. Don't wear styles that don't go with your body.
- **Outdated looks.** Pleated pants, large shoulder pads, leggings — those should go. If you haven't been shopping in this decade, it's time to start.
- **Wrong hem lengths.** Jacket sleeves should be at the wrist bone. Pants shouldn't bunch at the ankles.
- **Unsuitable accessories.** Too few — or too many — accessories can ruin a look. Accessories should go with the outfit.
- **Unkempt look.** Get out the iron. If you wear eyeglasses, make them stylish.

Source: Paula Molino of Fashion Fix, www.fashionfix.com

for 10 years as a buyer and product manager. She also worked for QVC — she's now a guest host for the television home shopping club — and other companies before starting Fashion Fix in 2002.

People who don't dress well aren't going to impress clients, Molino said. And dressing well can make people feel more confident in their abilities.

"Dressing better can improve your self esteem, help you command respect, reflect a better corporate image and give you greater achievement in business," she said. "You always need to send a clear-cut message of confidence in your dress."

Take Mike Hilbert, for example. To show what not to wear, he donned a 1970s-era brown tie with orange and blue dots, and a

checked suit jacket.

Later, Hilbert, who owns Sales Pros 4 Hire, replaced the outfit with a double-breasted black suit jacket accompanied by a black handkerchief and striped tie. But Hilbert said he was concerned about how much dressing so well costs.

"Dressing well isn't about the amount of money in your pocket," Molino said. "Whether you're on a Target budget or a Nordstrom's budget, I guarantee I can dress you. It's about knowing what to put together."

Dressing well is all about having the right accessories, knowing what looks good together and good on you, and keeping up with the latest style, Molino said.

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