



# career guide

## making the job fair work for you

ASU Career Services offers a comprehensive on-line Career Guide designed to help you evaluate career options, learn about internships and launch your career. The Career Guide includes detailed information about cover letters and resumes, interviewing, business etiquette, portfolios, graduate school admission processes, effective job and internship search strategies and more. Visit the Career Guide at [asu.edu/careerguide](http://asu.edu/careerguide).

Anticipating the great number of employers at a job fair does not have to be intimidating. You can be confident when you follow a simple strategy: **prepare for the career fair, go to the fair and communicate fully while you are there, and follow up after you attend.** These three easy steps will help make the job fair work for you.

### prepare for the fair...

#### **Craft a professional-looking resume that sells your strengths, experience, and accomplishments.**

When you allow plenty of time for editing and feedback, you can develop a solid resume that allows you flexibility when mingling with recruiters at a job fair. Have a general resume to have on hand at the fair and create different versions targeted at a specific industry or specific jobs that interest you.

#### **Develop a sustainable strategy for meeting recruiters.**

You probably will not have time to speak with all the employers at a career fair but you can narrow your focus to those employers who most interest you. Consider the list of employers attending the fair and rank them in order of importance to you. ASU Career Services maintains an active list of organizations that attend each job fair. Find it online, through Sun Devil CareerLink.

Keep the different versions of your resume well organized and make sure you give the right resume to the right organization!

**Practice, practice, practice.** You have less than one minute to make that first impression on the recruiters who want to know more about you.

**What will you say to them?** Compose and practice a brief personal introduction. Focus on the details: your name, major, and graduating year. Practice introducing yourself to people who already know you and keep it short, thirty seconds should be your goal.

**How will you appear?** Dress professionally by wearing a suit to feel confident and prepared talking with employers. Let the recruiter see your attention to detail in how you prepare for the job fair: hair neat and well groomed, clean nails and teeth, shoes shined and suit pressed.

**What materials will you give the recruiters?** Have at least one resume tailored for each organization that interests you plus another five, more general resumes to give those employers who catch your attention during the job fair. Print your resumes on bright 20 lb. weight, white paper with no texture. Keep it simple, clean and unfolded.

Pay careful attention and capture specific details in the notes about your conversations with each the recruiters.

### ...go to the fair...

#### **Yes, they are watching you.**

The moment you enter the fair, recruiters are watching you. They see how you dress, watch your behavior and evaluate how you interact with your friends and other recruiters. Take a mindful stroll around the fair to identify the locations of your selected employers and get a feel for the event. Select one of your lower-choice employers so you can develop a level of comfort speaking with them before moving on to your top selections.

**No, they don't bite.** Recruiters are friendly and they are at the job fair to meet you. Greet them with a firm handshake, a smile and direct eye contact, and a calm disposition. This is where all your practice pays off and you get to impress the recruiter with your resume, knowledge of their organization and genuine enthusiasm for the opportunities they offer.

**Take notes after each conversation.** Collect business cards from everyone you speak with and use the reverse to make notes about your conversations. Jot down key points about the conversation (including anything you may have said you would do), maybe something unique about the interviewer, and whether or not they said it was okay to follow up with an e-mail or phone call.

### ...follow up after the fair.

**Show your gratitude.** Within 24 hours of the job fair, send a thank-you email or note to every recruiter you spoke with while you were there. While it is a simple task, few people do it and that is one reason it could really make all the difference in your job search.

Always send thank you notes to the recruiters you met at the career fair. These short notes remind them of you and your meeting. The only time to ignore this advice is if an employer asked you specifically not to make follow up contact.

**Reflect on your career fair experience.** Career success involves working for an organization that shares your values and provides an enjoyable environment. Think about your connection with each recruiter. Can you see yourself working alongside them? What impression did they give about the kind of people who fit their workplace culture?

**Be realistic.** Do not expect to get an immediate job offer based on relatively short and public discussions with recruiters. Remember, the career fair experience is only one of many along your life-long career path.