

Upcoming Fair: _____

Location: _____ Need Directions? [Link to Google Maps](#)

Fair Date: _____



Tips for Fair Success

Use the following links to view valuable tips and guidance for getting prepared for a career fair, networking with employers at the fair and continuing communicating with representatives after the fair.

- [Why You Should Attend](#)
- [How to Prepare for the Fair](#)
- [At the Fair](#)
- [After the Fair](#)

Why You Should Attend

- Get first-hand information about a company/organization/school from a representative. You're likely to get more valuable and accurate information from an employee than you could ever get from a web site.
- Make a positive and lasting impression with Employers.
- Begin to establish your professional image by:
 - Distinguishing yourself from other candidates.
 - Effectively practicing professional communication with recruiters and other future colleagues.
 - Establishing a network of colleagues.

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How to Prepare for the Fair

Research Employers

- Identify companies/organizations/schools of interest attending fair.
- Create a prioritized 'Must Meet' list of companies/organizations/schools you wish to visit during the fair, keeping in mind that you may only have five minutes with one employer.
- Research companies/organizations/schools to learn what types of opportunities are offered, company mission, history, image.
 - Company/Organization/School web sites.
 - *Vault*, *Hoovers*, *Career Search* search engines.
 - Professional association web sites.
 - Read trade journals.

Build the Resume(s)

- Prepare a well-written resume four to five days in advance.
- Have your resume critiqued by UCS during [open hours](#).
- Have at least two other people proof-read your resume(s) for typos.
- Create more than one style of resume for each employer if a diverse number of opportunities are available within an organization.
- Study your own resume so you can answer questions regarding the structure and content.

Wardrobe: Make a Great First Impression

- Select your clothing with the company's/organization's/school's image in mind. Ask yourself ' Is this a place where employees generally wear suits or Khaki pants?' If you are not sure how to prepare then speak with a counselor.
- Wear comfortable clothing to prepare for a long day of walking and standing. Tight shoes, shirts, pants, or skirts will pay a toll on your body and mind.
- If there is a diversity among the employers at the fair you should consider bringing multiple outfits to meet the varied employer images.
- Wardrobe **dos**: cut tags from new garments, dress in conservatively-colored garments with subtle stripes or detailing and color-coordinate your garments, men: wear a tie with a sports coat (business suits are not necessary), women: if wearing a skirt then wear basic color nylons (no fishnets, please!).
- Wardrobe **don'ts**: avoid large jingling jewelry, strong perfumes or colognes, jeans or tight-fitting clothing, sandals or flip flops, mini skirts and skirts cut above the knee with large slits, belly shirts and shirts showing cleavage, white-colored athletic socks, large and bulky sacks or back packs.

Bring Your Fair Essentials

- Three to four resumes for each company/organization/school on your 'Must Meet' list.
- Personalized business cards, if available.
- A portfolio or professional binder to store your resumes and business cards.
- A pad of paper (stored in your portfolio) and pens to take notes.
- Directions and a map of the surrounding area (to locate parking and restaurants) for off-campus fairs.
- Breath mints.

Fair Etiquette

- Turn off your cell phone or mute the ringer
- Avoid drinking coffee prior to the fair.
- If you drink coffee or eat heavily seasoned foods then you should carry mints.
- Be mindful of your habits: don't chew gum, fidget, eat or drink while meeting with employers.
- Periodically during the day make restroom stops to check your overall appearance, especially after lunch (nothing makes a first impression quite like food lodged between your teeth).
- Eat before the fair and drink enough water to keep yourself hydrated during the fair.

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At the Fair

Communicating with Employers

- Present a real image of yourself, not the type of employee you think the employer is wishing to hire.
- Approach employers on your 'Must Meet' list when you feel most confident.
- Meet with employers on your own and not in a group.
- Offer a firm handshake and smile when meeting employers.
- Make direct eye contact when speaking with an employer.
- Speak confidently.

Nurture Your Conversations

- Offer a 20 to 30 second biographical sketch to employers. Introduce yourself by telling him/her your name, your academic profile, and your professional interests and experiences.
- Finish your introduction with a statement about why you are interested in the company/organization/school and the specific position that you are seeking.
- Allow the employer to lead the direction of conversation.
- Ask well-thought out questions about the company/organization/school (e.g. mission, job listings, style of management). DO NOT ask about salary.
- Ask well-thought out questions about the employee. For example, ask about his/her length of employment or the nature of his/her job within the company.

Collect Information

- Effectively utilize your time at the career fair by learning more about those organizations you are most interested in from their own employees.
- Collect business cards or company brochures from employers you made contact with, as well as those you could not speak to, at the fair.
- Take notes to help recall conversations with individual employers if he/she contacts you at a later time.
- Track the resumes you distribute to employers.

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After the Fair

Communicating with Employers

- Write an email or a letter thanking the contact for his/her time, information, and include any details about your conversation at the fair.
- Initiate contact with those employers you were unable to speak with at the fair by writing an email or letter. Include your biographical sketch, reasons for contacting this person, interests in the company, and your resume.
- Keep your list of distributed resumes and conversation notes handy for when an employer contacts you.

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