

Career Fairs might seem overwhelming, but they can actually be FUN. Employers are truly excited to meet (and hire!) OSU students. Career Fairs are a great opportunity for ALL students to meet employers, and learn about potential jobs/internships/careers. Here is a list of things you can do to make the fair a fun and successful event.

BEFORE THE FAIR

- ❖ **RESEARCH** the companies who will be attending the fair and the majors they're hiring for.
<http://oregonstate.edu/career/fair/>
- ❖ Develop **informed questions** to ask of each employer you're interested in. Questions such as "I'm interested in the management training program at Company XYZ; can you describe an ideal candidate for this program?" OR "Could you tell me more about your internship programs?" are much more effective than "So...what does your company do?"
- ❖ Create a **"game plan"**. Decide how much time you have to spend at the fair and prioritize your time accordingly.
- ❖ Create a competitive, **"get-noticed" resume**. Visit the Career Services Office to have your resume reviewed during drop-in hours. Monday through Thursday 1-4 p.m., 8 Kerr Administration Building. Don't forget to make copies!
- ❖ **Register** with Beaver Recruiting, the Career Services online job database. Many employers will be looking to interview students they meet at the Fairs, and you may **ONLY** sign up for interviews if you're registered with Beaver Recruiting. Come by Career Services to sign up.
- ❖ Prepare a **30 second "informercial"**. You have 30 seconds to make yourself stand out to an employer. Prepare a 30-second script that introduces you, states your knowledge of/ interest in the organization, and relates your background to the position(s) in which you are interested. Include your name, class, major, relevant experiences, skills/strengths, and opportunities you are seeking with the employer.
- ❖ Get a **good night's sleep** to prepare for the big day!

AFTER THE FAIR

- ❖ **FOLLOW UP WITH EMPLOYERS**. Write a thank you note, emphasizing a key point from your conversation at the Fair. Reiterate your interest in the company/position, and include your resume.
- ❖ **PRACTICE your interviewing skills**. Stop by Career Services to speak with a career counselor or schedule a mock interview and find out what you can do to prepare for a successful interview!

DURING THE FAIR

- ❖ **DRESS PROFESSIONALLY**. Career Fairs require the same attention to attire as an interview; in essence they *are* your first interview. If unsure what to wear, it's better to overdress than under dress; a dark suit is always appropriate. Wear comfortable shoes!
- ❖ **Leave your backpack** and coat home or hang them up once you get to the fair.
- ❖ **Sign in** at the Registration Table at the entrance.
- ❖ Have copies of your **resume, a pen and your planner** easily accessible. Employers may want to set up interviews!
- ❖ Have an **open mind**. Approach lesser-known employers to discover their potential for your professional development or "out of the box" divisions that may help you begin your career.
- ❖ **Be independent**. Approach employers on your own, even if you came to the fair with a friend.
- ❖ **Don't be afraid of the recruiter**. Approach him or her with confidence, remembering all the prep you've done! Employers come because they **WANT** to talk to you.
- ❖ Greet each employer with a **firm handshake** and a **positive attitude**. Maintain **eye contact**.
- ❖ **Be patient**. Don't interrupt the employer or jump into a conversation he/she is having with someone else. Wait your turn; you might even pick up some valuable information as you wait!
- ❖ **Put your resume into a recruiter's hands**; don't just drop it on the table. Take time to market yourself with your infomercial.
- ❖ **Be sincere**. Don't overstate your abilities, but **DO** let the recruiter know what you have to offer.
- ❖ **Don't monopolize** the recruiter's time. Market yourself, make a good impression, and let the next person do the same!
- ❖ **Close the deal!** Inquire about obtaining further information, and take a business card, what the next step is (company visit, setting up an interview, etc.).

CAREER FAIRS: THE 30-SECOND INFOMERCIAL

You have 30 seconds to make yourself stand out to an employer. Connect your background to the organization's needs by preparing a 30-second script that introduces you, states your knowledge of and interest in the organization, and relates your background to the position(s) in which you are interested.

THE ELEMENTS

Provide the following information during your introduction:

- Name
- Class (junior, senior, graduate, etc.)
- Major
- Opportunities you are seeking
- Relevant experience (work, internship, volunteer)
- Highlights of skills and strengths
- Knowledge of the company

Tailor your introduction to each employer based on research and knowledge of the company. Articulate how you'll fit with the company based upon your research. At a minimum, utilize the company website for research. Other resources include annual reports, press releases, and newspaper coverage.

PRACTICE TO PERFECTION

PRACTICE this introduction until you feel comfortable reciting it smoothly, conversationally, and without fillers such as "um", "like", and "you know". Your overall manner is also a critical component of a successful introduction. Incorporate positive nonverbal communications, such as eye contact, smiling, a firm handshake, and good posture. A mirror, a friend, or a career counselor are all good practice partners. Remember, this solid introduction will help you move on to the important next step – the interview!

SAMPLE CAREER FAIR INFOMERCIALS

Here are some sample introductions from fictional college seniors.

Hello. My name is Kathy Thompson and I am a senior economics major at Oregon State. I noticed on your website that you have openings for financial managers, and I am interested in a position in this capacity. Last summer, I had an internship with Johnson Financial and participated in a variety of company operations. The most interesting project I worked on was redesigning the company's service demonstration events for the Southern California region. This was invaluable training because it afforded me greater insight into the finance industry and allowed me to show my ability as a team player. Perhaps best of all, it confirmed my desire to become a financial manager for a top-10 firm, such as this one. I have been following your company's expansion into the greater Los Angeles area in the L.A. Times. I also read in your annual report that the company is considering establishing operations elsewhere in Southern California. Could you tell me more about this proposed expansion? Could you also tell me about your financial management training program?

My name is Bertha Sanchez and I have over 3 years experience in sales and marketing. For the past 2 ½ years I've been studying accounting at Oregon State University and I'm interested in working for a company where I can use my business and computer skills.

My name is Jake Hewson. I'm in chemical engineering and I'm interested in production-related work in the food and brewing industry. I have one summer of directly-related experience in quality control and have completed a major project on yeast culture enhancement. I would like to talk to you about how my background relates to work you do.

Adapted from jobweb.com's *Learn How to Perform a One-Minute Miracle*, by Kevin Gray, Associate Editor

http://www.jobweb.com/Resources/Library/Career_Fairs?Learn_How_to_Perform_192_01.htm