



# CAREER SERVICES

## Your Virtual Career Fair Guide

**Participating in a virtual career fair is an important strategy in your job search.** Virtual career fairs provide you with the opportunity to network with recruiters and learn about the needs of various organizations from the comfort of your laptop or phone. **Follow these tips to get the most out of your virtual career fair experience:**



*Photo courtesy of Glenn Carsten-Peters on unsplash.com*

- **Prepare for the fair as you would for an interview.** Review the participating recruiters on [Handshake](#) and sign up for one-on-one time slots before the fair. Research each company's mission and values. Reflect on your professional skill set, and be ready to communicate your strengths.
- **Reflect on your priorities.** 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. These help you focus on the organizations that will best fit your needs.
- **Create or update your resume.** See our examples: [Career Services page](#) and [Resume Toolkit](#). Book an appointment via [Handshake](#) to have your resume reviewed so it's employer-ready.
- **Complete your [Handshake](#) profile.** Include your resume, a professional photo, and completed the profile sections. Don't forget to make your profile "visible." (See: [Set Up Your Profile](#).)
- **Project a polished image.** Dress in business casual or as you would for an interview. Find a location with a neutral background, good lighting, and minimal noise.
- **Interact with recruiters.** Arrive on time, smile, introduce yourself, make good eye contact, and ask questions. Leave recruiters with a positive first impression!
- **Take notes.** Notes will help you keep track of contacts, next steps, and details. Request emails from recruiters and follow up with them later.
- **View and apply to open roles.** Check the employer's page on Handshake or their website.
- **Follow-up with recruiters after the fair.** Consider sending them a [LinkedIn](#) connection request or professionally-written note or email, thanking them for their time and reiterating your interest in their organization.

### Questions to Ask Recruiters

If you're wondering what to ask recruiters, choose questions that will help you gather information while making a professional first impression.

- 1) What do you like best about working for this company?
- 2) How would you describe the company culture?
- 3) What entry-level positions exist within your organization?
- 4) What skills, educational background, or work experiences do you look for in new hires?
- 5) What traits make someone a successful employee at your company?
- 6) What are some of the challenges a new employee might encounter on the job?
- 7) Are there opportunities for ongoing training through your organization?
- 8) What career paths are available at your organization? Are there opportunities for advancement?
- 9) Does your company hire on a continual basis or just at certain times of the year?
- 10) What does a typical work week look like?
- 11) In what ways do employees work collaboratively with each other? Independently?
- 12) Could you describe your hiring process?
- 13) How does your company evaluate employee performance?
- 14) How do you see the company changing in the future? How can I prepare myself for those changes?



*Photo courtesy of Christina@wocintechchat.com on unsplash.com*

### Questions NOT to ask:

- So, what does your company do? (This question shows you haven't researched the organization ahead of time.)
- How much would I be paid? (Questions about vacation leave, sick time, or other benefits are also not appropriate at this point.)
- Avoid questions that could be answered easily by reviewing the company's website. Review the websites of organizations that interest you ahead of time. Read through your Career Fair booklet for descriptions of participating organizations.



### 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 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 virtual career fairs!

### Communicate preparedness by focusing on the following points:

- Smile and introduce yourself: your name, year in college, and major/minor.
- Demonstrate your interest in their company. Provide a few examples of your experiences, such as internships or coursework, that relate to the field.
- Provide a few examples of specific accomplishments that make you a valuable employee.
- 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 I could talk with you after the fair to find out more about your organization?"
- 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 virtually!**

Murphy Center 374 | Monday-Friday | 9am-4pm | 608.796.3828 | [www.viterbo.edu/career-services](http://www.viterbo.edu/career-services)