



How to Guide: Get the Most from a Career Fair

Preparation before the Career Fair:

- Research the employers
- Know what your purpose is in attending the career fair
- Rehearse a one-two minute commercial. Prepare a script that introduces yourself, states your knowledge of and interest in the company and relates your background to the position or organization.
- Be prepared to ask questions and answer questions
- Develop a strong resume and bring several copies with you to the career fair

The day of the Career Fair:

Do:

- Do dress professionally; career fairs require the same attention as interviews. Wear comfortable shoes.
- Do arrive early.
- Do greet the person with a firm handshake and maintain eye contact.
- Do develop informed questions to ask beforehand. Bridge the gap between yourself and the recruiter. “What is a typical day like?” or “How would you describe the ideal candidate?”.
- Do stand alone and be independent. Try not to move in groups with your friends.
- Do have an open mind. Approach lesser known companies in order to discover their potential.
- Do have a sense of humor and be personable. Bring an appointment book in case you have the opportunity to set up an informational interview. Keep these materials organized throughout the fair.
- Do inquire about the best way to access future information and/or job opportunities at a company.
- Do “close the deal!” Take the initiative and ask what your next step is. Take a business card so you can follow up with a thank you note.

Don't:

- Don't be afraid of the recruiter. They attend these career fairs to meet qualified candidates!
- Don't pretend that you are interested when you are not.
- Don't schedule an appointment if you don't intend to keep it. You may be preventing a student who is really interested from obtaining an interview.
- Don't overstate your abilities, you'll end up in a job that you are not able to do. Present yourself and your abilities in a convincing manner.
- Don't monopolize the recruiter's time. Sell yourself, make a good impression and give the next student the opportunity to do the same.
- Don't ask questions about salary!
- Don't complain about former jobs, bosses, or classes! Avoid negative words like “can't” or “won't”.
- Don't insult the recruiter. Cultivate the recruiter as a contact in your network.
- Don't just throw your resume on the table. It will probably be thrown into a pile. Take time to market yourself.
- Don't jump into a conversation that the recruiter is having with another student. Patiently wait for your turn.

After the Career Fair

Follow-up is essential to making the most of your career fair experience! Recruiters appreciate the professionalism and careful attention shown by students who follow up on the initial career fair contact. Be sure to send thank you letters to employers that you meet within one week. Refer to the business cards you collected during the career fair for recruiter contact information. If an employer has requested additional information, send it out within the week.