

## La Grange stylist helps uncover your ideal

BY LAURA AMANN

lamann@pioneerlocal.com

**W**hat if your dream wardrobe wasn't waiting for you in a fancy store but was right in your closet?

Image stylist Julie Judd can make those dreams come true.

Judd, based in La Grange, has been helping women look great and feel fabulous since 2003. Her call to image consulting came after switching from a career in fashion to human relations and realizing how much image and clothes can make a difference.

"I saw people get passed over for jobs based, sadly, on how they look. I know that sometimes, it's an easy fix," she said.

She emphasizes understanding your body type and what styles and colors look best on you. Once you know that, everything else falls into place.

"Forget what stores are showing you each season," she recommends. "If you know what works for you, you'll have more options and versatility."

### Closet overhaul

On a recent warm afternoon, Judd headed to Gigi Doubek's La Grange house for a fall wardrobe overhaul. She came equipped with marked catalogs, color swatches and books.

First they took apart Doubek's closet. An image consult follows a similar format as the popular TLC show "What Not To Wear" but without the hidden camera, barbed remarks or loaded credit card.

Judd weeds through clothes that don't fit, are out

of fashion or just the wrong color or style for someone's body type. She focuses on achieving a closet full of clothes that you love rather than a bulging closet of clothes you never wear.

"You can own 10 pairs of black pants, but if only one of them fits you, then you really don't have a bigger wardrobe," she said.

### Importance of tailoring

Judd and Doubek make quick work of the closet and soon the bed is piled with potential outfits. Judd starts arranging tops and pants, adding a scarf or necklace. Soon she's throwing out questions and when she notices a gap, she marks the missing item on a list.

"Each outfit should have three pieces," she recommends. "Don't just think of a top and a bottom but remember a scarf or necklace or another layer."

She's a big proponent of alterations and feels many women don't take advantage of an easy fix. A long gray skirt, for example, can be altered to become a trendy pencil skirt.

Jeans can get hemmed to different shoe heights. Fit one pair to wear with flats, another to wear with heels.

Besides her image consultant business, she was also recently named stylist for Talbots in Oak Brook and one of her first achievements was bringing in an alterations department.

"So many women say, 'If it needs to be altered, it doesn't fit right' — and that's just wrong," she said. "You wouldn't buy a wedding dress just off the rack, why assume that all clothes are going to fit you just right?"

### JULIE'S FIVE TENETS

1. Find what styles work best for your body type
2. Learn what colors are most flattering
3. Don't be afraid of alterations
4. Wear proper fitting undergarments
5. Shop with a purpose

### Shop with a purpose

The list of items Doubek needs grows: long-sleeve T-shirts. "Get the basic colors that you wear the most and



Image consultant Julie Judd shows Gigi Doubek where to hem a skirt. | RUTHIE HAUGE-SUN-TIMES MEDIA

then fill in with patterns, ruffles, or other novelty decorations." Also needed: a chocolate brown turtleneck sweater and a holiday cocktail dress.

Another of her tenets is to shop with purpose:

"You wouldn't just go to the grocery store and start wandering the aisles looking for food. You need a menu, a list and an idea of what store to go to."

She recommends taking stock of your wardrobe

before the end of each season and writing down what you need. That way, when you find something, you know whether you need it or not.

By the end of the session, Doubek has a large selection of outfits for different occasions as well as a list of what she needs and suggestions for where to shop. After the home consult, clients can opt to shop with Judd where she will arrange to have a dressing room filled with selections. Or they are free to go on their own and use her contacts.

Business has been moving steadily and Judd keeps busy. Besides the personal image consulting and work at Talbots, she also has a successful speaking business.

But her favorite part remains seeing the confidence and glow that comes from having clothes that fit right and complement the figure of clients.

"I believe in my heart that every woman can look great — whatever their age, height or weight. It's just a great feeling when they realize that," she said.

For more information or to book an appointment, call (708) 829-8245, e-mail [julie@stylewisebyjulie.com](mailto:julie@stylewisebyjulie.com) or visit [www.stylewisebyjulie.com](http://www.stylewisebyjulie.com).



Judd and Doubek look over outfit options. | RUTHIE HAUGE-SUN-TIMES MEDIA