

Students: How to Work a Career Fair

Heavy employer recruiting is done in the fall through career fairs. Do you remember seeing that student (or being that student) who wanders around a career fair not knowing who to talk to or what to say? Chances are, employer recruiters remember that student as well – and not in a positive way. Recruiters look favorably on candidates who show up to career fairs prepared. But what does that mean exactly? Here are some tips to help guide you:

BEFORE career fairs, you should:

- familiarize yourself with industry/market trends;
- stay up-to-date on current events in your areas of interest;
- pre-register for the career fair;
- research participating employers and their internship/job opportunities;
- identify employers you plan to speak with and the positions for which you plan to apply;
- write résumés (creating tailored résumés for different organizations will set you apart);
- create your career portfolio;
- rehearse your elevator speech;
- prepare answers to typical interview questions; and
- develop questions for specific organizations and opportunities.

DURING career fairs, you should:

- arrive early;
- dress professionally;
- bring your résumé, portfolio and a pen;
- approach organizations you are interested in;
- be aware of your posture and body language;
- be approachable – SMILE;
- offer a firm, confident handshake to recruiters;
- execute your elevator speech;
- ask the questions you prepared; and
- obtain contact information from recruiters.

FOLLOWING career fairs, you should:

- organize the information you collected (it is a good idea to note where you met certain individuals and what you talked about);
- write thank you notes to people with whom you interacted;
- apply for positions that interest you; and
- follow-up with employers about applications you submit.

Remember, making a positive impression greatly influences your internship and career search. When recruiters sift through résumés and decide who they plan to interview, you are more likely to stand out if they remember who you are and the interest you showed in their particular organization.

For more information please contact careercenter@indianatech.edu

(2010). *Students: How to Work a Career Fair*. Retrieved September 2, 2010, from INTERNnetwork Web site: <http://image.exct.net/lib/feed11787c670d/d/1/careerfair.html>

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