



CAREER FAIR PREPARATION

A career fair is a great opportunity to explore careers, get employer information, and network with recruiters and company representatives. The following are tips for making your career fair experience a success.

BEFORE THE CAREER FAIR

See the Big Picture

- It is important to establish **realistic expectations** of a career fair. A job or internship may or may not result from the fair right away so try to see it is a great **networking opportunity**. Connections made here can lead to employment down the road.
- Take some time to set goals. *Examples:*
 - Obtain at least 5 business cards from employers.
 - Give resumes to 10 employers.
 - Collect information from 15 firms in the technology field.

Research Companies

- Obtain a **list of organizations** that will be attending from the Albers Career Center.
- Decide what **companies you want to target** at the fair.
- **Research** the companies and be familiar with the following:
 - What does the company do?
 - What is the company's mission?
 - What current events have happened with the company?
 - What types of positions are they hiring for?*Use this information to come up with some targeted questions.*
- Keep an **open mind** to the companies you want to consider—some might have great opportunities you never thought of!

Prepare Your Personal Introduction

- Prepare a **marketing pitch or personal introduction** so you don't get stuck not knowing what to say.
- Your introduction can include the following points:
 - Name / Class / Major / Skills and Strengths / Relevant Experience / Opportunities You Are Seeking / Knowledge of the Company
- **Practice** your introduction so it feels natural. Make sure to convey **confidence and enthusiasm!**
- Identify questions to ask to further conversation.

Sample Personal Introduction

"Hi, my name is _____, and I'm a senior at Seattle University graduating in June. I am exploring the fields of marketing and PR, which I believe strongly support my strengths as a creative, talented and innovative designer. I have also been interning at a marketing firm for the past 6 months which has given me direct hands-on experience in the field. What qualities/strengths are you looking for in qualified candidates?"

Prepare Materials and Dress Appropriately

- At least 20 copies of your resume. You can bring 2 types:
 - A general resume
 - A targeted resume for a specific position at a specific company
- Have personalized business cards printed (ask the Albers Career Center about this).
- A professional portfolio with your resume copies, pen and paper, job descriptions, list of questions, and business cards.
- Dress professionally in business attire (how you would dress for an interview). Make sure clothes are clean and pressed. Wear comfortable dress shoes.

AT THE CAREER FAIR

- Allow yourself **adequate time**. Come as early as possible. You may have to juggle your normal schedule or return between classes.
- When you arrive and check-in, take some time to **review the directory of employers**, look at the map to pinpoint your target companies, and get acquainted with the career fair atmosphere. It is suggested that you do a **walk-through of the fair** without talking to anyone just to get adjusted and observe how other students and employers interact. This will help you feel more comfortable.
- Interact with employers:
 - As you approach an employer, introduce yourself, make eye contact, and give a **firm handshake**.
 - Deliver your **personal introduction** with confidence and enthusiasm!
 - Answer questions about your skills and career goals and **articulate how you can benefit** the organization.
 - **Ask the employer some questions** you've prepared to engage them in conversation.
 - Express interest and excitement in what the organization does.
 - Take notes about opportunities and next steps. Make sure you are **clear on how to apply**.
 - The representatives may not be able to answer all your questions, so **write down contact information** for other staff that you can contact later.
 - Ask if the employer is collecting resumes, and if they are **give them your resume**.
 - Ask the employer for his/her **business card** and **company flyers or informational materials**.
 - Be courteous and know when it is time to move on. **Respect fellow students** who also want to talk to the employer.
 - **Thank the employer** for their time.
 - **Make notes** on the back of the business card or note paper on how/when to follow up.
- Take **short breaks** if you need to so you can maintain your energy. Career Advisors will be there to offer advice and answer your questions.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK RECRUITERS

- *What strengths or skills are you looking for in a qualified candidate?*
- *Please describe the usual college graduate entry-level position in your company.*
- *What type of training is provided?*
- *What has your experience with the organization been like?*
- *What do you like most about the organization?*

- *What internship/job opportunities are available right now at your organization? If there are none, when do you anticipate opportunities might become available?*
- *Can you describe career path opportunities in your company?*
- *What advice would you give someone who wants to break into this industry?*

AFTER THE CAREER FAIR

- Follow up with **thank-you letters or emails** to employers with whom you made a connection.
- Follow the instructions you were given on applying for specific positions. **Apply as soon as possible**, as the hiring process can often be expedited after a career fair.
- Set up a system to **keep track of company information** and follow-up activities.
- Determine your **next steps** based on what you learned from the career fair.

Recruiter Secrets...

The students that most impress at career fairs:

- *Demonstrate a familiarity with the organization*
- *Have intelligent questions to ask*
- *Have thought about the way they might fit into the organization*

Need more help?

Career Advisors in the Albers Career Center are available to help you prepare for a Career Fair and any other needs you have for your job or internship search.

Make an appointment today!

Pigott 331 • 206-296-5687 • acc@seattleu.edu