

## Making the Most of the Job Fair

A job fair brings together job seekers and employers to network and discuss job and internship opportunities. Specifically, job fairs allow job seekers to:

- Connect with organizations to collect information, submit resumes or arrange interviews
- Develop a job search network by collecting referrals to other departments/divisions within an organization
- Meet with new, less familiar organizations and discover unexpected opportunities

### What Do I Bring?

- Multiple copies of your resume. Get your resume reviewed at the Career Development Center ahead of time
- A portfolio or folder in which to carry your resumes and other materials
- A notebook or planner and pen to write down upcoming interviews or information sessions or other notes

### What Do I Wear?

Conservative, professional attire is best. You need to be neatly groomed. Your chances for an interview or job could be at risk if you wear anything that can distract an employer from focusing on your qualifications, like heavy perfumes or facial jewelry. Also, what you wear to a job fair will depend to some degree on the industry and roles you are interested in. If you are interested in positions with top accounting firms, a suit would be ideal. For part-time retail jobs, a collared shirt or blouse with nice pants would be more appropriate. When in doubt, err on the side of more professional and conservative, avoiding anything trendy or revealing.

### BEFORE THE FAIR: Plan Ahead

- Find out what organizations are attending. You may view a list of attendees through the Career Development Center (CDC) Events & Workshops page.
- Determine the organizations in which you are most interested and research these organizations through their websites.
- Bring enough resumes to share with the employers you are interested in, plus extras for new employers you may connect with unexpectedly.
- Prepare and practice your 30-second elevator pitch for employers. For more information on how to develop an elevator pitch, visit the “Engage in Professional Networking” section on the CDC Jobs and Internships page.
- Prepare questions to ask representatives.

### Questions to Ask:

- What career opportunities are available in your organization?
- What is the employment outlook in the field right now?
- What opportunities do you have for \_\_\_\_\_ majors?
- What type of training is available?
- What do you look for in candidates?
- What key skills/experiences are highly desirable?
- Do you have any tips for success in this field?

\*Note: Do not ask about salary or benefits.

## DURING THE FAIR: Take Initiative

- Arrive early. Be there when recruiters are fresh, alert and attentive. Try to arrive before the majority of other students get there.
- Take time to target organizations that interest you. Also keep an open mind and consider organizations you are not familiar with – there are great opportunities everywhere.
- Be patient and anticipate crowds and lines. Try visiting the tables with fewer crowds first.
- Scan employer handouts. Instead of just getting in line, approach the table from the side to quietly pick up materials to review. Step back far enough to be able to listen to and observe recruiters speaking to other students. Determine if your 30-second elevator pitch needs to be adjusted based on what you've learned.
- Take initiative and introduce yourself with a smile.
- Give your resume to the representative and share your elevator pitch. Ask questions from the list you prepared. You can also ask about the application procedure.
- Get a business card or a contact name from every person you meet. Write interesting facts, notes or additional contact names on the back of the card. Use this information to follow up after the fair.
- Many company tables have “freebies”, such as pens, candy, and toys. Be courteous and cautious when taking these items. Don't play with the stress balls or other toys during the fair. Avoid taking every free item you see. It is noticeable by recruiters and staff when a student seems to be attending the fair just for the free items.

## AFTER THE FAIR: Continue the Search

- Write a thank you email to the representatives you met. Include another resume and, if requested, any additional information.
- Connect on LinkedIn with recruiters with whom you spoke.
- Continue to research the companies or organizations that you met at the fair.
- Use a variety of job search strategies in addition to job fairs to round out your job search.