

## Career Fairs: Tips, Accommodations, and Strategies

Career fairs provide valuable opportunities to advance your job search and explore potential career paths. Whether you're seeking networking practice, resume reviews, interviewing experience, or simply exploring new opportunities, these events can be highly beneficial. To make the most of your career fair experience, here are some essential tips to consider:

### **Research Beforehand**

Prior to attending the fair, research the participating employers. Start by reviewing their profiles on platforms like [Handshake](#) and [Glassdoor](#), where you can find company overviews and details about open positions. Explore the employer's websites and conduct a quick online search for recent news or press releases.

### **Prepare Questions**

Having a list of well-thought-out questions shows your preparedness and interest. Consider asking about company culture, professional development opportunities, mentorship programs, or anything else you'd like to know. It's a great way to engage in meaningful conversations with employers.

### **Practice Your Introduction**

Craft a confident and concise introduction to use when approaching employers. Your elevator pitch should highlight your skills, interests, and career goals. Practice beforehand to ensure a smooth delivery.

### **Dress Professionally**

Opt for business casual attire that makes a positive impression. Avoid sweats or athleisure, but remember to wear comfortable shoes.

### **Come Prepared**

Bring a notebook or printed materials with information about the employers you plan to meet. Also, make sure to have multiple copies of your resume on hand.

### **Take Notes**

Jot down key points and contact information during your conversations with employers. This will help you remember important details and facilitate stronger follow-up communication.

### **Observe and Learn**

If you're feeling intimidated or early in your career journey, take the opportunity to observe others. Listen to conversations, pay attention to introductions and body language, and identify successful approaches that you can incorporate into your future career fair experiences.

### **Apply to Relevant Positions**

If you discussed specific job opportunities during the fair, prepare your application materials and submit them promptly. If no specific job was discussed, browse the employer's website for relevant openings and apply accordingly.

### **Send Thank You Emails**

Within 24 hours of the fair, send a personalized thank-you email to employers who shared their contact information. Express your gratitude for their time and mention specific topics you enjoyed discussing. Finally, inform them of your next steps, such as submitting an application.

By following these tips, you'll be well-prepared to navigate career fairs and make meaningful connections with potential employers. Good luck with your job search!

### **References**

1. <https://joinhandshake.com/blog/students/10-tips-to-make-the-most-of-college-career-fair/>

#### **Before the career fair**

- a. Do your research.
- b. Prepare some questions
- c. Practice introducing yourself
- d. Pick your outfit

#### **Day of the career fair**

- e. Come prepared: Bring a notebook or printouts with info about the employers you're planning to meet. And bring several hard copies of your resume.
- f. Take notes
- g. Eavesdrop!

#### **Following up after your career fair**

- h. Follow employers on Handshake
- i. Apply to an open job or internship
- j. Send a thank you email

2. <https://www.careerfairplus.com/blog/5-things-to-know-before-you-attend-a-job-fair>

- Researching Companies Gives You Focus
- Mapping Out Your Route Keeps You on Task
- Taking Notes Shows Interest

3. <https://ysu.edu/career-academic-advising/students/tips-for-success-at-a-career-fair>
  - Dress well, practice your best handshake, award-winning smile and make eye contact!
  - Ask Questions Directly, Politely, and Concisely
  - Some experts advise not asking the recruiter personal questions relating to his/her job, but especially if the recruiter is an alumni of your university, these questions are fine.
4. <https://career.fsu.edu/sites/g/files/imported/storage/original/application/1ad1d4dc79aa076c74409d97c046deaf.pdf>
  - Concrete advice about preparation, what to do when you're there, do's and don't's, templates for "elevator pitches" etc.
5. <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/finding-a-job/what-is-a-job-fair>
  - Practice stress-reducing activities beforehand: If you're nervous, remember that the employers are there because they want to hire someone. Take deep breaths and stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, chin high, and shoulders back to increase confidence.
  - Practice your interactions: handshakes, eye contact, and how you will briefly explain who you are.
  - Consider bringing a friend, this can help you feel more comfortable and confident.
  - Collect and keep business cards.
  - Respect the recruiters' time: Provide direct answers. Ideally, be the one that ends the interaction to show courtesy. They have to meet many possible hires. If the booth and the people running it are not busy, feel free to stay until it is.
6. <https://www.mentra.com/neurodivergent-job-seekers>
  - Job site that is specifically for neurodiverse people, run by neurodiverse people.
  - Mixed reviews on effectiveness, though.
7. <https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/2018-08/Employment%20Tool%20Kit.pdf>
  - Autism Employment Tool Kit.

8. <https://www.sjuhawknews.com/students-with-autism-prepare-for-career-fair-challenges/>
  - Short article about autistic students attending a career fair.
  
9. <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SfdU-QeQFW8NjHdcuxOsPVNjEzYHaMwiOPu35drRLLg/edit>
  - Stanford Neurodiversity Group step-by-step guide to career fairs, with definite instructions.