Job Fairs

Job fairs are a great opportunity to get in front of employers. With proper planning and execution a day spent at a job fair can lead to employment.

The first thing to understand about job fairs is that they are not all the same. Some job fairs may represent a specific industry such as healthcare or business administration. Other job fairs may actually be a single employer looking to support a surge in hiring. It is important to take a few minutes to research job fair advertisements to ensure the job fair is relevant to your career preferences and training. Once you determined a job fair is right for you then you must prepare for the event. The next section will give you the tools to make your next job fair a success.

1. **Pick your top ten employers.** Time is limited and some job fairs are very large events so you want to target your efforts to no more than ten employers

2. **Do your research.** Once you pick the top ten employers use the Company Intelligence Worksheet to learn as much about your target employers as you can.

3. **Adjust your resume.** A resume for job fairs should be more broad than specific. Highlight your soft skills and technical skills as they apply generally to your target companies. Remember that your resumes should be scanable and on high quality paper. Bring two resumes for each employer you plan to meet.

4. **Be prepared to fill out applications.** Some employers cannot accept a resume for legal reasons and company policy, but in many cases interested employers will have you fill out an application. For applications have detailed information on your last ten years of work history with names and contact information of past supervisors.

5. **Plan your day and stick to the plan.** Most job fairs will post a directory and location of employer booths. Grab a floor map and mark the location of your target employers. Don’t get distracted by speaking with employers you are not interested in working for.

6. **Make sure you are organized at the job fair.** Bring a packet with your resumes, a small note pad and two pens. Remember to also have your complete work history including supervisor names and contact information for the last ten years in case you have to fill out an application. Also have a list of three personal and three professional references per employer.

7. **Hone your soft skills.** Since you are meeting face to face with potential employers, your soft skills will be on full display and closely judged. Make sure you dress appropriately, listen actively and communicate effectively.

8. **Make the little things count.** Smile, give a firm handshake and have relevant questions ready to demonstrate you researched the company. Make sure you have your resume in your hand as you approach your target employer’s booth rather than nervously fumbling for it. Politely ask for business cards and focus on the moment. Have fun!

9. **Follow Up.** You should follow up with a brief email thanking each person you met within 24 hours after the job fair.

When preparing for your next job fair try using the using the Job Fair Prep Checklist.
Job Fair Prep Checklist

Job Fair Location Address:

Job Fair Date:

Start time:

Target Employers:

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- [ ] One copy of **Company Intelligence Worksheet** for each employer
- [ ] Two copies of resumes per employer
- [ ] Directory and floor map of job fair with target employers clearly marked
- [ ] Small note pad and two pens
- [ ] Copy of last ten years employment history with names/contact info of past supervisors
- [ ] Two copies listing 3 personal and 3 professional references per employer