

JOB FAIRS - CHECKLIST

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

A job fair is a networking opportunity to meet with potential employers to learn more about their organization, their culture, to secure an interview, and to gain more information about a specific industry or career path.

- REGISTER IN ADVANCE: View each career fair website and read about the attending employers, majors sought and if they are hiring. Don't assume employers at job fairs are just seeking business or technical majors. More than half of all employers at job fairs have at least one position for which they will consider any major!

BEFORE YOU GO:

- PREPARE YOURSELF: Students obtain the most success by being prepared:
 - Attend resume seminars and have your resume reviewed.
 - Attend interviewing skills seminars and do practice interviews.
 - Prepare a 20-30 second personal introduction to use with employers.
FOR EXAMPLE: "Hello, my name is Jane Doe and I am a junior Marketing student at St. Cloud State University. I am looking for an internship for this summer, and I read on the website that "company's name" has an internship program and I would like to..."
- RESEARCH EACH EMPLOYER:
 - Identify companies that interest you on the job fairs' website and see who is accepting resumes prior to the fair or doing interviews at the fair. Contact employers prior to the fair to request interviews, the earlier the better.
 - Explore each employer's websites. To impress employers, you should know:
 - What do they do? What are their main products and/or services?
 - What jobs do they have available?
 - What are the key skills and qualifications sought?
 - What is their mission statement?
 - What is currently going on at the company? What is the latest company news?
 - It is ok to make some notes about the company or the position and bring along questions to ask the company's representative.
 - Be able to tell the employer what you are looking for and why you want to work for them!

GETTING THERE:

- THE NIGHT BEFORE: Being well rested will allow you to go to the fair with the energy and enthusiasm necessary to get recognized in a positive way.
- WHAT TO WEAR: Professional attire is a must! Always dress for the job you want, not the one you have. You need to dress professionally for every job fair or interview even if the company has a casual dress policy.
- WHAT TO BRING:
 - Bring at least 20 copies of your resume, in a portfolio or briefcase.
 - Obtain a list of booth locations and employers.
- ARRIVAL:
 - Print map and directions to the fair.
 - Research parking options.
 - Bring Cash for parking lots and ramps.
 - Leave EARLY: plan to arrive at least ½ hour early. Allow time for traffic, finding the check-in and registration booth.
 - Stay LATE: plan to stay as long as possible. Employers usually have more time to spend with you in the afternoon as it is usually less busy at that time.

DURING THE FAIR:

- VISIT AS MANY BOOTHS AS POSSIBLE: When meeting a recruiter, be direct. Introduce yourself with a smile and a firm handshake. *Remember what you prepared!*
- Your goal is to get an interview. Let them know that you're interested.
- If they don't ask for it, leave your resume with the employer before leaving the booth.
- Always get a business card from the employer.
- IF THEY ARE NOT CURRENTLY HIRING:
 - Find out when they anticipate having openings. If they don't know when they will have any, ask if they would take your resume, and follow up once a month.
 - Follow up!
- IF APPLICATIONS ARE ONLY ACCEPTED ONLINE: Use it as a chance to explore opportunities and promote yourself. Employers are much more likely to go through a database and pull your resume if you have spoken to them in person at a job fair!!!
 - Find out about positions that fit your background.
 - Get a business card from the employer you SPOKE TO.
 - After the fair, update your resume to better fit the qualifications and skills sought.
 - Submit your resume online right away, within a day or two of the fair.
 - E-mail the employer you spoke to once your resume is posted, letting them know that you have applied online.
- IF YOU HAVE AN INTERVIEW: Check in 10 minutes early.
- Don't forget to network with the other participants.

AFTER THE FAIR:

- SEND A THANK YOU NOTE TO:
 - Each employer who you interviewed with! *This is a must!*
 - Companies you spoke to but did not interview with. It will help you to stand out from the crowd.
 - You can either send a card by post mail or an e-mail thank-you.
- FOLLOW UP! FOLLOW UP! Follow up! Many candidates get job offers months after the fair because they kept in touch with the employer representative. Be sure to follow up if...
 - They said they would be in touch within 2 weeks and you haven't heard from them.
 - A company told you to apply online, do so, then send the reminder e-mail to the person who you spoke to at the fair letting them know that you have applied.
 - They said that they weren't hiring, follow up once a month.
- LEARN FROM YOUR EXPERIENCE:
 - Analyze what you learned, make a plan of action and act on it.
 - Update your resume.