



Job Fair Tips

1. Prepare in advance

Before you go to the fair, have a look at the list of companies that will be attending. Have a look at the careers sections of their websites and review career opportunities they have available. The better prepared you are, the better and more specific questions you can ask, and candidates who've done their research always impress prospective employers. Also, review the directory and map of the career fair so you know where the employers you're interested in talking to are located.

2. Dress professionally

First impressions are important, so when you attend a job fair you'll want to look professional. You don't need to wear a full suit, but wearing business casual shows that you're taking your job search seriously.

3. Bring many copies of your resume

You'll need these to hand out to employers. Make sure you create a resume before the fair, and that you bring more copies of your resume than you think you need. Also make sure that they are clean and unwrinkled. If you happen to have a business card, bring a stack of those as well.

4. Arrive as early as possible

Doing so will give you a chance to talk to many employers before it gets really busy – fairs are busiest during the lunch hour.

5. Decide which employers you're most interested in

If you have enough time, you might want to start with those companies you are least interested in. This will allow you to get over any initial nerves and feel more confident when you approach the companies you'd really like to work for.

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6. Introduce yourself

Obviously, you'll want to shake hands and tell employers your name, but you'll also want to be prepared to give a brief but memorable introduction. Have your resume ready to give to the employer and make sure you can clearly explain what you're looking for in your career, as well as how your academic experiences are relevant to what they are looking for.

7. Always take notes

You should anticipate meeting a lot of people at a career fair, so taking notes will help you keep all of the information straight when it's over. Also, taking notes about your interactions will help you remember follow-up questions you'd like to ask the recruiter (since the representative at the fair may not be directly involved in hiring). At minimum, write down any names or phone numbers or any information you hear on the day in your notepad. Also, get the name of the person you should contact for follow-up discussions after the job fair.

8. Ask before taking any samples or giveaways

Some companies will bring "giveaways" intended for attendees to take. Common items are notepads, pens, brochures or samples of the company's products. Always check with employers before taking anything from their tables. It shows good manners.

9. Be courteous and show a positive attitude

No one wants to hire a dour dud. Smile and show enthusiasm during your conversations. Also, keep your questions brief as there will likely be a long list of students wanting to talk to the same employers.

10. Follow up (and say Thank You)

You have your notes from various conversations, and you've handed out your resume to anyone who has accepted it -- you're on the right track! But one job fair tip that a lot of beginners forget is following up with a thank-you note or email. This tip is critical to follow if you want to get results from your efforts at a career fair. Send thank-you notes to people you spoke to and add them to LinkedIn within a couple of days after the fair. When you send your request, add a personalized note to remind them that you met at the job fair.