How do I know what to wear?
Tips on choosing what to pack for ABA Marketplace

Marketplace is going to be such a wonderful experience for you, and as a STAR delegate, you will want to make a fantastic first impression. The following are some tips and ideas on how to look your best at any of the Marketplace events that you attend, and also how to pack more efficiently - Who really wants to lug around more bags than they have to or pay heavy bag fees?

When you are choosing the clothes to take, each piece should be interchangeable with other clothes that you are taking. What does this mean? Every shirt, sport coat, skirt, pant, blouse . . . should be able to be worn with at least one other piece in your suitcase. You will be very over packed if you take individual outfits.

**Step 1: Core Color.** Chose one core color for your main clothing pieces - suits, slacks, skirts, blazer and sport coats. This is the one color that will dominate your wardrobe while at Marketplace. It will help you to look professional and well pulled together and you will be able to mix and match with ease.

*Examples of good core color choices:*
- Black
- Brown
- Dark Grey
- Navy Blue

**Step 2: Build from here.** Now that you have your core color established, choose shirts, blouses, sweaters, jewelry, scarves, and ties that coordinate with your core color and with each other. How many outfits can you create with the least amount of clothes? Each piece that you take should go with at least 1 other thing in your suitcase. Stay away from too many patterned pieces, as these are harder to mix and match.

*Examples of building pieces: If my core color is dark grey, I might bring:*
- Shirts / blouses in various shades of blues, creams and lavender
- A pair of black slacks, a pair of khakis, and a pair of dress jeans
- Ties and scarves in rich jewel tones such as purple and dark red - these can be patterned to add interest to your outfits
- A dark blue sweater and a cream colored sweater vest

**Step 3: Putting it all together.** With the above clothes, including my core pieces, I can now mix and match with ease to have a number of different outfits.
- Dark grey suit + cream dress shirt + red tie or scarf = professional business
- Dark grey suit+ lavender dress shirt + purple tie or scarf = professional business
- Dark grey slacks + light blue shirt + cream sweater vest = business casual
- Black slacks + lavender shirt = business casual
- Khakis + blue shirt + cream sweater vest = casual
- Dress jeans + cream shirt + dark blue sweater = casual
For this 6 day event, I would suggest that you pack:

**Professional Business Attire – to be worn on the business floor**

- 1 Business Suit
- 2 ties (men)
- Men - 2 long-sleeved, light-colored, button-up dress shirts
  Women - 2 long-sleeved business blouses - avoid lace and glitter
*If you will be on the business floor for more than 2 days, bring 1 additional suit, shirt / blouse and tie

**Business Casual – to be worn on the networking floor & educational seminars**

Put the emphasis on *business*, not casual. It is better to be the best dressed person in the room, then the poorest dressed person in the room.

- 3 pairs of slacks (ladies – you can also wear skirts, but nothing shorter than 2” above your knee cap)
- 4 dressier shirts – no t-shirts. (A long-sleeved shirt will look best)
- 1 sport coat or blazer in your core color
- If you like to wear sweaters, this is also a good business casual option, as long as they are neat, professional, and compliment your outfit
- No denim of any kind or color for business casual

**Casual – to be worn at evening events and sightseeing tours.**

Keep in mind that even casual events are business events, so dress accordingly.

- 3 pairs of dress jeans, corduroys, or khaki style pants – no pants with holes, frayed cuffs or overly faded fabrics.
- 4 nice looking casual shirts – if you wear it around home on the weekends, it is probably too casual for this work function.
- 1 coat, pair of gloves & a hat. It will be chilly, most likely in the 30’s

**Shoes:**

Men:
- One pair of dress shoes + matching belt for your suit & business casual
- One pair of comfy shoes for sightseeing and evening events – no scuffed up, dirty shoes

Women:
- One pair of heels for your suit – no strappy sandals or super high heels
- One pair of dress shoes + matching belt for business casual.
- One pair of comfy shoes for sightseeing and evening events – no scuffed up, dirty shoes.

*If you would like to learn more about business attire, affective networking and other essential business etiquette skills, join me at Marketplace for my presentations:

- #303 - Projecting Power Through Business Etiquette & Attire
- #309 – Networking: Quality Not Quantity