

CAREER AND EMPLOYMENT TIPS | FINDING WORK

Job Fairs and Employer Events

Job fairs and other employer events are wonderful opportunities to connect with a large number of organizations. It's a chance for you to explore career paths, build your network and search for employment opportunities.

What is a fair?

- Fairs connect job or volunteer seekers with companies and organizations who are recruiting.
- The recruiters are there to give you information on their organization, their opportunities and when and how to apply.
- Some recruiters will accept resumes at the event, so it is a good idea to bring a few copies.

What are other employer events?

- Other events can include information sessions, receptions, facility tours, meet and greets, industry panels and conferences.
- Representatives and industry leaders are there to talk about the current trends in their fields and can give you insights into their company culture and job requirements.
- After the main event, there may be opportunities to speak with the representatives and attendees. During this time, you can be introducing yourself and [networking](#).
- Bringing and offering resumes is usually not appropriate for employer events that are not fairs.

Before

- Try to find out who is attending from the event webpage and figure out who you want to speak to.
- If going to a fair, customize a resume for the companies you are most interested in, in case they are accepting.
- Do research so you can have more meaningful conversations. The recruiters and industry leaders will appreciate your specific questions.
- Have your research notes handy, so you can refer and add to them.
- Figure out what you want to get out of the event, such as learning about career paths, expanding your network or getting a job.
- Prepare an answer for when someone asks you to tell them about yourself. Make a good impression: tell them your educational background, the work you are interested in and a relevant achievement.

During

- Arrive early; some representatives might not stay until the end. Wear business-casual attire, use good manners, turn off your phone, speak clearly and confidently, smile and make eye contact.
- Show initiative by approaching people to start conversations. Make sure you ask questions and don't just talk about yourself.
- Listen carefully to the information you receive. Stay long enough to have your questions answered but don't take up too much of one person's time.
- Ask each representative for a business card, their name, next steps and the best way to follow up.
- Explore all your options. Have an open mind about organizations you might have overlooked earlier. Good careers and contacts are often found in unexpected places.

After

- Follow up with people you felt you connected with or recruiters who seemed promising. Send a short email reminding them who you are, mentioning something you discussed and thanking them for their time.
- Reflect on your conversations. If you have further questions or need more information, do some more research.
- Start a contact log. Include the contact's name, organization, information learned, referrals received, if you provided a resume, questions you still have and space for further notes.

Tip: At any event, representatives are taking note of good prospects. Especially at a job fair, recruiters may be screening for candidates. Treat each conversation like a mini job interview and confidently introduce yourself and your skills to the recruiters.

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