

how **2** guide: Job Fair Success

Attending a job fair gives you something a job board or website can't – personal interaction with a recruiter. The reality, however, is that recruiters may see hundreds of applicants over the course of the event. Therefore, your goal is to make a good impression on the recruiter. Here are some tips on how to get the most out of job fairs.

Learn the Names of Employers Attending

If possible, obtain a list of the participating employers. Visit their websites, do some basic research on the companies (major lines of business and main products/services) and see what jobs are posted on their sites (if any.) As you prepare for the fair, make a list of the employers you want to talk with first.

Do Not Necessarily Pre-Qualify Companies Just Because They are not in your Field

For example, even though you are a Marketing major, you should consider speaking to the recruiters from the hotels, since they may have a marketing department. Likewise, accounting majors may consider inquiring about the opportunities with a hospital.

Know What You are Going to Say to Each Employer

- At a busy job fair, you may have only about 15-20 seconds to present yourself to each employer, so think carefully about what you want to cover and how best to say it. Your introduction may sound something like this: "Good afternoon. My name is John Smythe and I am a Finance major graduating this Spring. I visited your website when I saw that your company was attending the fair, and I'm very interested in learning more about the types of opportunities you are recruiting for."
- Despite the name "job Fair," you are not trying to get a job at the event. You are trying to get an interview. Companies don't hire "on the spot." Try to build rapport with the recruiter by expressing genuine interest in the company. Describe your qualifications and see if they match the requirements of the positions they are hiring.
- Do not ask any questions about salary. It is too early in the process. Once you are offered the job, you can then try to negotiate the salary. It is impractical, and often unprofessional, to do it at the fair.
- After speaking with the recruiter, get his/her business card and ask if you can send your resume directly to them, since hopefully you have made a good impression. If they direct you to an online application process, ask them if there is anything you can do to stand out or for other advice for getting a "foot in the door."

Dress Professionally

Even if recruiters appear in casual attire, they will expect you to be in professional business attire. If unsure what constitutes "professional business" attire, consult the resources on the FGCU Career Services website.

Follow-Up

The reality is that fewer recruiters are accepting paper resumes at job fairs. They are increasingly directing job seekers to online application processes. So, the real work may actually begin *after* the job fair. If you writing a cover letter, mention in it that you met "Sally Jones, the recruiter from your company, at the FGCU job fair, and she indicated I may be a good fit for the Account Executive position."

If you have any questions about how to prepare for a job fair or would like your resume reviewed, schedule an appointment to meet with a Career Advisor by using the contact information at the top of the page. (To access other helpful job search guides used by FGCU Career Services, go to: <http://studentservices.fgcu.edu/Careers/handouts.asp>)