

HOW TO MAKE A CAREER FAIR WORK FOR YOU

Preparation Before the Job Fair

- Know what you want to get out of the job fair. Do you want information about employers? A chance to meet representatives from specific companies? An overview of the job market in Columbus? Information about internship opportunities? Make sure your expectations are consistent with purpose of the event.
- Review the list of attending employers. Identify those that are looking for candidates with your qualifications. Read any information available about the company and jot down a few questions about the organization you can ask each representative.
- Prepare a one-minute introduction to use when you meet each company representative. In addition to stating your name, school, and major, your introduction should express why you are interested in the field or organization and briefly relate your background to what you know about the employer's needs. Practice your introduction until you feel comfortable with it.
- Make sure you bring enough copies of your resume. Between 10 and 15 are usually sufficient.

During the Event

- Take a few minutes before you enter the room to review the employer booklet for more information about the attending employers. Highlight and prioritize those you are most interested in so you can organize your time efficiently.
- Dress and act professionally. Business casual means you do not have to wear a suit, but you should still look professional—no jeans or sweatshirt. As always, good grooming is essential. The top twelve inches of your body are the most noticeable for neatness and style. Avoid anything distracting such as too much jewelry or a messy hairstyle.
- Show interest and enthusiasm by smiling and speaking clearly. Walk confidently with good posture. Make direct eye contact and shake hands firmly. Use a positive greeting to begin your introduction: "Hello, I'm Chris Smith. I'm an accounting major at ABC College and interested in exploring opportunities in corporate accounting..."
- Answer questions clearly and concisely. There may be many people in line behind you, so you don't want to take up too much time. Concise but complete answers also show you are well-prepared. Offer to leave a copy of your resume.
- Ask appropriate questions. For example, don't ask about salary at this point or basic information that is easily available in the company's literature.
- Ask for a business card because you'll want to follow up on interesting leads. Thank the representatives for their time. Don't just collect giveaways, take information too.

Follow Up

- Since you have business cards and company information, you can write individualized follow-up letter to appropriate employers, expressing your interest. Don't forget to include another copy of your resume. If you can, mention something you discussed at the job fair to help the employer remember you.