

Prepare for the Career Fair

Before the Fair:

- Have your resume reviewed. Remember to print multiple copies on resume paper and bring them to the career fair in a portfolio or professional folder.
- Research the companies/organizations who are scheduled to attend the fair. You want to be able to communicate intelligently with employers and ask questions.
 - Learn the basics: company/organization mission; products/services; location(s); competitors and niche; job/internship opportunities
- Dress in professional business attire. Your suit/shirt/blouse should be wrinkle-free/dry cleaned.
- Pay attention to hygiene and grooming - avoid cologne/perfume or strong scents.
- Prepare your 30-second commercial. Who are you and what are you seeking?
 - Name, education and current or past career-related experiences
 - Involvement on and off campus, internships and experiences
 - Skills, strengths, and/or accomplishments
 - Identify and establish a connection with the other person - ask open-ended questions
- Practice interview question responses, particularly responses to questions such as, "Why are you interested in our organization?"

During the Fair:

- Develop a plan, prioritizing organizations and their career fair location.
- Cell phones should be on silent. Don't chew gum.
- Introduce yourself with a firm handshake, good eye contact and a smile.
- Use your 30-second commercial as a point of reference regarding topics you want to address. You do not need to say it all at once, allow for employer interaction.
- Be aware of your body language and surroundings. Work the room.
- Exchange business cards and close the conversation with a thank you before moving on.
 - Write notes about your conversation on the back of business cards.

Sample Questions to Ask Employers at the Career Fair:

1. What specific skills/qualifications does [organization name] look for in prospective employees/interns?
2. What is the hiring process at [organization]?
3. As a freshman/sophomore, what qualities does your organization seek in candidates? How can I strengthen my future candidacy with your organization?
4. How have social, political and/or economic changes in the industry impacted [organization]?
5. What has been your experience at [organization]?
6. What professional development/training opportunities are available for new hires?
7. In doing my research, I noticed [blank]; do you mind telling me a little bit about this?

After the Fair:

- Draft thank you notes - Reference parts of your conversation in the note.
- Be certain that your thank you notes are error-free and send them within 24 hours.
- If requested by the employer, follow-up with supplemental materials.