

## Michael's tips to follow for a great headshot

### Clothing and accessories:

- You never can go wrong with classic: tailored suits and blazers. Dark and neutral (navy, charcoal, dark brown) will deemphasize the clothing and put more attention where it should be – on your face. Make sure that the clothing you select fits. A well-fitting outfit that is not necessarily your favorite will look better in a portrait than a jacket or outfit that fits you poorly or is too small or too large. Remember, most headshots are cropped to head and shoulders, so make sure that whatever you wear looks good on top! ○

### Avoid:

- Strong patterns (herringbone, stripes, checks)
  - White or very light colored dress shirts and blouses UNLESS they are to be worn under a jacket. White when worn without a jacket will tend to wash out your skin tones and compete with your face for attention. Our eyes tend to go towards the brightest portion of a portrait first; wear white and the viewer will look at your shirt and not your face.
  - Unconstructed or loosely constructed clothing (sweaters, most cotton knit, etc.). They tend to look sloppy in a head and shoulders portrait. Stick to fitted, tailored clothing.
  - Jewelry that will draw attention or is trendy.
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- Be sure that your clothing is pressed and wrinkle free. It is difficult to retouch clothing wrinkles -- and it's virtually impossible on patterned clothing. There will be a minimum charge of \$25 to retouch clothing wrinkles that could have been taken care of with an iron.
  - Casual portraits: If you want a casual option, a colored dress shirt (with tie or open collar) is a good choice. Collared shirts look best, so polos are an option. Just make sure that they are pressed. Again, avoid white shirts and blouses.
  - Glasses: If you normally wear glasses all of the time, plan to wear them for the session. I can typically work the lighting and the posing to ensure that no strong reflections occur. However, some stronger prescriptions that have a lot of curvature in the lens may be impossible to light without providing a reflection. If you have such a prescription, or have noticed a problem with reflections on your glasses in the past, please point this out to me ahead of time and we can discuss several strategies for remedying the problem.

### Personal Grooming:

- Don't get a new hair cut right before the session. Most new cuts looks best after growing out for a week, so if you need a cut, do it at least week ahead of your session. However, you may want to consider having your hair styled the day of the session.
- Makeup: Wear your normal makeup - resist trying anything radical or new the day of your session. Or, set an appointment with a professional makeup artist; just be sure to convey that the makeup is for a professional portrait. If you do not normally wear makeup, you may want to consider at least a light amount of foundation, blush, and eye-enhancement. Stay away

- from mineral-based foundation; some mineral cosmetics will reflect light and make you look sparkly! The goal of the makeup should be to enhance your eyes and your cheekbones without looking 'obvious'.
- Shave: Guys, it's almost impossible to retouch stubble or five o'clock shadow, so please shave close to the time of your portrait session.

**Style:**

- Be sure to communicate the purpose of your portrait with me and the style you need and desire. The tips I outline here apply to 95% of professional headshots, but if you have a unique need or personal style that needs to be conveyed, be sure to let me know that ahead of time. An example might be that you are to be featured in a magazine article and the magazine wants an image that reflects a certain concept or style. Please note, however, portraits that fall out of the "traditional headshot category" may necessitate an additional charge as they take more time and creativity. However, I am always happy to provide a quote for anything.

**Attitude:**

- There is a lot I can do with lighting and posing to make you look your best. The one thing I cannot control is your mood and if you have a genuine smile. I've seen a lot of forced smiles in my day, but if the smile doesn't reach your eyes, the portrait becomes lifeless. Many people do not like to have their portrait taken, and there is a lot of stress in today's fast-paced world. Try to set that aside for the few short minutes you are in front of the camera. Bring your "A" game, your can-do attitude and relax; I'll take care of the rest!

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Or book online at: <http://www.madison-headshots.com>