Career Fair Preparation

How to make the most of your career fair experience
Why go to a Career Fair?

• Make contacts and build your network
• Learn about professional opportunities in your field
• Practice interview skills and build confidence
• Learn about the world of work
Know Yourself

- Make sure that you have a career objective or target job.
- Do not plan to ask employers and recruiters “what jobs do you have for me?”
- If you do not have a career objective, come talk to a career counselor who can help you identify the appropriate next step in your career.
Prepare an Excellent Résumé

• Remember a résumé is a marketing tool that tells the employer *why you are qualified* to do the job you are applying for

• Check and re-check for spelling and grammatical errors
For Additional résumé assistance:

• **See our website:**
  www.roosevelt.edu/career/

• Make an appointment to see a career counselor
Prepare an “Elevator Speech”

What is an elevator speech?

• It is a brief introduction of who you are, what you do, and why the employer should be interested to learn more about you

• Remember it should be brief—others are waiting to speak with the employers

• Practice, practice, practice!
Practice an Elevator Speech

• Name
• Major and class
• Opportunities that you are seeking
• Relevant experience, skills and strengths
• Question for employer based on research
Know the Career Fair

- Check for a list of employers that are planning to attend the fair
- Research these organizations to know what they do and if they are an appropriate match for you
- Identify the top organizations that you would like to connect with while at the fair
Be Prepared

• Have plenty or résumés that are printed out on good quality white or cream paper

• Bring a small folder or briefcase to carry your résumés and any materials that you collect
What else to bring?

• Check with faculty or colleagues if there are other important documents to bring

• However, do not carry so much that you are disorganized or overloaded

• It is not a bad strategy to promise to send an employer something, then you need to follow up
Dress professionally

- Dress as you would for a job interview
- A suit, slacks or skirt and a button-down shirt
- Limit jewelry, make up, and perfume or cologne
- Think professional, if you have questions, ask for advice!
Plan your Career Fair Strategy

• Come as early as possible to have maximum time to connect while employers are fresh
• Obtain a floor plan, or take a quick walk around the room to see who is there and plan your approach to the event
When you arrive

- Bring your energy and a positive attitude
- Leave your coat and bulky bags on the side
Make Each Interaction Count

• Present with a strong handshake, a bright smile and your elevator speech

• Ask an engaging and appropriate question about the organization or the positions that they are offering
What is an engaging question?

- Show that you have done your homework and researched the company
- Think about something thoughtful that you would like to know that will demonstrate your knowledge of the field and organization
What is an appropriate question?

- Do not focus on the giveaways
- Do not make small talk, others are waiting to speak to employers
- Do not ask about salary
Get Contact Information

• Best-get a business card and make notes from your conversation

• Next best-get a brochure and note employer representative’s name and position and other conversation highlights

• Third choice-make notes on a pad of name, title and conversation highlights
Follow-up

• Before you finish your conversation, find out what the next steps are

• Note the next steps on your business card, brochure, or note pad
Follow-up, part II

- Refer to notes for follow-up actions:
  - Complete an on-line application, if requested
  - If there is no specific recommendation, send a thank you note and suggest next steps, i.e. informational interview

- FOLLOW UP
Finally...

- Do not be discouraged if you do not leave the Career Fair with a job
- Use the Career Fair as an opportunity to:
  - Build your network
  - Learn about organizations and positions
  - Practice your networking and interviewing skills
Follow-up III

• Did I mention that you need to follow up with employers that you met at the career fair??!!
Questions?

• Contact Office of Career Service:
  – [www.roosevelt.edu/career](http://www.roosevelt.edu/career)
  – Chicago AUD 470
    312-341-3560
  – Schaumburg 125
    847-619-7921