

Career Fair Tips: First Impressions, Lasting Impact!!



- * Career fairs are the best opportunity you can find to make connections face to face with recruiters who make hiring decisions.
- * To make the most of those connections, your first impressions need to make a memorable impact on the recruiter.
- * You want to stand out in positive ways when recruiters review all the people they met during the event.
- * Here are some important things to remember as you prepare for the event and any meeting you have during your job search process.

Career Fair Tip #1

Before the Fair

Do:

- * Research the companies just as you would for an interview.
- * Practice introducing yourself with family or friends.
- * Practice your handshake. Engage the full hand, palm to palm. Look the other person in the eye and smile.
- * Prepare a 30 second marketing pitch about yourself. Follow the four step plan:
 - Give your name
 - Mention the occupation you are looking for
 - State your experience, skills, and accomplishments
 - Offer your unique selling point

Don't:

- * **Wait until the last minute to prepare.** Maximize the brief time you have with each employer by being sure you know how your skills and interests match their needs.
- * **Be sluggish.** Each time you meet a recruiter, be at your best.
- * **Wear jeans, tennis shoes, or scrubs.** This is perhaps your first contact with a future employer.
- * **Carry a backpack, large purse, or bags.** Carry your information in a small briefcase or a professional-looking portfolio, giving you a place to file the business cards of recruiters that you meet.

Career Fair Tip #2

Dress for Success

- * A business suit in a conservative color (navy, gray, or black are preferred). Women may wear suits with either a skirt or pants.
- * Shoes should be conservative and polished.
- * Attempt to cover all tattoos and body piercings.
- * Keep jewelry to a minimum. A conservative watch is a good jewelry choice for a career fair.
- * Hair should be clean, styled and off your face. Short hair is preferable for men and facial hair should be groomed.
- * Be sure cell phones are not visible and turned off.



Career Fair Tip #3

Showtime

- * Arrive early, get a list of employers. Plan your strategy.
- * You only have a few minutes to wow each recruiter. Your conversation should be interesting, short, and memorable.
- * Make a good impression. Firm hand shake, be professional, let your personality shine, and think of your conversation as a mini interview.
- * End with a request. Ask for the recruiter's business card and how should you follow up and when. Take notes on what the recruiter says.
- * Network with everyone. You never know who may be a good contact for you.



Career Fair Tip #4

Communication Tips

- * Speak clearly and do not interrupt.
- * Ask open-ended questions that help you gather information (“What type of background and experience do you find to be most successful in your company?”)
- * Stay focused on the topics of the company, open jobs, and your potential fit.
- * Once you answer a question, give the employer time to reflect on what you said and to follow up with another question or statement.
- * Don't be hesitant to talk to an employer just because the booth is next to a recruiter with whom you've just spoken. This is expected at a career fair.
- * Professional recruiters expect you to get as much out of the fair as you can and by doing so, you need to meet with as many people as possible.



Career Fair Tip #5

The Power of Networking

- * Networking is an important skill for job-seekers to develop.
- * Because the vast majority of job openings are never advertised, job-seekers need to have a career network that can provide support, information, and job leads.
- * Chat with other attendees while you wait in line to meet with recruiters.
- * Other job seekers may know of opportunities in your field or have personal connections with someone who can help you find a job.



Career Fair Tip #6

Don't Forget to Follow-up

- * Following up at the end of the career fair is one of the most important ways you can expand your network and land a new job.
- * Within a week of the event, send a thank you email or note.
- * This will ensure that the employer remembers you and makes another good impression.
- * Sending a thank you email or note is a professional gesture that shows your interest and maintains an open line of communication.

