

How to Be Successful at a Job Fair



Job fairs provide job seekers with an opportunity to:

- Increase their exposure to the employer population.
- Network and make dozens of in-person contacts within just a few hours.
- Be seen in person: often it is better to be seen and have a chance to sell yourself in person rather than trying to sell yourself on paper through your resume.
- Gather information on the industry and occupations right from source.

What to do before you go:

- **Learn who will be attending.** Obtain a list of participating employers, if it is not published then go to the organizers of the event and request one.
- **Decide who you want to see first**, in case you don't have enough time to see everyone.
- **Do some preliminary research** on the employers you are interested in. Learn about their businesses and the kind of people they hire.
- **Prepare questions.** Employers may ask if you have any questions. Be sure to have at least two questions ready.
- **Get assistance from career service providers and attend workshops.** This will give you an advantage over those who do not and are not as well prepared.

What to do at the Job Fair:

- **Find a place to leave your coat** and other unnecessary items. You want to be comfortable when connecting with employers.
- **Turn off your cell phone.** If you worry about an emergency, set it on vibrate. **DO NOT** answer the phone when talking to employers: they will think that you are not interested, or that you do not know how to organize your priorities.
- **Bring** a small portfolio file or a folder with **several copies of your resume.**
- **Bring different versions of your resume** if different skills are required. Target your resume to the employers you want.
- **Dress professionally**--it is better to be over dressed than under dressed.
- **Introduce yourself:** say your full name, smile and shake the employer's hand firmly.
- **Prepare!** Your first 30 seconds with an employer are critical.
- **Know your qualifications and be able to sell yourself.** Tell the employer what you can do to add value to their company. You need to **plan out what you are going to say, and how to say it!**
- **Take informational brochures** from the table. It may offer new information about the company.
- **Thank everyone you talk to.**
- **Take notes as you go.** If you speak to many employers it is easy to get them mixed up. If they ask you to send additional information you want to be able to deliver and send it to the right party.
- **Request a business card from anyone you speak to**, it is great for follow up and keep in touch with contacts.

After the Job Fair:

- **Self-assess how you did.** Could you have been better prepared? Do you need more help on your presentation skills? If so, find a career service provider to learn how to do better next time.
- If an employer took a lot of time providing you with information on their industry or they gave you career guidance, **request a business card and send a short thank you note.**

Adapted from http://employment.alberta.ca/apps/cajf/docs/RRM-CE_jobfairsuccess.pdf

Back to the Job Search Skills Section: <http://www.jcfswinnipeg.org/JobInterviewingTipsInformation.html>