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## Career Fair Strategies

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Career Fairs can be helpful to first year students, sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Explore your options by discussing your interests with the representatives in attendance.

### **Before the Career Fairs**

- Research the employers and graduate schools that might be of interest to you.
- Develop a strong resume and bring several copies for distribution.
- Read employer literature in the Career Library, online at the Vault Career Library, and on the web at [www.denison.edu/career](http://www.denison.edu/career)
- Be prepared to ask questions of the representatives. Practice out loud; it helps.
- *Develop a 15 – 30 second introduction or commercial about yourself where you:*
- Identify specific experiences where you have demonstrated your strengths.
- Provide specific examples of your skills: this will make you a stronger candidate.
- Know why you want to work for their company. If you don't know, they won't know either.

### **During the Career Fairs**

- Make a good first impression.
- Make eye contact immediately when introducing yourself.
- Give a firm handshake.
- Remember the representative's name; if not, casually refer to their nametag.
- Smile and be polite - enthusiasm is an important quality.
- Dress professionally; wear a suit if possible.
- Body language often can speak louder than the spoken word.
- Do not fidget or play with your hair.
- Do not rock from side to side.
- Do not look around when talking or being spoken to.
- Do not chew gum.
- Communication is critical! Listen carefully to what the representative has to say!
- Avoid using filler words such as, "um," "like," "ya know."
- Show confidence in your voice. The room will be noisy, and if they can't hear you they won't remember you.
- Be articulate and sell yourself.
- Bring several copies of your resume to distribute to the representatives.
- Ask for a business card or write down the representative's name. It's also okay to ask about the hiring process.
- Explore all your options!
- Speak with employers and graduate schools that you had not considered before.
- Take the initiative and engage in meaningful conversations with representatives.
- Representatives are here to provide information about their companies and career fields.
- Representatives are excellent resources in your career search and decision-making process.

## **After the Career Fairs**

- Mail a thank you letter; it will bring attention to your name.
- You can send an additional resume with your thank you letter; again, point out your strengths.
- You can also call to make sure that your application is complete.
- When calling, be prepared and know/practice what you are going to say beforehand.

## **Questions to Ask Employers**

- 1) How many employees does your company have?
- 2) What goals does your company have for the present and beyond?
- 3) What kinds of positions exist within your company for new college graduates?
- 4) How many employees are in my area of interest (which is...)?
- 5) Does your company hire on a continual basis or just at certain times of the year?
- 6) Can you describe the timeline of the hiring process?
- 7) What does your company consider the 5 most important qualities in an employee?
- 8) Are graduate degrees important? If so, in what areas?
- 9) What courses do you suggest in order to be a successful candidate?
- 10) Is there a GPA cut-off in the recruiting process?
- 11) What personality traits are important for success in your company?
- 12) As a new employee, what can I expect to be doing 2, 5, 10 years from now?
- 13) What made you choose this company?
- 14) How long have you been with the company?
- 15) What has your company accomplished of which you are especially proud?
- 16) For how many years does the average employee stay with the company?
- 17) What percent of applicants are eventually hired?
- 18) What is the retention rate in the company?
- 19) Do you expect your employees to relocate?

## **Questions to Ask Graduate & Professional School Representatives**

What special features does your program have that distinguishes it from similar programs?

Would you explain the application process to me?

How large is your program? How many faculty members are in the department?

What is the length of your degree program for full-time students?

Is it possible to attend the program part-time? How long would it take to complete the program?

How many applicants did you have for this year's entering class? What percent were accepted?

What are the pre-requisites for admission? What elective courses do you recommend?

What is the median GPA of entering students? Is there a GPA requirement for admission?

Do you require a graduate admission test? (GRE, GMAT, LSAT, MCAT)

What is the median score for this entering class?

What do you think about deferring enrollment for a year or two?

If I work prior to applying for graduate school, what experiences to you value the most?

How do students finance their graduate education? What assistantships, fellowships, or research positions are available?

How can I apply for those positions?

What kind of career assistance does your program provide?

\*Do not read directly from this list of questions at the Career Fairs. Adapted from: Union College Career Center