

CAREER FAIR TIPS

PRIOR TO THE FAIR

1. Research companies, agencies, or organizations that will be attending the career fair:
 - Know in advance which organizations will attend and the positions that are open (Check eBear bit.ly/MSUebear for a list of registered organizations). Create a list of employers you would like to talk to at the fair.
 - Visit the employer websites to begin conducting research (read About Us, Mission, Careers, etc...)
 - Develop a list of questions to ask employers based on your research of their organization.
 - Know what skills are needed for specific careers.
2. Take steps toward making a good impression:
 - Prepare a well-written resume in advance of the job fair utilizing *Resumes for America*. Upload your resume in eBear to have it critiqued.
 - Plan to bring 20+ copies of your resume in a folder or portfolio.
 - Study the “corporate culture” of the organization and know how to use industry-related terminology.
 - Know how to relate your past work, academic and out-of-class experiences to the career field.
 - Know how to express what you are looking for and what you want.
 - Prepare and practice you 30-second commercial (see handout).
 - Plan to dress professionally. Wear comfortable shoes. First impressions count!
 - Plan to carry a pen and note pad; bring something to carry company literature, business cards and giveaways.

AT THE FAIR

3. Make a good impression:
 - Arrive early; employers are at their peak and there is less competition.
 - Carry as little as possible (avoid coats or backpacks, etc.); turn off cell phones in the employer area.
 - Visit your top choices first. Avoid standing in a long line to speak with one recruiter when you could talk with 3 or 4 others in the same time period.
 - Smile, make eye contact, and shake hands firmly and confidently. Introduce yourself with your full name, major, and graduation date.
 - Remember your body language...don't fidget or look around. Act interested, focused, and enthusiastic. Be friendly, assertive, mature, and sincere.
 - Don't ramble. Provide a concise, well-prepared overview of what you have to offer and your career interests.
 - Ask at least 2 intelligent questions of each organization, about such topics as: company mission, client base, internship or co-op opportunities, summer or part-time employment, full-time career paths, trainee programs, hiring procedures, etc. Keep in mind that employers will expect that you have researched and will not want to answer questions that are easily available on their website.
Note: Don't just drop your resume at the employer's table. Try to get it into a recruiter's hand. If you cannot speak to the recruiter, look for a business card to contact him/her at a later time.
4. Make things easier on yourself:
 - Network...while in line, talk to other students about recruiters they have spoken to already.
 - Speak clearly and loudly enough to be heard through the noise.

CAREER FAIR TIPS

- If provided, wear nametags prominently - list your name, class year, and degree. This will help employers remember you better.
- Bring 20+ resumes in a folder or portfolio. You can separate resumes with different objectives for easy accessibility. However, be prepared to sell your skills and characteristics in person. Recruiters will remember their impression of you as much or more than your resume. *Note: Many employers will direct you to apply online. If this is the case, know that the individual interactions that you have with the employer can be valuable as you will stand a better chance of being recognized when the recruiter reviews the online resumes later. Use the time to make a positive impression and be memorable.*
- Ask for the recruiter's business card for follow up; take notes about each organization on the back of business cards that can help you recall your conversations with recruiters.

AFTER THE FAIR

5. Follow up with company representatives:
 - Organize company brochures and contact information so you can easily begin the process of following up with employers.
 - Mail or email (according to hiring timeline) a thank-you letter as soon as possible to each organization of interest to reinforce your good image, and include a copy of your resume.
 - Approximately 2 weeks after mailing the letters, call the recruiter to confirm receipt of your letter and to express your continued interest in the company and desire for an interview.