

CAREER FAIR SUCCESS TIPS

Career fairs provide an excellent opportunity to explore career paths and to make face to face contact with many employers. At some fairs you may also have the opportunity to interview for open positions. The Career Center sponsors a number of career fairs throughout the year and encourages you to attend those that meet your career goals.

Before the Career Fair

- Meet with Career Center staff to discuss your strategy and preparation for the fair.
- Check the Career Center's Calendar of Events at www.monroecc.edu/go/careercenter for a list of participating organizations.
- Research the employers that interest you by visiting their web sites.
- Create a prioritized list of employers you would like to meet with at the career fair.
- Prepare your own 45 second "infomercial" to introduce yourself. Include your name, degree(s), your anticipated graduation date, type(s) of position(s) you are seeking, what field you would like to be employed i.e., marketing, finance, health care, and why you chose their company (this is where the research comes in).
- Review your strengths, skills, goals and interests and consider how they relate to the positions available and how an employer will benefit from them.
- If you will be interviewing at the fair, work on your interviewing skills by meeting with a Career Counselor to conduct a mock interview.
- Develop a professional resume and bring several copies (at least 15-20). If you need assistance, submit your resume for critique/review in the Career Center. Allow 48 hours for feedback. Once you have made corrections you may want to make an appointment with our staff to further discuss your resume.
- Dress appropriately in professional business attire.

During the Career Fair

- Obtain a floor plan and map out where your target companies are located.
- Avoid interrupting the recruiters or your fellow job seekers.
- It is your responsibility to approach employers and initiate a conversation.
- Be assertive. Make eye contact immediately when introducing yourself.
- Be confident and shake hands firmly. SMILE! And be polite! Use good manners!
- Provide employers with a copy of your resume and ask questions.
Sample questions you may want to ask representatives:
 - What type of entry level positions exist within your company?
 - What qualities are you looking for in prospective employees?
 - What do you feel are the future trends in this industry?
 - Why did you choose this company? How long have you been with them?
- Collect company information for further research.
- Obtain a business card from everyone you speak with so that you can follow up.

After the Career Fair

- Follow up is crucial. You may want to follow up within a week to determine if the employer has received your application/resume, inquire about the status of the position and to express your continued interest.
 - Write thank you notes to representatives from companies that are of particular interest to you. This will bring additional attention to your name and affirm your interest in working in their organization.
 - Send an additional resume with your thank you letter.
 - Keep records of your contacts with employers including dates of your letters, emails or telephone calls and make copies of all the information you send.
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Employer Expectations of Students at Job Fairs

The following are the results from a survey done by the National Association of Colleges and Employers on 2000.

- According to employers, the following are the biggest things to avoid during a Career Fair (in order of importance):
 - 1.) Lacking focus and not knowing what type of position to look for. Admitting “I’ll take anything” or answering “I don’t know” when asked about interests.
 - 2.) Not dressing neatly or professionally.
 - 3.) Not bringing resumes.
 - 4.) Lacking knowledge of a company and/or confusing the company for someone else.
 - 5.) Lacking enthusiasm or interest in the company or job opportunities.
 - 6.) Asking about salary.
 - 7.) Not asking any questions, asking inappropriate questions, and having a poor or unprofessional attitude.
- Other student mistakes cited by employers include:
 - 1.) Grabbing free stuff.
 - 2.) Not making eye contact.
 - 3.) Lacking communication skills.
 - 4.) Not being willing to relocate.
 - 5.) Not bringing anything to write on.
 - 6.) Giving a weak handshake.
 - 7.) Not taking the time to fill out the job application when asked.
- Top 3 things employers typically discuss at Job Fairs:
 - 1.) Company benefits.
 - 2.) Information on current job openings.
 - 3.) General company information.