

PREPARING FOR A CAREER FAIR

Reasons to Attend

Regardless of your major, year in college, or future goals, there are many benefits to attending a career fair. **You can:**

- + Investigate positions and career fields you could pursue with your major and background
- + Meet representatives from organizations for whom you are interested in working
- + Get more information about specific companies and organizations
- + Gain valuable interview experience
- + Increase your chances of interviewing with an employer
- + Receive sound job search advice from seasoned company recruiters
- + Develop your network of contacts

Talk to anyone you know who works at the organization/company or check out the Alumni Directory or LinkedIn to see if there are any alums working for the company you could speak with to learn more.

Sample questions you may ask

Do your homework before you attend the fair and find answers to as many of these questions as possible—it shows the employer you are serious about your candidacy.

Internships

- + What experiences might I have as an intern in your organization?
- + Do you offer both paid internships and internships for academic credit?
- + Do many of your interns become full-time employees after their internship?
- + What is your favorite part about working for [name of organization]?

Jobs

- + What skills do you look for in potential candidates?
- + What type of previous work experiences do you look for in candidates?
- + What's the best way to apply to your organization, and how long does the process usually take?
- + Will you be on campus to interview?

Sample questions they may ask you

- + When are you available to begin working?
- + Are you interested in full-time or internship opportunities?
- + What kind of position are you looking for?
- + Which geographic areas are you interested in?
- + Why did you stop at our table today?
- + May I have a copy of your resume?



WITHIN TWO WEEKS OF THE FAIR, follow up with the representatives you spoke to, unless you have discussed an alternative arrangement. Employers may leave a fair with hundreds of resumes, and they report that less than 5 percent of students follow up after a fair. This simple step can give you a big advantage.

At the fair

Don't ask what positions the employers have; tell them what you're seeking. The best way to do this is with a prepared "pitch" or elevator speech. Your pitch is a 10- to 15-second introduction that includes:

- + Who you are (your major, your interests)
- + What you offer (skills, experience)
- + What you're looking for (a good opportunity to show tailored interest in the company)
- + A good follow-up question

Example: Hi, I'm Bob Marks. I'm a junior at IU majoring in apparel merchandising. I did an internship last summer with a designer in New York and that really piqued my interest in clothes designed for customers with disabilities. I'm hoping to complete another internship in a related area this summer. I know your company recently developed a line of activewear for customers with disabilities. How did this innovative line come about?

Try writing your own pitch below:

Who you are (your major, your interests)

What you're looking for (a good opportunity to show tailored interest in the company)

What you offer (skills, experience)

A good follow-up question

