

Seuple
The *EDIT* V



A NOTE FROM MAGGIE

BODY CONFIDENCE

When clients first meet us in our beautiful atelier, we talk about designs, fabrics, colours and lifestyle. Inevitably the conversation moves on to our bodies - what we like and don't like about our physique. You won't be surprised to know that this topic is something that unites many women throughout the world!

It seemed appropriate therefore, for us to explore the theme of body confidence. We asked a few clients about their Semple experience and their stories are told with truth and gratitude. They all comment about how Semple has made them feel and this in turn has affected how they show up.

I'm sure some of the comments will strike a resonance with you. If so, let me know.



March 2019

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The cover: Sheena Singla wears her Semple dress. Read the complete feature on page 12.



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FIT FOR A ROYAL

HELENA GAUNT

It's taken me a few years to get ready for a new adventure. I've explored several professional opportunities, in the UK and abroad, and never quite felt able to say 'yes'. But when the role of Principal at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama came along, I knew that I needed to allow myself a bold step and to go for it. It would definitely be a huge challenge, for me and for my family, but to say no to it would be to abandon something important, in my own growth and in what I want to serve.

Over the summer as I made the transition, emotions rollercoasted. Excited butterflies clashed with terror at the scale of the unknown. Grief leaving behind the Guildhall School where I'd been teaching for 28 years tangoed with deep gratitude for the support and friendship of so many special colleagues and friends. And to crown everything, a good dose of guilt over whether I was doing the right thing for my children was never far away.



Helena with HRH The Prince of Wales

“I could sense the power of giving myself a gift, a piece of tangible support”

But in the midst of all this, a small voice inside me piped up (one of my best voices) to ask what I could do to support myself, what would help? Accepting the turbulence, in my own thoughts and being as much as in the changing places and jobs, what would help me feel my roots, the things that mattered most? As soon as I asked that question, ideas flowed. And one of them stood out – simply to make my sense of self more strongly visible to me – my passion, purpose, energy and integrity.

And so my Semple dress was born. I've wanted one for ages but never thought I could justify it – I'm the sort of person who says 'no, I don't deserve such attention'. Now, however, was different, a time to get over myself and do something! I could sense the power of giving myself a gift, a piece of tangible support in taking this leap.

So the conversation began, with Maggie, and Dulcie – and another small and beautiful journey launched.....





“I already knew when I commissioned my dress that the first wearing could be at my first Royal function”

I already knew when I commissioned my dress that the first wearing could be at my first Royal function, hosting HRH The Prince of Wales at his Welsh College for a show to celebrate his 70th birthday. This could be a perfect opportunity – a stressful day, only a few weeks into the job, where I would have to fulfil the role of College figurehead and host immaculately.

So what can I say? It was brilliant! The day of course was made by the whole College team of staff and amazing students - there is nothing quite as exhilarating as these moments where after all the blood, sweat and tears, everyone and everything comes together, the ensemble kicks in and you're off!

A personal success for me was the way in which I was able to find my stride, to fill those shoes of Principal authentically, to make them my own. Wearing the dress lifted me, gave me courage, and most of all helped me find ease in my own skin.

Thank you Maggie and everyone at Semple. It has been a delight every step of the way!







GOODBYE GLOSSOPHOBIA

ESTHER STANHOPE

Eyes and tooth! Esther age 6 in 1978 I wasn't always confident – now I speak for a living!



Confession. I wasn't always confident. Most people who have seen me speaking at a conference or seen my videos on Youtube don't believe me when I admit to my dark secret past of feeling like I wasn't good enough. How can someone who's interviewed Hollywood stars (like George Clooney & Madonna) at the BBC and produced shows live on air with politicians and leaders all over the world, lack confidence?

The biggest stumbling block in my career up until recently was my fear of public speaking. Most people (around 75% of us) fear standing up in front of a room full of 'unvetted' strangers. And it turns out women in particular have the same feeling as me. I've been behind the scenes giving other people confidence for most of my career in live studios.

In my experience working all over the world with banks, Deloitte and global law firms, many senior women are the beating heart of the boardroom taking the hard decisions, leading and cajoling, but when it comes to speaking up, they'd rather avoid the spotlight. So they don't get the credit.

When it came to putting the spotlight on me even at the BBC as a senior producer, I wasn't comfortable. I've really worked hard and stretched my comfort zone for the last 5 years and guess what? I've mastered the art of public speaking, and as a result it's become my career!

Opposite: Esther wears the Esther suit in electric blue french crepe with a fuschia rose pocket square

*Here are 6 beautiful tips
I'd like to share with
you today to help you
boost your confidence
with speaking up...*

- 1 Just do it! Go on speak in front of audiences all the time, start small, but do it, a lot
- 2 Don't be perfect.
- 3 Decide what YOU are and stick to it. Call it personal branding or whatever you like. Be true to yourself warts and all. If people don't like it, perhaps there isn't a fit.
- 4 Don't worry! (There, I've said it, stop it!)
- 5 Get some great clothes that look fantastic on you and fit YOUR size and shape – more on that from the goddesses at Maggie Semple (thank you for my blue suit ladies)
- 6 Invest in yourself. Call it your wellbeing budget! As well as clothes, hair, make up, gym membership or classes. You're more likely to feel confident and 'go public' if you FEEL good in general.

*There's good news.
If I can do this, so can you!*

I decided to take the bull by the horns and tackle this issue 'glossophobia' (fear of public speaking) head on. So I'm writing the book!

For me, if I trace my Glossophobia back, it all started when I was 6. My teacher at Little Ealing School in West London, Miss Baldock, (I hated her) asked me to read aloud to the class of 33 people. I failed. All the words on the page seemed to disintegrate and I couldn't get the words out. I was tongue-tied, I started to sweat and shake, I couldn't speak properly and so I was labelled dumb.

*A bad experience in the past doesn't
mean you can't achieve confident
speaking NOW!*

That was why I believe I failed 20 years later at the Edinburgh TV festival – I was head of Programmes for the 'YOOF' (youth) channel Rapture TV and I gave the most awful presentation ever. The room was packed out and I 'should' have been the goddess and voice of youth programming. Instead I ummed, eered and stuttered my way through my slides. If only I knew then what I know now. So guess what I avoided public speaking for another 15 years.

A bad experience in the past doesn't mean you can't achieve confident speaking NOW! So coming out later this year is an easy to follow book for you on how to do it!

I have tried and tested all the tips in this pocket guide and I have heard hundreds of stories from clients all over the world, in banks, law firms and global organisations and at my time at the BBC.

Please do connect with Esther to get more of her confidence boosting tips and an update on her book 'Glossophobia' by emailing 'Tips please' to esther@estherstanhope.com

A woman with shoulder-length brown hair and gold-rimmed sunglasses is smiling and holding a large white rectangular sign in front of a dark, ornate door. She is wearing a blue top. The background is a dark stone wall with a small plaque on the right that reads "people make it work", "CARINI SPORTS", and "the meeting machine".

POSE

Power posing is all the rage. My mini formula from my BBC days make an instant impact. Here's a very quick fix of my super charged formula.

P – Posture

O – Oomph (good energy)

S – Speech, nice and clear

E - Eyes and teeth!

Yes cheesy as it may be, smile more than you think you need to and you'll come across as charismatic. Also your brain will think 'I'm happy, I'm relaxed' then you will feel like that. Give it a go. Go on dare you.

Sheena wears the Ophelia dress in red Italian single crepe, featuring a silver statement zip at the back of the dress

OUR
COVER
STAR

UNIQUE TO ME

SHEENA SINGLA

To me, being body confident means feeling positively good about your body, over and above being comfortable and accepting your body. It enables you to step out into the world every day feeling strong, capable and energetic. Combining this with a Semple dress you love is a very powerful thing.

I wanted my Semple dress to be one that I could dress up or dress down but equally be something special which would make someone say "Ooh I love your dress". I had lots of design ideas and really enjoyed thinking about them to create my own dress. However it was very helpful to talk through my ideas with the team, discussing what would work well or not in practice. After all they are the ones working with the fabrics and customers all the time!

"I really enjoy wearing my dress as I know it's unique to me and fits my figure 100%."

I started off thinking that having a dress especially tailored didn't make sense for me, placing so much focus on a single outfit. However, not only is it about creating a dress you love, it is about enjoying the process of creation too. I couldn't believe how well my dress fitted having tried it on once after being measured. The seamstresses are amazing!

The Semple experience was unique. I was made to feel at ease from the start with no judgement on my body shape or size. At the same time I really enjoyed meeting and chatting to the Semple team - each one of them are inspiring and talented women who are involved in so many interesting projects.

It was also an efficient process - a quick turnaround that has minimal fuss is always helpful for a busy woman like myself!



DON'T STAND LIKE A QUESTION MARK

KAY WHITE

Maggie sat down with best-selling author and Smart Career Moves Mentor Kay White to ask her views on body confidence.



Kay and Maggie both wearing an Ophelia dress

Maggie: When we talk about body confidence what does it mean to you?

Kay: For me it means, to use a hackneyed phrase, being comfortable in your own skin because we all have different bits and pieces that come together to make us who we are. I spent years hiding certain pieces of me and being afraid to show them or being teased at school.

*My mother used to say
“Kay, don’t stand like a
question mark”*

My mother used to say “Kay, don’t stand like a question mark” because I hunched my shoulders. I am 6ft tall and there is no way of disguising it. Body confidence is about owning it, never apologising and actually really getting on with life. People still say ‘aren’t you tall’ as if I didn’t know! My point is what body confidence means to me is really accepting and owning who you are and at the same time making the absolute most of yourself.

Maggie: Tell us about your latest book: It’s Always your Move - Purposeful Progress for Corporate Career Women.

Kay: I wrote my first book in 2011 called the A-Z of Being Understood as an entry level version of some of the things that I was constantly working with clients on. A is for attitude, B is for using the word but, C is about how you make yourself clear, D is for being direct. I used this approach as a spring board to hone my message. The book came about because people kept asking when I planned to write my work down.

From 2011 to 2018 I hosted events and worked both virtually and physically with thousands of women on how to show up as your best, most valuable self at work. I focus on showing women strategies for promotion, recognition and comfortably receiving rewards because not everyone wants to be promoted but they do want to be recognised and rewarded. That work has brought all sorts of lessons and results from a range of clients who have taught me so much. I started my latest book on 28 January 2018 and finished on 28 April 2018. I gave myself three months and I achieved it which was a huge personal confidence boost!

My new book is called **It's Always your Move - Purposeful Progress for Corporate Career Women** and those words are chosen very carefully.

*Purposeful is really important and what this means to you. **Bullets** What is the purpose of what you are trying to do or achieve?

*Progress, is about moving and while it is fine to stand still you can't do this for too long as the world is moving around you.

*Corporate Career Women, and I was one for over 20 years starting as a secretary and working up to director level in an global insurance broking house and then leaving because I started to lose myself.



Kay stands with her miniature Sample dress

IT'S ALWAYS YOUR MOVE

Purposeful Progress for
Corporate Career Women



My new book ***It's Always Your Move*** is designed to give you **clear guidance, proof and inspiration with many real-life stories, strategies and steps** for you to take to boost your income, options and self-confidence and to guide you to your next move, and the one after that.

It's Always Your Move features the **8 Proven Principles of Your Career Success Cycle™** in motion in your career all the time.

Help yourself to a complimentary Principle from Kay's book "Shine In Interviews & Appraisals"

www.kaywhite.com/always-your-move/



In the book I discuss and share strategies and stories about 8 key Principles in Your Career Success Cycle:

1

Embrace your expansion which is allowing yourself to be seen to be a bigger version of yourself energetically.

2

Discover what's out there, not thinking that you have to wait to be asked but look what else is out there, who's doing what, what other Industries, what transferable skills do I have?

4

Leveraging your connections. So many of my clients say that they are good at having a chat at a network meeting but they are not purposeful about it. Move the conversation and talk about some challenges and who might the person know who can help you.

3

Prepare, plot and plan is the third principle. It's about having your CV ready, having conversations with people, thinking how you speak about yourself., presenting your best self which is where I talk about the colour, the style, the posture, The Wonder Woman pose and preparing yourself to be body confident.

5

Shine during interviews and appraisals and I don't mean necessarily waiting for a job interview but there are promotions and appraisals and some women don't prepare for them adequately. And it is this 5th principle that I would like to invite your readers to take a copy of it to use themselves, straight out of the gate! They can go to: kaywhite.com/always-your-move and download the whole of Principle 5. In it I explain the three main things that women should think about for themselves when approaching their appraisal or one-to-one AND how to show up and shine in an interview for a new role.

6

Negotiate more for yourself and don't be shy about talking about money. Talking about opportunities and coming from that place of expectation and then negotiating. No doesn't have to be no. It can be not now, not me.

7

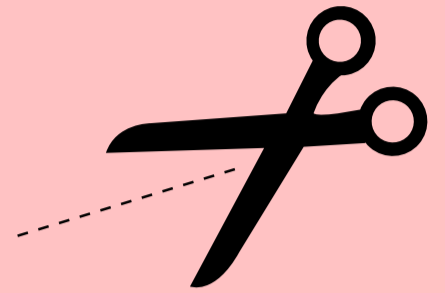
When you decide to move, how do you accept the role, how do you **move on with grace and gratitude?** How to be proactive when you move so that you don't burn bridges.

8

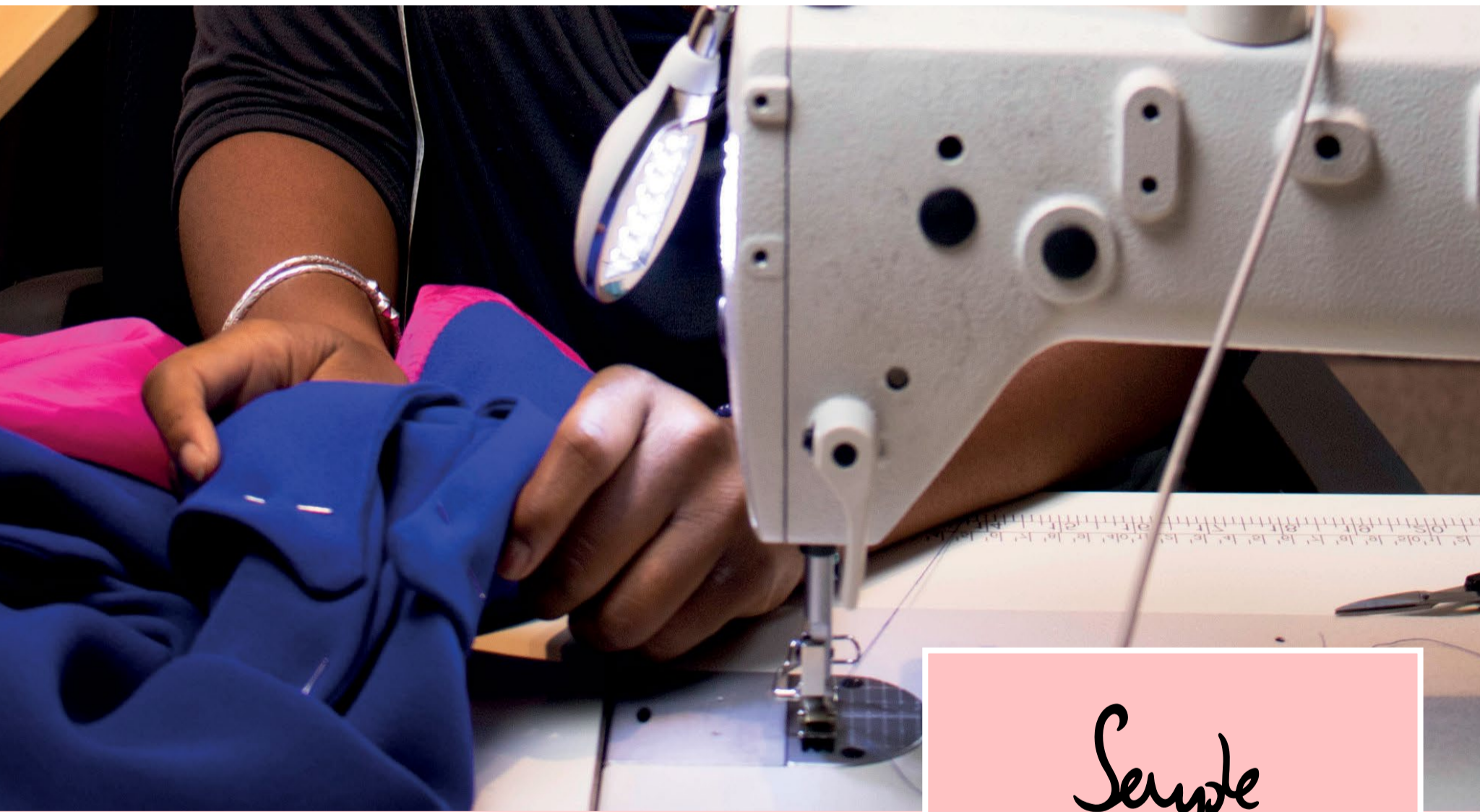
I chose the infinite 8 as it never stops as it **truly is a cycle.** It's your first 100 days and how to maximise those first days which even if you have moved desks because you have a different role and you are still the same person to everybody else but you have a different responsibility and you need to plan that.

As I learned myself during my own 20+ year corporate career and now emphasise to my clients "Who's driving the bus in your career? If you're not, someone is and no-one should be – nor is - more interested in your career than you"

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www.maggiesemple.com

FITS LIKE A GLOVE

LINDA KENNEDY MCCARTHY

Being body confident is not about what size or shape you are – it is about being comfortable in your own skin and making the most of what you have. Acknowledging that everyone is different and being aware that different things will look good on different people is important. Knowing which colours and shapes suit you helps, as you'll feel happier and more confident in what you are wearing.

I selected a bright colour with offset piping as I hoped it would suit my colouring and style. I also wanted something unique that would stand out without being too "in your face", so I chose a simple style that was quite fitted yet allowed me to move around comfortably. I enjoyed the iterative process – I was keen to take advice from the professionals, whilst at the same time have some input into the design and style. There was a good choice of colours and fabrics and it was great to have help narrowing the

choices down and making key decisions. I chose a fabric that would be suitable (not too heavy or thin), as it was for work/public speaking, so needed to be both durable yet at the same time, a bit special. You nailed the brief! I wanted something that would not age, yet would be different at the same time – the colour and shape has definitely achieved this.

The whole experience of having something fitted to your size and shape is completely different from buying an "off the peg" dress. My issue with store purchases (being 5'2") is that there would always be something that wasn't quite right – either length too long, sleeves not right, too large on the waist or hips etc. Having a made to measure Semple dress is quite lovely, as you have something that is tailor made for your figure. It therefore fits you like a glove and accentuates the positives, whilst minimising the negatives. It feels very special, as you know that the style and colour combination are unique to you, therefore no one else will have the same dress and there is no danger of walking into an event and seeing someone else in the same outfit!

"Having a made to measure Semple dress is quite lovely."

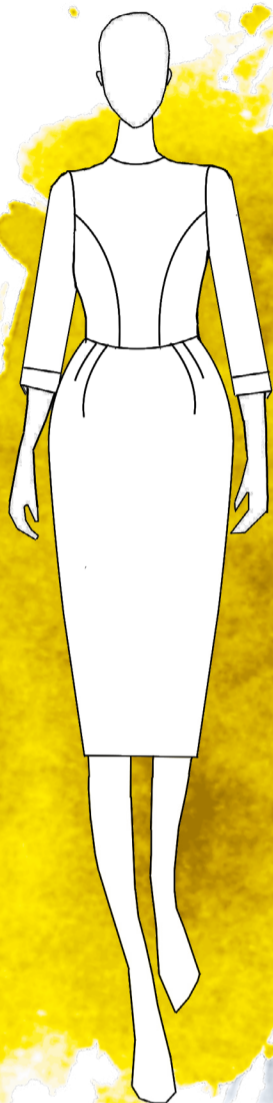
I thoroughly enjoyed the whole experience, from initial meeting with the incredible Maggie herself through to receiving my beautifully wrapped dress. Dulcie and the team were lovely throughout and I felt totally spoilt. I would totally recommend that everyone has a made to measure item at least once!



Linda wears a coordinating bag with her Semple dress



Linda wears the Maggie dress in electric blue French crepe with apple green trim



THE DULCIE DRESS



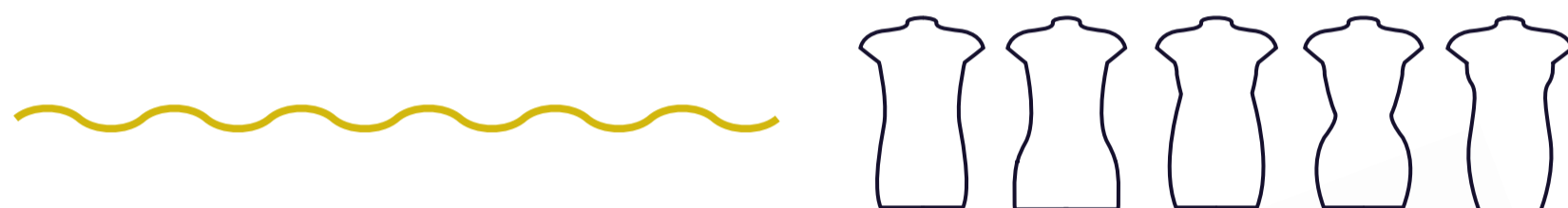
BODY SHAPES



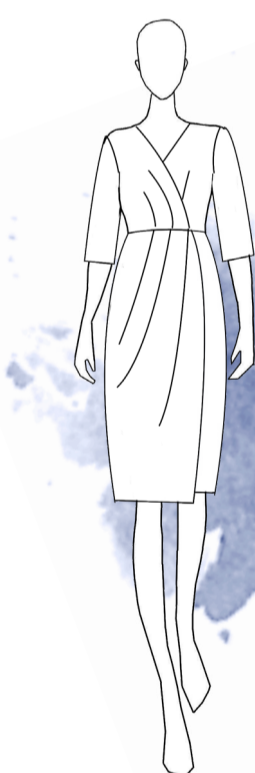
DULCIE'S EDIT

We all have a body shape that is unique to us. However there are some defined categories used that act as a guide to help us when deciding which tailoring styles to go for.

Below we have outlined a few of the most common body shapes we work with at Semple and have paired these to styles from the Semple lookbook.



INVERTED TRIANGLE



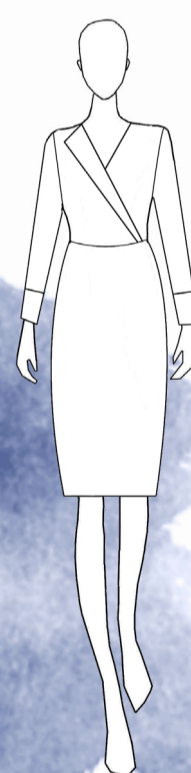
The Catriona dress:

Loose dress with pleated wrap detail to draw attention to the middle of the body and falls for proportion.



The Liana suit:

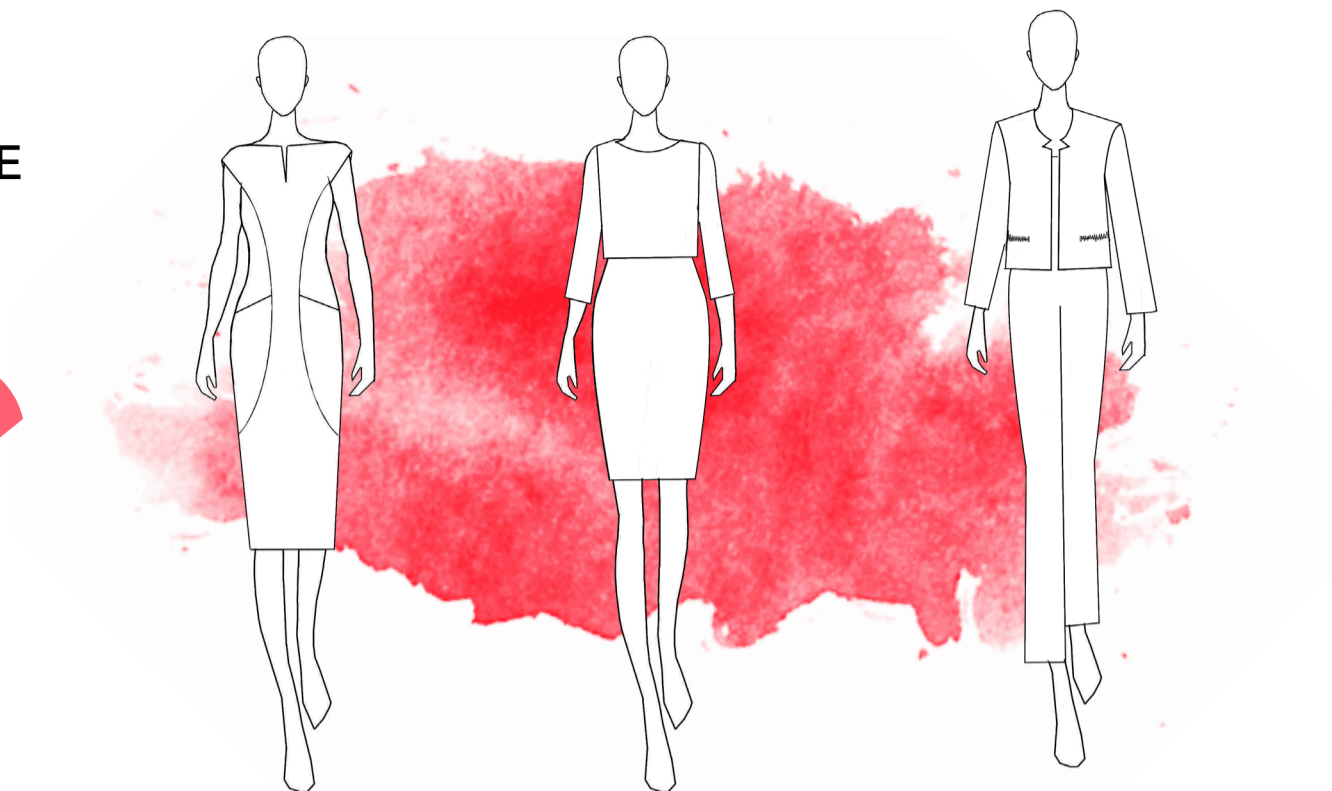
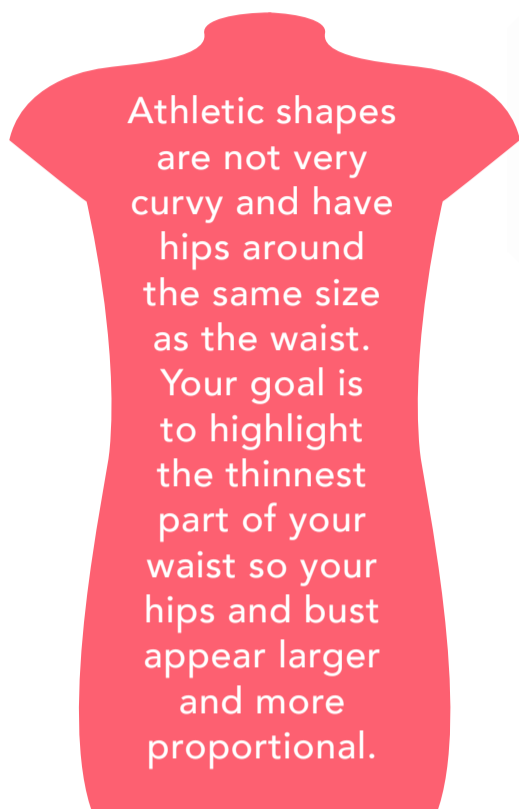
Peplum jacket with lapel to centre attention to the waistline, paired with a slight bootcut trouser to continue the balance to the lower body.



The Patricia dress:

Tailored dress with lapel detail that glides over the bust vertically to draw the eye to the lower body.

ATHLETIC/RECTANGLE



The Selma dress:

A statement neckline and cap sleeves to show off the arms, with pockets to add curves to the hips.

The Florence dress:

A built in top to the dress to balance the upper body with the lower and add femininity.

The Serena suit:

Boxy jacket which finishes at the hip with tapered straight leg trousers to bring proportion to the body.



The Sienna dress:

An empire cut with contoured panel seams and floaty A-line skirt to provide proportional shape.

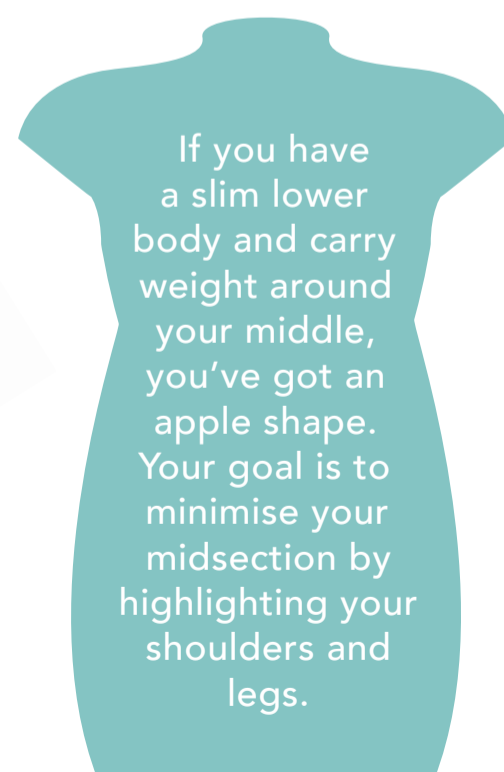
The Gala suit:

Tailored jacket with button fastenings to show waistline, paired with trousers with a slight flare.

The Ivy dress:

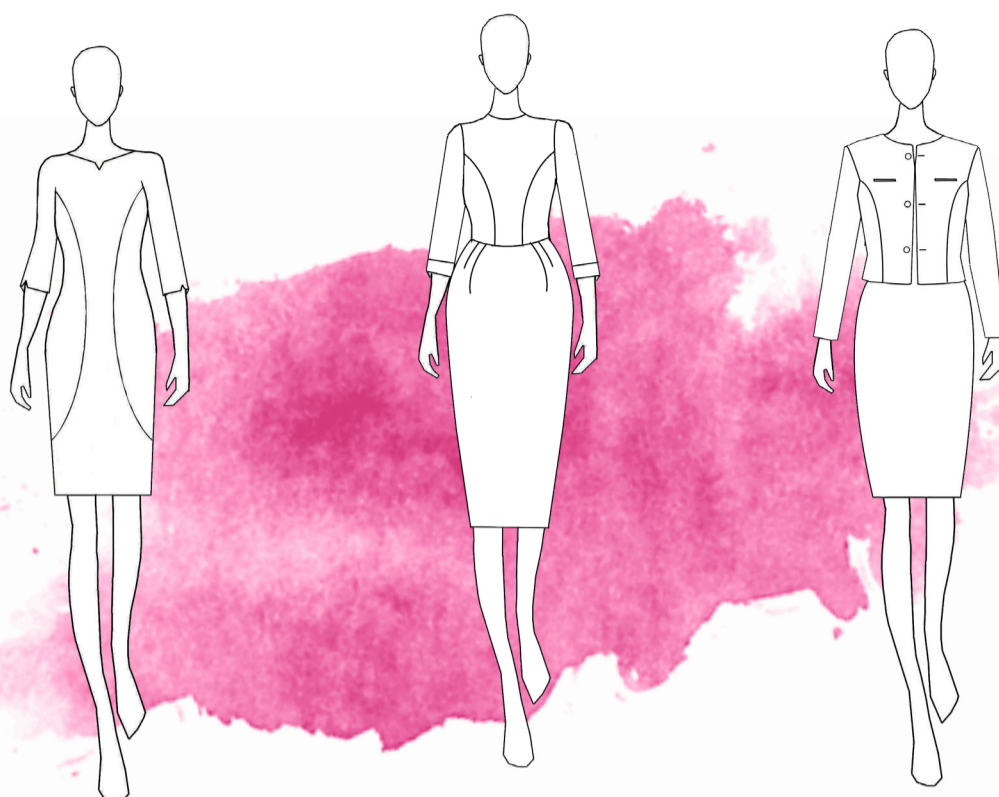
A flattering V neck and shift shape to glide over problem areas.

APPLE SHAPE



HOURGLASS

If you're curvy with a tiny waist, then you have an hourglass shape. Your goal is to highlight your curves, not hide them, by emphasising your waist. Waistlines and belts are great for achieving this.



The Vanessa dress:

Flattering sweetheart neckline and princess seams into a tapered skirt to accentuate the curves.

The Dulcie dress:

High waistline and pleated detail to enhance small waist and hips, whilst disguising the tummy area.

The Coco suit:

A timeless fitted jacket cropped to the waist, teamed with a chic, smart pencil skirt.



PEAR SHAPE

If the widest part of your body is around your hips and this outweighs the upper half of your body, then you have a pear shape. Your goal is to elongate and balance your figure by accentuating your top half.

The Forelle suit:

A longline jacket which follows the upper body shape and finishes below the bottom to cover the hips.

The Alison dress:

Flattering V neckline and empire cut to accentuate the upper body and glide over the hips.

The Betty dress:

High waistline to accentuate smallest part of the body and A-line skirt to balance.



Jay wears the Grace dress in aqua blue Italian single crepe

EMBRACE YOUR CURVES!

JAY MONTELIBANO-MCLEOD

Q+A

What does being 'body confident' mean to you?

I think the meaning for me has evolved over the years... I used to be a little more self-conscious about my "curves" especially my hips and thighs but I have since learnt to embrace them with pride! I would say it means being comfortable in your own skin, embracing your body, flaws included, and being able to "strut your stuff" and flaunt it to the world, regardless of what reactions you may get!

"A special, personal experience that left me feeling Fab-u-lous!"

What did you select for the design of your Semple dress and why?

I am not very "fashion-savvy" so I was very pleased to have the expert guidance of Dulcie when I was making my decisions! I went for the classic sleeveless 'Grace' dress design as I usually get warm easily and wanted something I could also easily wear in Asia as I would definitely want to show off my Semple dress when I go home to the Philippines for Christmas 2019! I went for the Italian crepe as it would keep me cool and chose a beautiful Aqua-blue colour which Dulcie helped me choose. I'm so glad I did as I absolutely love it and can wear my dress for a range of occasions!



Jay during her consultation with Dulcie and Maggie

What is the difference between investing in a Semple dress in comparison to buying an 'off the peg' dress?

I was amazed at how shopping the "Semple way" helped to ensure my dress fit me perfectly. The process was much more meticulous and the end result was so much more flattering than if I were to try to look for a similar style in a shop – I don't think I would ever find one that fits me perfectly in this style as my shape is a bit unconventional!

How did you feel by the end of your Semple experience in comparison to how you began your journey?

I felt very pampered and loved by my husband who gifted me the experience and the Semple team. I'd like to think that I deserve it! I love that it was made especially for me by my lovely seamstress Sandra, who I met during all of my fittings!

GENTLY PUSHING BOUNDARIES

EMER WYNNE

Q+A

What does being 'body confident' mean to you?

I've never thought about 'body confidence'. However I am confident in my body because it supports me to flow through life with energy and strength; I respect and support it through nutrition, exercise and meditation to play that critical role for me.

"My Semple experience was warm, considerate and professional."



A close up of Emer's lace fabric



Emer in her Vanessa dress

How did you find your Semple experience?

My Semple experience was one where my emerging thoughts and requirements were listened to. That's what mattered. I was not rushed and everyone at Semple really cares about their work. So special. I enjoyed the design process even though it can be overwhelming. I am not experienced in understanding what fabrics and designs work etc. So, the support of the Semple team is invaluable. It was definitely a team effort.

How does it feel in terms of fit to wear your Semple dress in comparison to one off the peg from the highstreet?

Of course it's unique. I am lucky in that I can step in to many high street dresses and they fit but not like Semple. Knowing that my Semple dress is reflecting what's important to me, down to the colour of the lining or the detail on the sleeves is a lovely feeling.



What did you select for the design of your Semple dress and why?

My theme was 'gently pushing boundaries'. Not sure why but the design and fabric selected work for me because they are classic and chic. I am middle aged (horrible term actually) and don't want to be wearing frumpy dresses. I want to continue to look and feel great and my Semple dress helps me do just that. For me a classic style gives that edge in a subtle way. I like that.

How did you feel by the end of your Semple experience in comparison to how you began your journey?

I felt I had a lovely, warm, considered personal experience. I felt listened to and gently challenged where needed.

Above: Emer wears the Vanessa dress in navy French crepe with floral lace panels



BRANDING YOURSELF RIGHT

CAROLINE WOLF

Here are a selection of top tips from professional stylist for business women, Caroline Wolf, on how to brand yourself the right way.

Wear outfits that promote your Brand Personality. Establish your image credentials because what you wear sends out a message, often before you've said Hello. Ensure your image sends out the message you would like people to receive - especially when you are not in the room.

Opt for clothing in a shape and fabric to complement your own body silhouette. Wearing shapes and fabrics for your body line will let you feel comfortable 'in your own skin'.

Leveraging your connections. So many of my clients say that they are good at having a chat at a network meeting but they are not purposeful about it. Move the conversation and talk about some challenges and who might the person know who can help you.

Rehearse before an important meeting. Just as you rehearse what you are going to say, rehearse what you are going to wear too - from top to toe! What you say is of course more important than how you look, but looking the part, looking chic and influential - is part of your Brand. Don't let yourself be judged on your appearance.

Choose colours that are appropriate for your line of business and in a flattering shade for your complexion. Unforgiving colours will make you look drained and tired instead of enhancing your complexion to appear refreshed and energised.

Perfect fit is guaranteed to give you a boost in self-esteem. Perfect fit allows you to forget your clothes and focus on the job in hand. It stops you 'fiddling', whether it's a wayward button or hem that's riding up. To the person opposite you, you look unfocused - and you are!

Stay on trend. You don't have to follow every colour or style trend but keep up-to-date. Timeless pieces aside, just as you keep your computer software up to date, so you need to keep your Personal Brand and clothing up-to-date. Wearing yesteryear clothes is not always an advantage.

The best piece of clothing you can wear is Confidence! If you don't feel happy in something, it will show in your face and body stance. Move on.

STAY IN TOUCH

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