

Career Fair Tips

How to prepare

- ❑ Identify your top 10 organizations and begin researching basic information about them, including size, location, products and services, history, financials and mission/vision statement. Use resources such as the organization's website, LinkedIn, Glassdoor and news articles.
- ❑ Polish your resume. Stop by during our drop-in hours to review your resume. Print out 15-20 copies to bring to the career fair in a portfolio or binder.
- ❑ Prepare a one minute "elevator pitch" that introduces yourself, demonstrates that you know something about the organization, expresses why you are interested in the organization or field and briefly relates your background to what you know about the employer's needs.
- ❑ Practice your "elevator pitch" and prepare two or three questions you can ask the recruiter.
- ❑ Dress and act professionally. As always, good grooming is essential. The top 12 inches of your body are the most noticeable, not only for neatness and style, but also for anything distracting, like too much jewelry, heavy makeup or a messy hairstyle. For business occasions, the look should be tailored.

Answer questions clearly and concisely

- ❑ Ask appropriate questions. For example, don't ask about salary or what the company does if it is in the published information.
- ❑ Questions for representatives at the job fair should first and foremost be natural. Be yourself. Don't rifle your questions, but maintain a natural flow.
- ❑ Ask if they are collecting resumes. Ask for a business card – you'll want to follow up on interesting leads. Thank them for their time. Pick up company recruiting information, too, not just the giveaways.

During the event

- ❑ Take five minutes at the door to review the list of attending companies. Highlight those that will be hiring people with your qualifications so you can organize your time efficiently.
- ❑ Showcase your enthusiasm and knowledge while asking prepared questions. Your questions will help you gain in-depth understanding of the organization and its opportunities, allowing you to access your fit.
- ❑ Take notes after each conversation and identify next steps, including filling out an online application.
- ❑ Body language can often speak louder than words:
 - Do not fidget or play with your hair.
 - Do not rock from side to side.
 - Do not look around when talking or being spoken to.
 - Do not chew gum.

Follow up

- ❑ Since you have business cards and company information, you can write individualized follow-up letters to appropriate employers, expressing your interest. Sending a thank-you email is not only appropriate, it can bring attention to your name for future hiring decisions.
- ❑ Plan to follow up with recruiters if you do not hear back from them regarding your job or internship application two to three weeks after the career fair. You may say something like, "I am following up to find out the status of my application." Remain professional.
- ❑ Use professional contact information. Your email address and cell phone voice message should be professional. Don't use music for your cell phone voice mail message.