

Four Steps to Career Fair Networking

by Kathy Douglas

Career Fair Prep

- Perfect your resume.
- Get your professional dress ready (typically business casual or business dress).
- Practice introducing yourself.
- Find out which employers are attending.
- ***Research the employers you want to meet with.***
- Prepare specific and general questions.

What to Bring

- Business cards
- Padfolio, notepaper, and pen
- 10-15 resumes (depending on fair size)

During the Fair

- Walk around to meet employers alone—you might have friends at the fair who you check in with, but don't travel as a posse.
- Limit your give-away item collecting.
- Introduce yourself with a smile, a handshake (if recruiter offers a hand), and a few relevant details about yourself, your education/experience, and/or interest in the employer.
- Speak slowly and confidently.
- Be strategic—talk to your top three employers first, others if you have time.
- Take quick breaks between rounds of visits to freshen up and take a breather.
- Don't dominate recruiters, be mindful of other students waiting in line.
- Ask about opportunities and next steps if there are specific openings.
- Wait for cues from recruiter regarding resumes—some will be collecting them, others might direct you to follow up by e-mail, or apply online.
- Get the appropriate contact information and/or ask for a business card.
- Thank recruiters after speaking with them.
- Take notes as soon as you walk away from a table.

After the Fair

- Take a few minutes immediately after fair to sort through your notes and make a list of follow-up items.
- Follow up and thank recruiters of particular interest. (You don't have to follow up with everyone.)
- Follow up with online applications, or by sending a resume and cover letter to the appropriate contact.
- Reach out via e-mail or by telephone to reps who were not at fair, but who work with your level of education/field.
- Set up informational interviews with individuals at companies/organizations of particular interest to you, and with alumni in these organizations.
- Check in with your career office with specific questions.

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