



ADVISING & CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Your Career Fair Guide

Participating in a career fair is an important strategy in your job search. Career fairs provide you with the opportunity to network with a variety of recruiters and learn about the needs of various organizations.

Follow these tips to get the most out of your career fair experience:

- **Prepare for the fair as you would for an interview.** Review the participating recruiters on Handshake and make a list of the ones you'd like to visit. Research each company's mission and values. Reflect on your professional skill set, and be ready to communicate your strengths.
- **Reflect on your priorities.** Prior to the fair, gather the information you need to make career decisions. Consider: location, nature of the job, salary, benefits, job security, travel opportunities, the size of the organization, etc. Knowing your priorities helps you focus on the organizations that will best fit your career needs.
- **Bring several copies of your resumes to the fair.** Advising and Career Development staff can help you prepare your resume ahead of time. Bring your resume in a professional-looking padfolio. Be ready to share your resume with organizations that interest you.
- **Project a professional image.** Dress in business casual or as you would for an interview.
- **Interact with recruiters on your own,** not with a group of friends. Project a professional image by smiling, introducing yourself, and making good eye contact. Leave recruiters with a positive first impression!
- **Be sure to take notes.** Taking notes will help you keep track of contacts, next steps, and details. Request business cards from the recruiters you meet so you can follow up with them later.
- **Follow-up with recruiters after the fair.** You may consider sending them a LinkedIn connection request, thanking them for their time and reiterating your interest in their organization. Alternately, you can send them a professionally-written note or email.



Quick tip: Maintain your energy!

Career fairs can be hectic and tiring, but first impressions matter. Each time you meet a new recruiter, convey your enthusiasm. Smile, shake hands firmly, and project your voice. Be sure to take breaks when you need them. Don't let your "battery" go dead!



Sell yourself with a 30-second "elevator speech."

If you were to step into an elevator with another professional, you'd have approximately 20-30 seconds to chat. What would you want that person to know about you? An "elevator speech" or "elevator pitch" is a brief, compelling introduction of who you are and what you do. Elevator speeches can be useful in other networking situations, including career fairs!

Communicate professionalism by focusing on the following points:

1. Shake hands and introduce yourself: your name, year in college, and major/minor.
2. Demonstrate your interest in their company. Provide a few examples of your experiences, such as internships or coursework, that relate to the field.
3. Provide a few examples of specific accomplishments that make you a valuable employee.
4. To finish up, request additional information. For instance, "If your company offers internships, I would appreciate the name of the person in charge of that program, or perhaps I could meet with you in person to find out more about your organization."
5. Thank them for their time. Let them know you'll be in touch, and then make sure to follow up!



Sample "Elevator Speech"

Hello, my name is Taylor. I'm a senior Business Administration major and marketing minor at Viterbo University. I just completed a marketing internship with ABC Company, where I created a new logo and redesigned the company website. During that internship, I became especially skilled in social media branding, increasing traffic to the website by 80%. I'm interested in pursuing a marketing career in the Midwest. I'd love to send you a resume in case you know of any openings in your company.

Visit us!

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