

HOW TO WORK A JOB FAIR



Career fairs are one-day events where job seekers have the opportunity to make contact with employers. Candidates can identify and learn more about organizations who are currently hiring, pick up application forms, and in some cases, interview for a position. Company representatives are available to answer candidate questions and provide details about the company and their available opportunities. The fair offers a low-risk environment in which candidates can explore a variety of organizations and careers.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Prepare and proofread your resume. Plan to bring a large number, on high quality paper, to the fair.
- Decide what to wear; a suit or business casual is your best choice. Don't forget personal hygiene; brushing your teeth or eating a breathe mint is a good idea before you enter the fair.
- Review the list of participating employers and research the organizations that interest you.
- Prioritize the employers you wish to contact.
- Write down the questions you would like to ask employers; remember, however, that some employers may not have time to address all of your questions. (See page 2 for sample questions)
- Relax. You are prepared for the event.

ATTENDING THE FAIR

- Leave family and friends at home. You need to focus on your career goals.
- Bring a large quantity of resumes with you, as well as a pen and paper to write notes.
- Check in at the registration desk. Orient yourself to the facility; review the employer map provided by the registration table. Remember your priority list of companies to contact.
- As you approach an employer's table, respect the privacy of other's as they conclude conversations.
- Establish eye contact, smile, introduce yourself and shake hands with the company representative.
- Tell them why you are interested in the organization. Show enthusiasm and interest. Remember, you are the driver of this conversation.
- In one to two sentences, tell the representative about your experience and strengths.
- Be ready to ask your questions AND be ready to answer their questions.
- Determine if they have openings which match your interests and qualifications. If so, provide them a resume.
- Ask for business cards from recruiters with whom you have spoken.
- Excuse yourself graciously at the end of the conversation. Don't forget to thank them for their time.
- If food and beverages are provided, be moderate. Avoid messy hors d'oeuvres. Don't hover around the refreshments. Remember your goal: make contact with potential employers.
- Feel free to take a "freebie" offered by the company, but don't overdo it. You aren't there to find presents for your neighbors.

AFTER THE FAIR

- Make notes. While the fair is still fresh in your mind, write down key names and information.
- Follow up with thank you letters. Don't overlook this courtesy, especially if a recruiter has been particularly helpful. This is especially important if you interviewed with an employer that truly interests you.
- Contact employers you promised to send information to.

BE READY TO ASK QUESTIONS:

The representatives want to talk with you. Approach them and have a few questions ready:

- What positions do you anticipate having open this year?
- What hiring do you plan to do in the next three to four months?
- What types of people do you hire?
- Are you looking for someone with my education and experience?
- What types of people are successful in your organization?
- I want to do _____. Who should I talk to in your organization?
- What made you choose your employer?