

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR NEXT JOB/CAREER FAIR



There are some techniques to utilize at a career fair. You need to do as much as you can to maximize the quality of time you are spending at the fair, and the quality of time for the companies represented.

- Dress professionally always! It does not matter the type of career fair. The person sitting at that table may be your new boss!
- Bring copious amounts of resumes. Better to have more than less. Bring a nice binder to store resumes and include a notepad and pen and your own calendar of appointments to take notes or further directions from employers. They may want to schedule a follow-up appointment for interview!
- Go early if possible because you can avoid the rush!
- **Have your elevator pitch ready.** This is a pitch that summarizes your experience, abilities, objectives, and the assets you can provide to the company in less than 2 minutes. There are typically hundreds of job seekers that companies are engaging with, and they hate to waste time speaking with one candidate for a lengthy period of time, even if it's someone they are looking for. Make sure you practice this pitch until you are comfortable using it, but make sure it does not sound programmed or too basic.
- Visit your lower priority companies first, so you can practice your elevator pitch prior to visiting the top priority companies on your list.
- Make eye contact, smile, shake hands firmly and create that good first impression with an employer.
- Always maintain professionalism. (Even between tables). Employers notice everything!
- Do not wait in long lines, but rather spend that time networking with other job seekers or employers (even if those employers weren't on your target

list; there may be companies not within your industry that are hiring your profession). Network! Network! Network! Talk to both employers and other job seekers. You never know who might be able to help you find a job! “Hi, my name is _____ and I am here to _____. What brings you here today?”

- Be prepared to answer multiple questions in a short time with each employer. Act as if they are an interview in and of it-self.
- Only ask questions about the job. Wait until after the job fair to find out about the company. This time is for you to find out what the hiring managers are looking for now and down the road.
- Keep the conversations flowing. Have a mental list of questions prepared that are engaging and smart. Also, when given the opportunity, try to relate your skills and experience to the company or openings at the company.
- Always request business cards or at least write down contact information so you can follow up with a thank you and pursue any leads.
- **Career fair follow-up: Keep yourself fresh in the mind of the decision makers. You must send a follow-up or thank you letter within a few days. Always refer to the specifics of the job fair and try to mention any part of the conversation that stood out to make it easy for them to remember you. Also, include your resume.**

Excerpts from: businessinsider.com/-2011-3#ixzz2Xp28AnKl

Revisions and additions with permission by UNM Gallup Career and Job Placement Officer Mary Lou Mraz