

How to Prepare for the Career Fair

The Career Fair is a valuable opportunity for all college students – whether you're a freshman looking to decide on a major, a sophomore or junior seeking an internship, or a senior looking for a post-graduate career – the Career Fair is an opportunity for all college students in any part of their college experience to seize.

1. Anticipate for the Career Fair in advance

- Polish your résumé at the Center for Career Development – it provides an important opportunity to convey to employers the qualifications and skills you can bring to the workplace.
- Attend a Navigating the Career Fair Workshop - it helps to develop realistic goals for the Career Fair and provides tips to maximize your Career Fair experience.
- Watch a [presentation online](#) if you can not attend a Navigating the Career Fair Workshop.
- Research and familiarize yourself with the employers that will be attending the fair and create a list of those that you would like to meet; using social media sites and researching their website will provide a sense of what each organization does, what positions may be open, and how to best market yourself.
- Prepare a 15-30 second personal introduction to use with employers; introduce yourself, major, and year; describe your interest in the company and relevant experiences you may have; finish your introduction with a well thought out lead-in question (e.g., inquiring about possible positions open at the company).
- Prepare three questions to ask each employer that you meet – this shows you are genuinely interested in the company and have an understanding of the fields.

2. Be prepared on the day of the Career Fair

- Dress for success – professional business attire is critical for the fair (suits should fit well; perfume and cologne usage is discouraged for those that may be sensitive to strong scents).
- Bring a simple padfolio with paper, pen, and two résumés for each employer you plan to approach.

3. Navigate the Career Fair successfully

- Leave your non-essential items (e.g., coat, backpack, sunglasses) at the coat check; switch your cell phone to silent if brought to the Career Fair.
- Establish a rapport with each recruiter; don't forget to smile, make eye contact, and offer a firm handshake. Use your prepared introduction and résumé to start the conversation. Be sure to use mature and appropriate language when speaking to an employer.
- Inquire about the company's recruitment process; ask about open positions, the anticipated time frame for the application process, and any other questions you have regarding employment. Ask the recruiter if you can follow up with him/her after the Career Fair.
- Gather business cards and informational material from each booth; make sure to put all materials in a bag or briefcase.
- Thank each recruiter for taking the time to speak with you.
- Send thank-you notes to each employer you meet after the Career Fair; you can send them via email or mail, but make sure to send them within 24-48 hours.

4. Continue your career **development after the Career Fair**

- Create follow-up plans. Approximately two weeks after the fair, follow up with organizations that you are interested in; contact the recruiter and express your continued interest in working for his/her company and use this opportunity to answer all inquiries you may have about the application process.
- Assess your Career Fair experience and plan for the next one; reflect on your strategies, interactions, and results. Make note of any changes you need to make to increase your job search success.
- Visit the Center for Career Development to meet with a career consultant, explore career options, or learn more about the job search process.