



UNIVERSITY CAREER CENTER

TEXAS TECH
Office of the Provost
Academic Innovation
& Student Success

How to Navigate a Job Fair

By attending a career fair or networking event, you can make connections with employers and recruiters to discuss the opportunities within their organizations in real-time. It is not often that recruiters gather for several hours in a purposeful effort to meet you and other job seekers. For this reason, it's important to be as prepared as possible when connecting with employers at a job fair. This is the first impression the recruiter will have of you; follow these steps to maximize your chances of turning a chat into an interview!

BEFORE: PREPARE BEFORE THE FAIR

- ❖ **Prepare your resume.** You may have the opportunity to develop a profile in the virtual career fair platform. Make sure that your resume is accurate and error-free. Consider setting up an appointment with a UCC counselor to make sure your documents accurately and professionally present your experiences.
- ❖ **Identify the companies** you're interested in speaking with. Many platforms will allow job seekers to see the list of companies registered prior to the event. You may also be able to see what jobs the company is recruiting for, information about the company, and what times they anticipate having recruiters available to chat. Organize this information in a way that makes sense for you.
- ❖ **Create your 30-second elevator pitch.** The elevator pitch is a concise presentation of career goals, generally delivered in approximately 30 seconds. Focus on skills, knowledge, and experience you can bring to the employer.
- ❖ **Plan to dress appropriately.** Your outfit is your first impression visually to the employer. If the career fair has a webpage, review it to see what dress is recommended for the event. If you are unsure, err on the side of caution and overdress.

DURING: PRESENT YOURSELF CONFIDENTLY & CONNECT WITH RECRUITERS

- ❖ **Treat the conversation as an informal interview.** Be prepared to introduce yourself with your "elevator pitch", demonstrate how you can contribute to the company, and talk about your strengths and weaknesses.
- ❖ **Pay attention to nonverbals.** Focus on appearing relaxed and confident. Maintain eye contact during the conversation and be sure to smile throughout the conversation.
- ❖ **Don't be afraid to ask questions.** Ask informed questions based on your prior research and preparation. If the company posted that they are looking for a project manager, asking "What positions are you recruiting for?" shows that you didn't do your research. Instead, ask "What are you looking for in a project manager?" to show that you prepared ahead of time.
- ❖ **Get their contact information and discuss what happens after the fair.** Before the conversation ends, ask about next steps and the best way to follow-up after the virtual fair.

AFTER: FOLLOW UP

- ❖ **Take notes and follow-up.** After the conversation, write a few notes to remember the recruiter, interview questions, and other details. This information can be helpful for writing thank you notes and for any type of second interview or follow up you might have with the company.
- ❖ **Write thank you notes!** The best way to connect with the recruiter may be through email, so send a well-written thank you note that emphasizes how you match the needs of the organization. Keep the email short – 3 or 4 sentences only.