

# Preparing for a Career Fair



## BEFORE THE FAIR

- 1 Ask for a list of companies that will be attending.
- 2 Prioritize the companies that interest you the most. This is to make sure that if you run out of time to meet all of the representatives you at least met with your top choices.
- 3 Research employers that you are interested in speaking with by looking them up on their websites. Doing this will allow you to ask more specific and focused questions which will impress representatives as it shows a genuine interest in their company. Be prepared to tailor your conversations specifically to each recruiter.
- 4 Update your resume and be prepared to distribute at least two copies per organization. Bring a pen and paper or tablet for taking notes, and business cards (if you have them). Avoid carrying excessive bulky handbags or briefcases as you want to have your hands free for handshaking. A professional padfolio organizer will make it easy to carry all of the above and also hold recruiting literature that will be handed to you.
- 5 Prepare a 1 minute “self-introduction”. Practice extending your hand and introduce yourself by name, your major and class standing, skills, extracurricular activities and work experience. Demonstrate that you know something about the company, and express why you are interested in that organization. Ask pertinent questions. For example: .What career opportunities/internships are available in your organization for my major?
  - a) What are the key skills and experiences that you are looking for in new hires?
  - b) What makes the ideal employee for this position?
  - c) What are some typical job assignments for this position?
  - d) What is the application process?
  - e) What do you like best about your company?
  - f) How many summer interns do you hire? How are they recruited? How many are hired from this pool for full time employment?



- g)* How do you see the future employment outlook in this field?
- h)* What are your organizations goals for the next 5 years?
- i)* Do you have any suggestions for me as to how I can market myself better while in school?
- j)* Are there any specific courses a student might take that would be relevant in this field?
- k)* What type of training does your organization offer?
- l)* What are some typical career paths?

- 6** Choose the 'business casual' outfit you are going to wear a few days before the fair. This will allow enough time to get anything cleaned or pressed in advance of the event. If you wear a coat make sure you check it at the venue so you aren't encumbered. Wear comfortable shoes as you will be on your feet for a period of time.

## DURING THE EVENT

- 1** Arrive early, get your bearings. Review the map and directory so you can locate the employers that you're most interested in. Note: you may find it easiest to start with the employers in which you are less interested to allow you to hone your approach and be most confident when you approach the employers that you are especially excited about! Anticipate crowds and lines. Try visiting the tables with fewer crowds first.
- 2** Pick up the materials to review and listen and observe recruiters speaking to other students.
- 3** Be friendly, confident and be prepared with something to say. When the opportunity presents itself take the initiative and introduce yourself with a smile , eye contact and a brief firm ( not limp) handshake.
- 4** Give your 1-2 minute rehearsed "self-introduction/elevator pitch." Often, the recruiter will take the lead and ask you questions, but you should be ready to convey what you want the company to know about you. To really use your time wisely, you should be able to convey why you're interested in the particular company and how your skills and qualifications fit the position.
- 5** Hand the recruiter a copy of your resume. As you speak about yourself, point out the places that support what you're saying. This will draw the recruiters attention to your resume and make you stand out from others.
- 6** Ask relevant questions from the list you prepared. Ask about the application process and next steps. Take notes when you inquire about next steps and the possibility of talking with additional managers. Write down the names, telephone numbers, etc. of other staff in the organization whom you can contact later.
- 7** Thank the person you were speaking with for their time and request a business card so you can follow up.



## AFTER THE EVENT

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- 1 WITHIN 24-48 HOURS OF THE CAREER FAIR, SEND A PERSONALIZED THANK YOU NOTE/EMAIL TO EACH PERSON YOU MET WITH, WHETHER YOU ARE INTERESTED IN THE COMPANY OR NOT.
- 2 For the companies you are interested in, follow the recruiter's instructions about applying for a position. If you need to submit your resume online, do so quickly so that you're still fresh in the company's mind. Maintain contact with the recruiter to let them know you have completed their application procedures.
- 3 Inform the Career Center at NCC of all employment offers.

