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# CAREER FAIR FUNDAMENTALS

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## Optimize Your Career or Job Fair Experience

### Why you go

- To make a human connection with a company so that you can make a good impression and set yourself up for 'next steps'. This could be an information or actual job interview
- To learn about a company's hiring process and their near and long-term hiring needs
- It is highly unlikely that you will get a job offer at a Career Fair. Making great connections is the prize

### Before you go – polish your personal brand

- Fine-tune your Resume and make sure that it is congruent with the jobs and companies that you are interested
  - ♦ You can review **Resume Fundamentals** and **Sample Resumes** to help you develop a great resume
- Check your LinkedIn Profile and make sure that it is in sync with your Resume
- Make sure that your profile photo looks professional and that your profile is a great representation of you

### Before you go – do your due diligence

- Find out what companies are attending and spend time researching the ones that you are most interested in
- Do some quick research on additional companies that you find interesting
- Map a plan of who you MUST see. Some lines at employer's tables are long and you should make sure that you give yourself enough time to see your top employers
- Map a secondary plan of companies that would be 'nice to see'; visit these employer tables after you see your top targets
- Keep an open mind about employers that you have not done research on

### How to research your target employers

- Check out their website and pay particular attention to their 'About Us' and 'Media' or 'Press Releases' sections
  - Press releases give you recent company news and tell you what they are proud of. There is usually a paragraph about the company at the end of the press release that gives a great summary of the company
  - If you really want to dig deep, review investor information and the 'Products and Services' section
- Check out [www.glassdoor.com](http://www.glassdoor.com) for company reviews, salary information, and interview information. Look for trends in the company reviews and be aware that they can sometimes be out of balance. Negative people can outweigh positive people on any type of review
- You can use Google to look at competitors and other company information

### 3X3 Worksheet – Organize Your Research

- Use the worksheet to collect pertinent information about your target companies. Note that in the 'Requirements' section, you should add the three requirements or qualifications that are the most daunting
- Bring the 3+3 with you to the Career Fair – you can use it for a refresher and for additional notes

## TARGET CAREER/COMPANY WORKSHEET

COMPANY	POSITION TITLE	POSITION DESCRIPTION HIGHLIGHTS AND REQUIREMENTS	REASONS I WANT TO WORK AT THIS COMPANY 'COMPANY FOCUSED'	REASONS WHY I'M A GREAT CANDIDATE FOR THE POSITION 'YOU FOCUSED'
		1)	1)	1)
		2)		
		3)		
FOCUS			2)	2)
		1)		
		2)		
		3)	3)	3)
		1)	1)	1)
		2)		
		3)		
FOCUS			2)	2)
		1)		
		2)		
		3)	3)	3)

### Look sharp

- Dress up as if you were going to an interview
  - Men should wear a suit or slacks and a business shirt; ties are appropriate. Your shoes should be polished and you should not wear athletic shoes
  - Women should wear a business dress, suit, or professional slacks and a blouse. Heels should not be over 3" and you should not wear sandals. Skirts no higher than just above the knee and nothing should be too tight or loc-cut
- Everyone should have clean and pressed clothing; clean and styled hair; and have great personal hygiene – nails, body, teeth and breath. Avoid excessive jewelry, cologne, or makeup; cover tattoos and piercings as much as possible
- Have appropriate business accessories and if possible, avoid bringing your backpack
- Bring crisp copies of your resume and bring them in a folder so they stay 'crisp'

### Your introduction and pitch

- Develop and practice a brief introduction – brief, speak slowly, breathe
  - "My name is XXXX and I'm a Master of Science, Finance grad student (at CU Denver Business School, if you are not actually at a CU Denver Career Fair). I'm very interested in XXXXX because of your XX years of experience in the investment management industry. I think it's great that you were rated as one of the best places to work in 2014" (use your research to customize your introduction)
  - "My name is XXXX and I'm a Master of Science, Finance student. I'm interested in portfolio management. XXXXX is one of my target companies."
- Craft a 30 second to one minute summary of you. Sum up your relevant academic or professional experience and you may want to include a bit of leadership and community service activities. Make it concise and interesting
- Practice your intro and summary before you go to the Career Fair. Use the intro when you meet people and the summary when they ask you for more information. Be comfortable with your own story

### Listen and respond

- Listen to what is being said to the people who are before you in line and get a preview of what questions you might be asked. Listen to their answers and improve yours. Do not say the exact thing that the person ahead of you said
  - You can listen-in at some booths before you choose to engage
- If they ask you what kind of positions you are interested in – have an answer. Make sure your response fits what their company does. If you are not sure, say you would like a position in 'finance' or 'marketing'. Do not say 'I don't know'

## **Career Fair interviews**

- Some employers interview at Career Fairs. It is not typical, but could happen
- Be prepared to answer (at a minimum)
  - Tell me about yourself. (this is where the summary comes in)
  - What do you know about our company? OR Why are you interested in our company?
  - Why are you interested in the XXXXX position?
  - Describe one of your key strengths.
  - Tell me about a weakness.

## **Be considerate**

- Understand your time constraints. If there is a line of people behind you when talking to an employer, be brief

## **Follow-up**

- Ask for business cards and follow up with the people that you talked to. The follow-up could be to say “thank you for attending our Career Fair. I enjoyed our conversation.” Enclose a copy of your resume (if appropriate)
- If you had a great conversation with them, ask if you can invite them to connect on LinkedIn. Make sure your invitation is customized and mentions the Career Fair
- Write notes on the back of their card so you can remember the conversation
- If they ask you to apply on-line – do it promptly. Be meticulous. Applications don’t usually have Spell Check