

# Getting the Most from a Career Fair

**Note: Some employers may not accept hard copies of resumes and ask you to apply online. Companies with government contracts are required to maintain and report statistical data on applicants. Their online databases compile the required statistics to ensure compliance with equal opportunity employment laws.**



## Review the List of Employers Prior to Attending the Event

- Know what you have to offer the employer; identify your skills. How can you make money for the employer?
- Have an effective resume to present that highlights what you can do for the employer.
- Print resumes on quality paper.
- Dress in conservative business attire.
- Plan to attend the career fair early.

## Research the Company

Where can you conduct research?

- The Internet
- Walsh College Career Services
- Walsh College Library
- Local Library-Business Reference Section
- Crain's Detroit Business
- Wall Street Journal

## Research the Companies You are Interested In

You will have limited time with an employer. It is very important to research companies. Know the products, services, history, clients, locations, size, competitors, and mission statement. This information will help you understand the organization and its culture. You may uncover information that will help you sell yourself and identify why you are a good match for the company. When talking to recruiters you can let them know by your statements and/or questions that you were interested in them and did research to learn about the company. You can call the company and request a copy of their annual report.

- Search web sites for information on open positions and review job descriptions. This should give you a good idea of what skills and qualifications the company looks for in their applicants. This information will help you prepare your introduction at the career fair. For an Internet guide that can help you review job requirements, contact the career services office.
- Be specific about the type of position/positions you are interested in and tell the recruiter what your skills and qualifications are.
- Give the recruiter a copy of your resume.
- Prepare your 30 second commercial.
- Ask the recruiter questions and reference information you learned about the company while conducting research.
- Tell the recruiter why you are a good match for their organization.
- Don't expect an on-the-spot interview. This is your opportunity to make a good impression and create enough interest that the recruiter will want to contact you for a formal interview to discuss potential openings.
- Employers attend career fairs to recruit new talent for their companies. Positions could be available immediately or expected to become available in the future. With this in mind, ask the employer what the next step would be in their hiring process. This will give you a time frame for follow-up.
- If you are interested in a company but the recruiter is not looking for someone with your specific skills or major, ask the recruiter if they could refer you to someone in the company who might have a future interest in talking with you. Recruiters don't always know what positions will become available.
- Take any materials the employer has and the recruiter's business card.
- E-mail a brief thank you letter to the employers that spent time talking with you within 48 hours.
- Relax and enjoy yourself. Think of this event as an informal exchange of information between business professionals.