

Making the Most of a Job Fair

Job fairs and career days are excellent opportunities to learn more about careers and promote yourself to interested employers. However, in order to be successful and make the most of this unique experience, you must take time to properly prepare. If you don't, you stand the chance of being "just another face in the crowd" to the prospective employers.

The following tips will help to prepare you for your visit to a job fair:

Before the Job Fair:

- **Research Employers:** Review the list of employers that will be participating and research their products, services and employment needs.
- **Develop your résumé:** visit a Career Counselor or attend a résumé writing workshop at your Career Services Office for extra help in formatting, content or just for a review.
- **Polish your personal presentation:** Introduce yourself, look confident and initiate a handshake with a smile!
- **Prepare questions:** What are your expectations for new hires? What key skills/experiences are highly desirable? What do you like about the company?

During the Job Fair:

- **Dress professionally:** Dress as you would for an interview. The most appropriate attire would be a dark business suit.
- **Break-up:** If you attend the job fair with a friend, go your separate ways. Employers will want to focus their attention on individuals, not small groups of people.
- **Demonstrate enthusiasm:** A positive attitude will pay off!
- **Target:** Target those organizations that are of interest to you and make sure you present them with a résumé. Don't avoid visiting an organization just because you haven't heard of them.
- **Present yourself:** Greet the employer with a firm handshake, ask pertinent questions and express your interest in opportunities within their company.
- **Business cards:** Get a business card from every employer with whom you speak.
- **Network, network, network!** Talk to as many employers as possible. There are hidden opportunities for you with employers you may not have previously considered.

After the job fair:

- **Follow-up:** Follow-up in a timely manner to all the employers you met at the fair with a thank-you note. Be sure to include another copy of your résumé and any other information requested during your discussion.