

**10 Steps for Career Forum Success**

**Simple steps to follow Before, During and After the Forum**

1. **Have a Strong Resume:** Present an error free, concise, visually appealing document that demonstrates quantifiable results whenever possible. Ensure your qualifications are evident and you effectively sell yourself on the top quarter of the page.
2. **Do your Research:** Review the Career Expo Employer List prior to the event and research the attending employers.
3. **Develop a 30-Second Elevator Pitch**: Anticipate an employer asking **“Tell me a little about yourself**?” Develop a brief introduction of yourself and incorporate the 4 W’s: who you are, why you’re interested, why you’re qualified and what you can offer.
4. **Introduce yourself and Shake Hands firmly while maintaining Eye Contact:** In many ways, a career fair is a test of your social skills. The employers will be friendly and outgoing, they'll expect the same of you.
5. **Dress Appropriately:** You must look professional, groomed, polished and dressed in business attire in a conservative color. Clothes should be clean and pressed. Cell phones should be turned off and absent from view. Carry a portfolio or folder to hold your resume, paper, pen and business cards if you have them.
6. **Ask Insightful Questions:** If you’ve done your research on the organizations, you'll probably have some questions you'd like to ask. Not only will you get some answers, but you'll also show yourself to be someone who does his/her research which will be appreciated.
7. **Focus on What You Can Offer:** You’ll be a refreshing change to most company representatives if you tell them what you can do for them and their organizations instead of asking what they can do for you.
8. **Leave Your Resume with Representatives:** Be sure to ask for a business card from each representative.
9. **Take Notes:** After the fair concludes, jot down notes about specific conversations you had with company representatives. These notes will be helpful in writing personal and tailored thank you notes after the fair.
10. **Follow Up on Promises and Send Thank-You Notes:** Provide additional information on your candidacy if requested. Email each of the representatives you met and thank them for their time. Reiterate your interest in the company and your relevant skills and experience. Most job seekers fail to take this simple step, often losing out in the end to those who did express their thanks.

**Questions to Ask Recruiters...**

**When the recruiter asks, “Now do you have any questions?” it is important to have a few prepared. It shows you’re interested in the company and are serious about your career plans.**

Tailor the questions you ask to your career interests and goals. Don’t ask questions just for the sake of asking questions—make sure it is information that you need. Also, try to avoid asking questions that are answered in the company’s annual report or employment brochure. Recruiters know when you haven’t done your homework!

**Strategic Comeback Questions**

These questions are designed to give job-seekers the chance to respond to the recruiter’s answer with a positive spin on how you perfectly fit (and ideally exceed) what the company is looking for in an employee.

**Examples**

* What kinds of skills and experience do you look for in the employees you hire?
* What are the characteristics of your most successful employees?
* Are graduate degrees important to advancing within your organization? Which ones?
* Which courses or experiences do you suggest to be a successful candidate?

**Strategic Planning Questions**

These questions are designed to give the job-seeker more information and knowledge about the hiring process for each particular employer.

**Examples**

* What kind of entry-level positions (or internships) exist within your organization?
* Does your company hire on a continual basis or just at certain times of the year?
* How long does the hiring process take? What does it consist of?
* What percent of applicants are eventually hired?
* What is the retention rate?

**Key Company Information Questions**

These questions are designed to provide you with critical inside information you need to know when making a decision about the attractiveness of each potential employer. Remember, a job fair is a two-way street and you should be evaluating these companies as much as they are evaluating you.

**Examples**

* Are there specific career tracks within the organization? In other words, what can a typical employee (for the position I am seeking) hired in your division expect to be doing 2, 5, or 10 years after hiring?
* What is your organization’s culture like?
* For how many years does the typical employee stay with the company?
* Are there opportunities for ongoing training through your organization?
* Do you expect your employees to relocate? How much travel is involved?

**Recruiter Information Questions**

Some experts advise not asking the recruiter personal questions relating to his or her job, but especially if the recruiter is an alum of your university — or you have some other personal connection — these questions are fine. Even if there is no connection, these questions can be asked — and their answers can provide you with some critical insights.

**Examples**

What made you choose this company and why do you stay?

How long have you been with the company?

What’s the one thing that most surprised you about this company?

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