

# GET NOTICED AT THE JOB & INTERNSHIP FAIR

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The Job & Internship Fair provides students with an opportunity to meet employers from a variety of industries and receive information about the organization and available positions, both full-time and internships. Employers have the opportunity to view a large number of potential candidates and promote their organization, which aids in the pre-screening process and gaining familiarity with potential candidates.

## WHAT DO EMPLOYERS EXPECT OF JOB FAIR CANDIDATES?

- Have some knowledge of the company/organization.
- Dress professionally.
- Be prepared to ask appropriate questions.
- Be prepared to answer questions about your interests, education, skills and experience.
- Follow-through after the fair.

## PREPARATION IS THE KEY TO MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR FAIR EXPERIENCE!

**Resume:** Develop/update your resume and have it reviewed prior to the fair. Career Services provides workshops on resume writing and will critique it for you. Resumes should be concise and easy to read. Bring sufficient copies to provide to employers in which you are interested.

**Attire:** Many employers consider *business casual* appropriate for a career fair. If you are seeking a full-time position, wear business professional attire (i.e. a suit). When in doubt, err on the professional side. This is your chance to make a great first impression!

**Research:** Review information about the fair, employers who have registered to attend, and the positions for which they are recruiting. You can find this information by logging into Handshake and viewing the fair information.

**Plan Your Strategy:** Make a list of employers you intend to visit then prioritize. Determine your objective: Is your goal to visit with employers about internships? Are you interested in learning more information about a company? What do you hope to accomplish at the fair?

**Questions:** Prepare a list of questions based upon the research you've done and your objective. Ask about career opportunities, specific position openings for which you might be qualified, and the organization.

**Market Yourself:** Be prepared to talk about your career interest areas, strengths, education and related experience. Develop your elevator pitch – a concise, brief introduction you can use to initiate a conversation with an employer and help spark their interest in you.

**Items to Bring:** Resumes, a pen or pencil, your list of employers and your questions. Avoid carrying unnecessary items so you're able to move freely throughout the fair and easily shake hands when approaching an employer.

## AT THE FAIR

- When you arrive, review the fair lay out and note the location of employers. Plan your strategy for visiting with your top priority employers to make the best use of your time.
- Be patient. There may be other candidates waiting to visit with an employer. You might visit with another employer or use the time to browse the company literature or your list of questions.
- Listen. While waiting, you will have a great opportunity to listen to employers. You can hear what questions other candidates are asking and the employer responses.

### **AT THE FAIR, CONTINUED**

- Be professional. Introduce yourself and use a firm handshake and genuine smile to begin the conversation. Do not interrupt others that are talking with an employer.
- Answer questions directly and concisely. The conversation should be two-sided, with both parties asking questions and providing information.
- Ask intelligent, well thought out questions from the list you have prepared.
- Make notes. Use these after the fair to re-assess your interest in certain organizations.
- Be positive. Even if an employer doesn't sound like a future alternative for you, be gracious and thank them for their time.
- Collect business cards and company literature so you can use these to do further research or send an application or thank you note after the fair.
- Network. You might have a specific interest area or geographic preference. Some organizations may be able to refer you to a related department or location. Keep an open mind while you talk to representatives – you never know where it might lead!

### **AFTER THE FAIR**

- If an employer has asked you to complete an application or send other documents, do so in a timely manner. Failure to follow-through could eliminate you from the candidate pool. The same is true for thank you notes.

### **WAYS to MAKE an UNFAVORABLE IMPRESSION**

- Unprofessional or inappropriate attire.
- Questions about salary.
- Lack of goals or career direction.
- Lack of questions; lack of sincere interest in a company.
- Taking the "Freebies" and walking away.
- Poor communication skills (lack of eye contact, interrupting others, weak handshake).

### **THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND**

- Fairs offer the opportunity to present yourself to potential employers as well as for you to "interview" them! Be prepared to make a great first impression.
- Rarely do employers extend an offer at a career fair. Do not expect it!

### **EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS YOU MAY WISH TO ASK**

Questions might range from specifics about the organization to typical job responsibilities. Ask yourself, "What do I need to know about this employer to help me determine if I am interested in them or if they offer the types of positions in which I have an interest?"

- What is the hiring process for your associates/interns?
- What types of training are provided for new employees?
- Is there an application I need to complete in order to apply for this position?
- What types of majors do you traditionally hire for your \_\_\_\_\_ positions?
- If I have additional questions, whom may I contact?

**REMEMBER, YOU ONLY GET ONE CHANCE TO MAKE A GREAT FIRST IMPRESSION!**