



## Picture Perfect: Photography That Makes You Smile

*By Khris Erickson*

Not all photographers are created equal. Someone specializing in architectural or food photography may not be the best choice when you need a portrait taken. Look for a photographer who regularly takes business portraits. Ask about cost and what is included in the cost. Will you get 4x6 proofs? If so, are they yours to keep or will you have to return them? If you are going to receive a proof sheet (a sheet of images the same size as negatives), will any prints be included in the package price? Also, is there a price break if your company needs portraits for more than one person?

I generally advise my clients to have their portraits taken in color, because that way we can always have some black and white prints made if they are needed. If only black and white film is used, there isn't any economical way to add color to it (unless your name is Ted Turner). Also, black and white prints are usually more expensive than color and can have a longer turn-around time. This is because most professional quality black and white prints are still printed by hand, instead of by a machine.

Since most professional portraits are head shots, you don't have to worry about what you wear below the waist. You do have to decide what kind of an image of yourself you'd like to present – corporate, corporate casual, artsy, casual – it's up to you. You may want to bring more than one outfit and have pictures taken in a variety of styles. Stay away from

wearing mostly black and white, as extremes in tones create problems for your printer, don't show image detail and will make your body look less dimensional. Clothing with a pattern is okay, but should be toned down with solid colored accessories or jackets.

When you get to the studio, ask for a mirror so that you can check your hair and – for the women – your make-up. Make-up should be applied as you would normally wear it in a business setting.

Don't worry if you wear glasses. A good photographer can make portraits with little or no reflection. Just a warning about UV reactive glasses that get darker in sunlight. The studio flashes that photographers use are UV balanced and will cause glasses to react. Unless you want to look like a cool movie star who wears shades everywhere, bring an alternative pair of glasses with you, or go without.

Now that you know how to find a photographer and what to wear, go into your photo session with confidence, good posture, and a good attitude and your portrait will turn out great.

*At the time this article was published, photographer Khris Erickson was the owner of Epic Images, specializing in photography for marketing purposes. The business has since closed.*