

MAKE THE MOST OF JOB FAIRS

To get the most from a fair, you will need to be well prepared. The tip sheet below (with information from the Employment Guide available in ccSpringboard) helps ensure that you're ready to put your best foot forward.

BEFORE THE FAIR:

- Determine your goals and identify which skills you want to market. Think about how your skills, knowledge, and experience fit the organizations' needs. You can track this information in My Plan
- Find out which companies and organizations will be represented, and research them to determine if they are of interest to you
- Prepare copies of your resume (or resumes if you have several versions), tailored to a variety of career choices. Be sure to review the tips in the Employment Guide to polish your resume
- Create a calling card or networking card that includes your contact information and a skills summary
- Consider taking supporting documents such as reference letters, your professional portfolio (including examples of your work and accomplishments), copies of your transcript, and completed job applications. You can build up your library of documents in My Files
- Compose intelligent, well-informed questions that you want to ask employers. It may be helpful to review the "Questions You Can Ask" section of the Employment Guide
- Practice your handshake and your 30-to-60 second self-introduction
- Plan what you will wear; dress professionally, as you would for a job interview

DURING THE FAIR:

- Pick up a floor map, and plan which companies you want to visit. You may want to speak to representatives from companies you are really interested in after you have practiced and warmed up with some other companies first
- You should take copies of your resume to leave with employers at their request, but, ideally, you want to send (the next day) a letter or resume that reflects the information you gained from your discussion with the employer. If you do leave a resume on the day of the fair, follow up the next day with a letter
- Do not arrive during the last half hour of the event because employers may be tired after a long day or need to leave early
- Do not take an employer's promotional materials without first talking to the company representative and then being invited to do so
- Visit booths by yourself. You will appear to be more confident and be better able to focus and market yourself if you are on your own
- Do not directly ask for a job. Present your self-introduction and ask questions of the company representative
- Be mindful of the time you take with each employer. Do not spend more than ten minutes with an employer unless the representative invites you to continue the conversation. Other people will want to speak with the employer, so be careful not to monopolize an employer's time
- Collect the names of appropriate people to follow up with after the fair
- Be organized: take a folder to collect handouts, a calendar in case an employer wants to schedule an interview, and a pen and paper or electronic organizer to record notes and required follow-up