

**YOUR CAREER
GET-AHEAD GUIDE**

You Can Get the Glam Job



Guest columnist **Lyn Paolo** puts the power in Olivia Pope's wardrobe.

Costume designer **Lyn Paolo** has won two Emmys and dressed the casts of *Scandal*, *ER*, *The West Wing*, and *Shameless*. Her advice for grabbing your fantasy gig? It's all in the dirty details.

Goyard tote

Jean Fares Couture gown

Louise Green hat

Escada jacket and Movado watch

Michael Kors sheath dress

Treat Your Job Like Grad School

I moved to L.A. in my 20s and started working at the bottom, on costumes for music videos and commercials. At first, I felt insecure because I was with big designers who went to school for the history of costume design. But I learned that work is the best training for whatever you aspire to do. If you're with someone who's great at what she does, pay attention.

Put Your Best Footwear Forward

How you walk is so important. If you stride across a room, you exude confidence. So make sure you have the right foundation—which is your shoes. As the day goes on, you don't want to be hobbling around the office. It's okay to have six pairs of shoes under your desk to change into. I do!

Express Yourself

When I spoke to Shonda Rhimes, *Scandal*'s creator, I told her that I didn't want Olivia Pope to be another woman in a masculine suit. It's detrimental to women. Being a woman in the workplace doesn't mean you have to dress like a guy.

Embrace Each Assignment

When I worked on *ER*, I had to decide, who is this person on the gurney? Is he a construction worker? A gang member? A middle-class dad? Is it even a man or a woman?

That show made me really good at what I do. People don't realize that making something look real is harder than making something look pretty.

Accept Change as the New Normal

My parents still panic every time I tell them that a show is over. I have to say, "It's okay. There will be another show. It's what I do." Older generations think you should have a steady job, but I don't think that exists anymore.

LYN TAKES THE COSMO Career Quiz

- ▶ **What's your biggest strength at work?** I am very organized. I don't have a lot of patience for clutter—either verbal or literal.
- ▶ **Best part of your job?** I love problem solving and getting to the end of a long day and knowing that my team and I pulled off something remarkable.
- ▶ **What's your best interviewing tip?** Be confident, dress the part, and if you're being interviewed by a woman, carry an amazing purse.
- ▶ **Would you date a coworker?** When everyone works long hours, it's hard to meet people outside work. But when things go south, it can be tragic, so I err on the side of *no*.