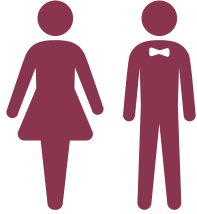


Mastering the Art of a Career Fair



LOOK THE PART AND DRESS FOR SUCCESS

Approach a career fair like an interview: show up well-groomed and dressed to impress. Trade in your jeans and t-shirt for conservative business attire to make a great first impression.



PREPARE AN ELEVATOR PITCH

Talk about how your knowledge, skills, and accomplishments will benefit a potential employer. Make it sound conversational and natural. End with an action request, e.g. ask for a business card. Avoid discussing any part of your personal life.



DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Find out what businesses are going to be at the Career Fair Conference by visiting The Career Centre.



COLLECT CARDS

Ask for business cards from each person you speak with, and follow-up with them after a career fair.



BRING A RÉSUMÉ

Prepare a concise and effective résumé, and print enough copies to give to each potential employer.



MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR TIME

Prioritize your time so that you network with as many employers as possible. Speak first with the companies that interest you the most.



DON'T SMOKE

If a fix is a must, brush your teeth and chew gum before meeting with prospective employers.



FIGHT THE HUNGER

It can be a challenge trying to make a good impression when your tummy is grumbling, so eat something substantial prior to arriving.

IT'S ALL ABOUT NETWORKING

Research! Find out everything you can about the companies that interest you the most. Use this knowledge for follow-up questions.

First impressions, lasting impact! Treat every networking opportunity like a mini interview. You only get one chance to make a good first impression.

Be concise! Keep it short. This is where your well-practiced "elevator pitch" will come in handy.

Follow-up. Send an email the next day to each employer you spoke with. Very few job seekers will follow-up, so this will set you apart.

Network online. If the company is on [LinkedIn](#), add them to your connections.



For help preparing a résumé or for more information on topics discussed, visit the Career Centre in room 2409.

Preparing for the Career Fair Conference

Career Centre staff members are here to help you conquer the Career Fair like a pro. Here are some tips that will help set you up for success.



5 THINGS TO TAKE TO A CAREER FAIR

- **Copies of your résumé.** Be sure that it represents your knowledge, skills, and abilities effectively. It needs to look professional, be easy to read, and be free of typos. If you are looking at several career options, you may want to have two or more targeted résumés prepared.
- **A smile, a strong handshake, and a positive attitude.** It may seem obvious, but first impressions are everything. Approach an employer, smile, and offer your hand when you introduce yourself.
- **Energy!** Career Fairs require you to be on your feet moving from table to table for an hour or so. Each time you meet someone, be at your best and as refreshed as possible.
- **A thirty-second “elevator pitch”.** Hand the recruiter a copy of your résumé and be prepared to expand on it quickly! Share basic information about yourself and your career interests like this: “Hello, I’m Carrie Jones. I’m in my final year of Business at Cambrian College. I’m very interested in a marketing career. As you will see on my résumé, I just completed an internship in the Marketing Division of the ABC Company in Sudbury. I’m very interested in talking with you about marketing opportunities with your organization.”
- **Information about the organizations** that will be attending. Gather information as you would for a job interview. To maximize the brief time you have with each employer, you need to know how your skills and interests match their needs.



5 THINGS TO TAKE AWAY FROM A CAREER FAIR

- **Business cards** from the recruiters you have met. Use the cards to write follow-up notes to those organizations in which you are most interested.
- **Notes about contacts you made.** Take paper and a pen with you or use the Résumé Tracking List provided to write down details about particular organizations, including the names of people who may not have had business cards. Take a few minutes after you leave each table to jot down these notes.
- **Information about organizations you have contacted.** Most recruiters will have information for you to pick up, including company brochures, position descriptions, and other data.
- **A better sense of your career options.** If you have utilized the event correctly, you will have made contact with several organizations that hire people with your skills and interests. In thinking about their needs and your background, evaluate whether each company might be a match for you.
- **Self-confidence** in interacting with employer representatives. A Career Fair gives you the opportunity to practice your interview skills. Use this experience to practice talking about what you have accomplished and what your interests are.



5 THINGS NOT TO DO AT A CAREER FAIR

- **Don’t cruise the booths with a bunch of friends.** Interact with the recruiters on your own. Make your own positive impression.
- **Don’t carry a backpack or large purse.** Carry your résumé in a professional-looking portfolio or small briefcase. It will keep your résumé handy and will give you a place to file business cards you pick up.
- **Don’t come dressed for the gym.** A Career Fair is a professional activity, make sure you’re dressed appropriately.
- **Don’t “wing it” with employers.** Do your homework! You’ll be able to figure out why you want to work for the organization and what you can do for them prior to meeting them.
- **Don’t come during the last half hour of the event.** Many employers travel a long distance to attend the Fair and may need to leave early. If you come late, you may miss the organizations you wanted to contact.



For help preparing a résumé or for more information on topics discussed, visit the Career Centre in room 2409.

Crafting Your Elevator Pitch



A QUICK INTRODUCTION

(name, college program or specialty and year, something personal or memorable that is related to the job)



PLANS FOR THE FUTURE/CAREER GOALS

(I'm interested in a career in...")



STEPS YOU'VE TAKEN TO GET THERE/EXPERIENCE

("last summer I interned with..." or "I'm an active member of..." or "my classes in... have taught me..." or "currently I am working for...")



WHAT CAN YOU OFFER? (ADDED VALUE)

("this summer I'd like to work at your company because..." discuss skills and how you would benefit the organization)

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE (THEN ASK FOR FEEDBACK)

Like anything else, practice makes perfect. The more you practice, the more natural your pitch will become. Remember, how you say it is just as important as what you say. Practice your pitch with a few friends and ask them what they thought your key points were. If their response doesn't square with your objective, the pitch still needs work.



For more Elevator Pitch resources, visit the Career Centre in room 2409.

Questions to Ask Representatives

Take advantage of this opportunity to obtain first-hand information about careers that interest you.

CONSIDER ASKING THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

What types of jobs does your company/organization have for college graduates?

What are typical entry-level positions in this field? What duties and responsibilities do these positions entail?

What academic background would be most helpful in preparing me to enter this field?

What kind of work experience (part-time, summer, co-op) would be helpful to me?

Are there extracurricular activities I can pursue which will help me to prepare for work in this field?

What criteria does your company/organization use to assess candidates during interviews?

What advice do you have for a graduate entering this field?

Are there internship or co-op opportunities in this field?

Does your company have training programs for its employees?

What are the opportunities for career advancement?

LinkedIn Headshots

Do you have LinkedIn? If not, you should!

LinkedIn has become a great online tool to market yourself. More and more recruiters are using social media for employee prospects.

But remember, your LinkedIn profile needs to be professional... and it all starts with your profile picture!

Get your professional headshot taken during the Career Fair Conference

Get your headshot taken on a first-come first-served basis, between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Don't forget to dress appropriately – it will be a headshot, but it still needs to be professional.



TIPS FOR LINKEDIN PROFILE PICTURES

Should be professional looking and a close up of your face

Should be current

You should be the only one in the photo

Don't forget to smile