

## Who's the pretty pollie?

Women reveal what they'd change to make Howard and Rudd look like winners  
By DEREK BALLANTINE and BRYAN PATTERSON, LINCOLN WRIGHT

FOR a token male view, we went to image consultant **Jon-Michail** who said the PM's nose hairs may have been pulled and his eyebrows plucked but John Howard still needs a makeover.

"He used to be fairly mediocre to look at," **Jon-Michail**, the CEO of Image Group International, says. "He got himself to international status from a statesman perspective by tinkering with his external appearance. "It started off on basic things like his eyebrows, the change of the glasses, plucking the nose hairs. He definitely picked up on the quality of suits and ties."

But **Jon-Michail** thinks the PM needs more funkiness, including new glasses, even shorter eyebrows and an ultra short hair cut. "For his hair we've gone really short, like Larry from the Three Stooges. Eyebrows have been trimmed. We've put in new glasses. Where we think he needs a lot of help would be more in his leisure gear."

The PM's powder coloured ties were working well, but **Jon-Michail** said Mr Howard's recent appearance in a Cats football jumper holding a baby was a complete disaster. "PM dressed up in Cats gear? It's sickening and tacky. Obviously bad advice. Don't tell me this is authentic." –



Suzie Wilks (TV presenter, corporate host) John Howard is refined and gentlemanly. No substantial change required. Kevin Rudd, groove it up a bit if you want to be seen as the man who knows what's going on in today's world. A stylist might charge a small fortune for this election-winning advice, but the very stylish Suzie Wilks offers it free of charge.

As a television presenter, model and professional communicator, she knows what women want in a political leader and she heads our team of honorary advisers on style, if not substance, in the countdown to the federal poll.

"Mr Howard presents very well," says Wilks, formerly of TV lifestyle shows such as Changing Rooms. "He is a refined man. He dresses appropriately, working well with what he's got, and rarely makes mistakes with colour choices. He comes across as a gentleman."

Mr Rudd has some grooming problems, according to Wilks. ``Unlike Mr Howard, there is a lot of hair to work with," she says. ``It needs to be shorter, more modern. I feel like I want to mess it up a bit, to cut it into a more modern style."

While some women told us Mr Rudd was smug, Ms Wilks thought he actually looked less assured than Mr Howard because of the way he dressed. ``He's not as comfortable in his clothes as Mr Howard," she says. ``He needs to wear better fitting single-breasted suits and more up-to-date shirts with better fitting collars. ``I am not a fashion tragic. I believe less is more, but Mr Rudd needs to groove it up a bit. ``He can do that and still be conservative."

Denise Downing (Adelaide) Celebrating her 69th birthday on a visit to Melbourne, Denise Downing is comfortable with Mr Howard's appearance and delivery. She is aware that sections of the community want a younger leader, but she admires Mr Howard's wisdom and values his experience. ``I have no problem with him," she says. ``I like Mr Rudd, too, because he seems a good, solid man with sound ideas.`` I feel I know him quite well through his regular appearances on Channel 7 and I wouldn't be seeking to change anything about him."

Tracy Bartram(Radio presenter) The funny and musically talented Tracy Bartram -- she sings jazz, but is better known as a MIX 101.1 breakfast presenter -- thinks Mr Howard needs updating. ``I see him in grey zip-up vinyl shoes from K mart, grey jumbo cords and a grey polyester cardigan," she says.

``It is time he embraced the inner senior cit. I think he should also go for the complete comb-over." To lift Mr Rudd over the line on election day, he needs to visit another strip club, just to prove he is not afraid. ``He also needs a little product in the hair, laser surgery to lose the glasses and some fitness work to get rid of the softness around the middle, which all politicians seem to have," Bartram says. ``Given that he speaks Mandarin, I think he could carry off a Chinese silk suit. It would be very fetching next to his skin, bringing out the inner rose."

STAND-UP comedian and regular on TV and radio, Cal Wilson reckons Kevin Rudd needs to be more ocker. An acute political observer from the other side of the Tasman, Cal thinks Kevin Rudd is on his way to power provided he makes minor adjustments to his image. "I recommend he model himself on Kevin Bloody Wilson, maybe growing a beard and cracking bad jokes. "He could brand himself as Kevin Ruddy Wilson. "Instead of an election campaign, I suggest he run in a sitcom, not so much Hey Dad as K. Dad.

"I see him as a fatherly kind of figure, which is good. John Howard is the granddad, but Kevin is the dad. "In fact, Kevin reminds me of my dad - whenever I see him on TV I want to ask him for the car keys." As for Mr Howard, he still has a shot at election victory, the former New Zealander believes. "The eyebrows need a wax," she says. "On second thoughts, maybe the eyebrows could run on their own." - DEREK BALLANTINE



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**Image Group International**

*Asia Pacific Head Office*

**Tel: (+61 3) 9820 4449**

**Email: [info@imagegroup.com.au](mailto:info@imagegroup.com.au)**

**Website: [www.imagegroup.com.au](http://www.imagegroup.com.au)**

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