

Career Fair Prep

MAKE THE CAREER FAIR WORK FOR YOU!

Career fairs allow you to meet prospective employers, develop industry contacts and obtain information about employers, industries, jobs and career paths.

BE PREPARED

- Employers expect you to dress professionally, ask thoughtful questions and have a targeted resume
- Employers may not be hiring, so make a good impression so they remember you for the future
- You will have a short amount of time to sell yourself... make the most of it

BEFORE THE CAREER FAIR

- Research companies and learn about products/services, mission, vision, current and future opportunities
- Prepare a targeted resume and bring enough copies (get it critiqued at Career Services)
- Prepare a business/contact card that outlines your contact info, education, skills and qualifications
- Create a list of relevant questions to ask and be prepared to answer employer questions
- Practice your 30 second elevator pitch - summary of your education, experience, and your career goals (Elevator Pitch Tipsheet)

DURING THE CAREER FAIR

- Arrive early and dress professionally
- Introduce yourself, give a firm handshake, smile and maintain eye contact
- Ask meaningful questions and listen attentively
- Collect business cards, brochures and handouts

AFTER THE CAREER FAIR

- Follow up to thank the employers for speaking with you
- Emphasize your interest and how your skills and qualifications make you a great fit for their organization
- Set up an Information Interview with an employer of interest

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START THE CONVERSATION

- “After researching your company I was looking forward to meeting you and learning more.”
- “I see you work for, I’ve read a lot about your latest (product/process/research).”
- “Hello, my name is and I am in the program, as a student I am really interested in learning more about your company.”

KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

- “Tell me more about...”
- “What advice do you have for graduates entering the field?”
- “What do you look for in new hires?”
- “Are co-op, internship or summer positions available?”
- “What are the company’s plans for future growth?”
- “What are the typical career paths for a graduate in this field?”
- “What personal qualities, skills or experience would help someone do well in this company?”

It is NOT appropriate to ask about salary at the Career Fair

BE PREPARED TO ANSWER EMPLOYER QUESTIONS

- Tell me about yourself
- What specific position are you most interested in?
- What are your short-term and long-term career goals, and how do you plan to achieve them?
- What do you consider to be your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
- How has your college experience prepared you for a career?
- In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our organization?
- What do you know about our organization?
- Why did you choose your program of study, what interests you about the industry?
- What qualifications do you have that make you think you will be successful?

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HOW TO MOVE ON

Always thank the employer and ask to leave a resume and get contact information.

- “Thanks for the information on __. It was great meeting with you. I will definitely follow up with you later.”
- “As a student who wants to know more about the _ industry, I really appreciated the opportunity to talk to you. Do you have a business card so that I can follow up with you later?”
- “I am very interested in keeping in touch. What is the best way I can keep in touch with you or someone in your company so I can apply when appropriate?”

DRESS FOR SUCCESS AT THE CAREER FAIR

Dressing in a professional or business casual manner – no matter what job you are applying for

- Leave your backpacks and winter coats in your locker
- Cover up tattoos and visible body piercing (nose rings, eyebrow rings, etc.)
- Wear minimal jewelry
- Avoid loud or distracting patterns, wear colours that are not memorable (black, navy, grey, taupe, cream) and make sure clothes are clean and wrinkle-free

RECOMMENDED

- Dress shirt with collar, dress pants or professional khakis with professional shoes or dress pants/skirt (not too short or too tight) with blouse (avoid showing cleavage)
- Wear minimal daytime makeup; use only clear or conservative colour nail polish
- Clean-shaven or well-groomed facial hair