

VANDAL CAREER FAIR GUIDE



University
of Idaho

Career Services

VANDAL CAREER FAIR GUIDE

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Table of Contents

What is a Career Fair?

Why should I go?	5
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Before the Career Fair

What are my goals for the Career Fair?	7
What skills, abilities, & interests do I have?	7
How do I research the organizations?	8
Is my resume ready?	10
What do I bring to the Career Fair?	14
How should I dress ?	14
How do I make a good first impression ?	16
What is an elevator pitch ?	18

Fair Day

How do I plan my time?	21
How do I check in to the Career Fair?	23
How do I talk to recruiters ?	24
What if I get an interview ?	28
How can I network effectively?	29

Following Up

Should I send a thank you ?	31
How can I use social media to follow up?	32
What happens next ?	32





What is a Career Fair?

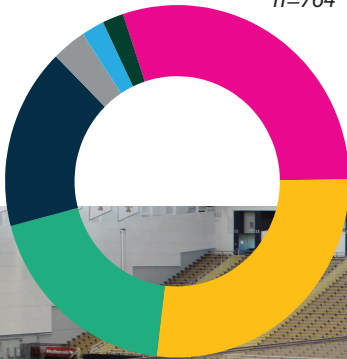
Career fairs bring together organizations and potential future employees to create spaces for dialogue. These conversations can grow your knowledge, lead to job or internship offers, and establish future connections as you build your career.

Similar to an expo, each employer has a table/booth with resources, and recruiters or representatives available to speak with you about their organization.

Employers are eager to not only share their opportunities for internships, seasonal work, and full-time hiring, but also to promote their company brand and culture to the upcoming workforce.

Why do Vandals attend Career Fairs?

n=764



Internship (31%)

Career Opportunity (26%)

Exploration (17%)

Networking (16%)

Graduate School (5%)

Class Credit (3%)

Other (2%)

*Career Fair Student Survey,
Spring 2018*



Why Should I Go?

Networking

In today's online recruitment market, a little face time goes a long way. Speaking with recruiters in person can help your application stand out. It could even land you an on-the-spot interview. Recruiters want to get to know you, so be yourself (not who you think they want you to be) and shine light on your strengths. In some cases, the connection may not circle around to pay off for a year or more, but you'll be glad that you took the time to start building these professional relationships now. (More tips for building relationships on pg. 29.)

Jobs & Internships

It's true, they happen. A much anticipated motive for many attendees is the opportunity to secure a job or internship offer, whether you're interested in the private, non-profit, or government sector. Student attendance at the U of I Career Fair leads to hundreds of interviews taking place on campus each semester.

Exploration

Have you known what you wanted to do for a career since you were a little kid and you're still on track? If so, congratulations, you mysterious unicorn. For most college students, the pathway to a career can be more open-ended and requires some intentional exploration and the seeking out of information and opportunities. What better place than a room full of professionals representing dozens of careers and industries?

Employers come to you!

Take advantage of employers traveling from all over the Northwest and beyond to recruit great candidates. This is a significant investment of their time and resources as they seek out face-to-face interactions with students and alumni.

"Career fairs have provided me ideas about possible career paths, and meeting the various employers is a lot of fun."

*-Helena
Junior, Accounting*

Before the Career Fair

Walk through the following pages to ensure you are feeling prepared to meet diverse employers, make a great first impression, and use your time well at the fair.

96% of employers say Vandals communicate their strengths and qualifications effectively.

-Career Fair Employer Survey, Spring 2018



What are my **goals** for the Career Fair?

With wide-ranging opportunities ahead, take some time to write down a few specific goals: one for your preparation time and one for the Career Fair itself.

(Ex. “Practice my elevator pitch with a career advisor before the fair.” or

“Talk to companies from three different industries at the fair.”)

Goal #1:

Goal #2:

What **skills, abilities, & interests** do I have?

Articulating your skills, abilities, and interests can help you identify the opportunities you may want to pursue at the fair, and give you confidence as you communicate your attributes and experiences to employers. (Ex. A job skill at which you naturally excel, a characteristic or trait that you’ve demonstrated, a project or experience you’re really proud of...)

Skills/Abilities:

Interests:

How do I **research** the organizations?

Researching employers prepares you to stand out in your upcoming conversations. Any knowledge about the company you bring will help convey that you are confident and prepared as a professional. You can use what you learn to customize your resume, elevator pitch, and questions for the company.

Resources to research organizations:

Handshake



Find a list of all attending employers as well as their active job postings. Log in and select the “Events” tab, then “Find Career Fairs” to browse the upcoming U of I fair.

uidaho.joinhandshake.com

Company Website or Social Media

Try exploring:

“About Us,” “Mission Statement,” “Company Values,” “Careers,” or “News” pages on the site.

Follow the company’s social media pages to get current info on the organization.

LinkedIn



Access employer pages to read up on company news and explore employee profiles. Seek out Vandal alumni currently working at the company.

The Argonaut

Before the main event, find the Career Fair insert to browse a full list of employers attending and company profiles. You can also read articles with tips for your time at the Career Fair.



Pro Tip: Follow companies in Handshake to receive notifications or emails when jobs are posted or the organization will be on campus.

After researching, you should have some familiarity with:

1. Company's product/service and customers
2. Where they are located (regional, national, international)
3. What makes this company stand out to you?
4. How do your skills & experiences uniquely pair with this company?

Choose 4 companies to research and answer the above questions:

Company: _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Company: _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Company: _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Company: _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Is my **resume** ready?

A resume is your opportunity to highlight and share your education, skills, and experiences. Every resume is unique, but regardless of style, effective resumes are well-organized and well-written to demonstrate the strengths you possess.

*"Be creative, but not too outside the box for your career path.
Highlight not only your experiences, but why you stood out."*

-Megan | Recruiter, Target

What can I include on my resume?

Education

**Leadership
Roles**

**Certificates, Licenses,
Trainings**

**Employment
History**

Volunteer & Service Experiences

**Educational Experiences
(Projects, Study Abroad,
Campus Activities)**

**Technical &
Software Skills**

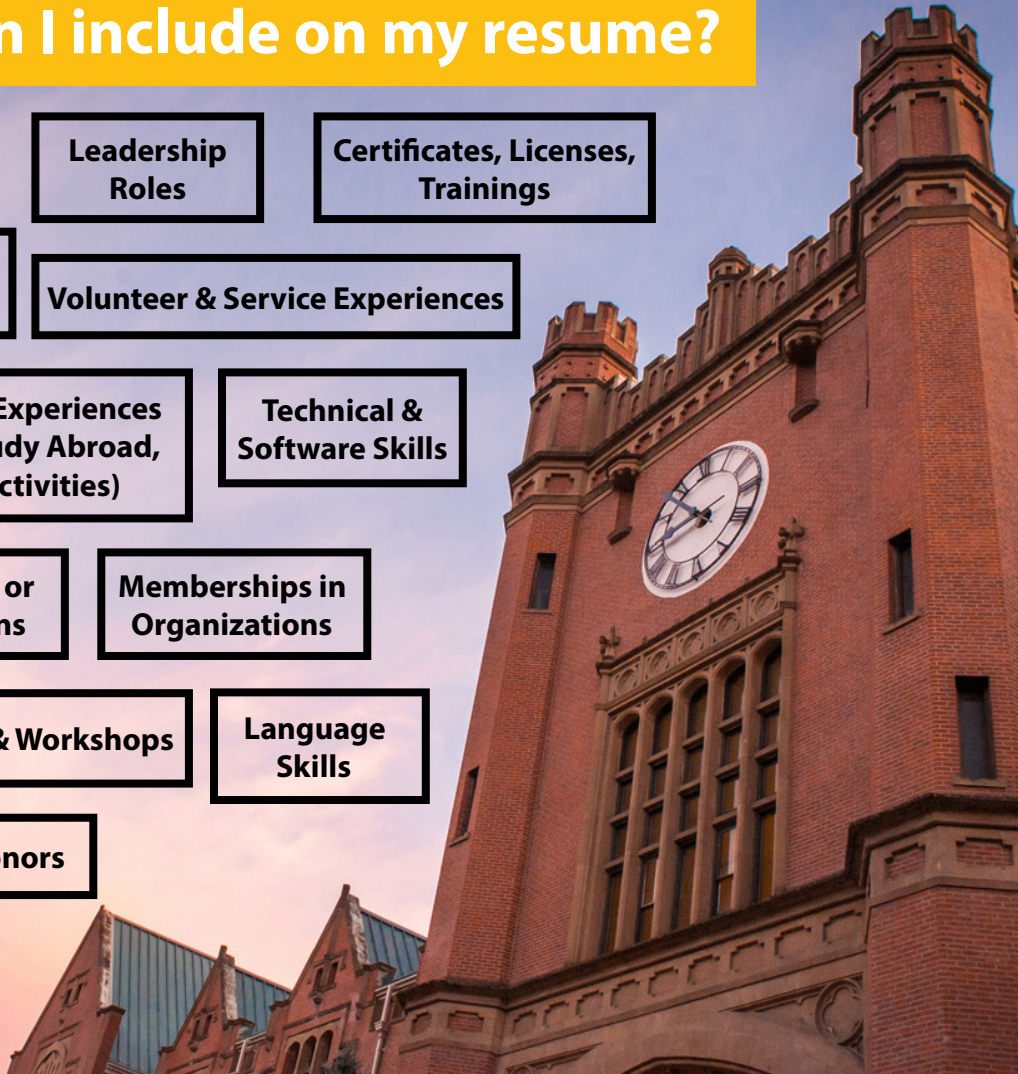
**Publications or
Presentations**

**Memberships in
Organizations**

Conferences & Workshops

**Language
Skills**

Awards & Honors



Resume checklist

Formatting

- ☐ Is the document visually pleasing?
- ☐ Is the font style professional and an appropriate size? (11-12 pt.)
- ☐ Are there different sections? (Education, Experience, Skills, etc.)
- ☐ Is the layout consistent? (Dates in the same location? Same font throughout?)

Sections

- ☐ Do you have a clear header with your name and contact info easy to find?
- ☐ Does your “Education” section include the name of your degree, university, location and expected graduation?
- ☐ Does your “Experience” section(s) include your role/title, the organization or company name, location, and dates?
- ☐ Do you have a “Skills” section including hard (technical) skills such as software, tools, or languages?
- ☐ Do you include other sections such as “Projects,” “Leadership,” or “Volunteerism?” (These are optional, but can be included if relevant.)

Content

- ☐ Does each experience include bullet points demonstrating accomplishments and the skills used?
- ☐ Does each statement start with an action verb? (Analyzed, built, presented, etc.)
- ☐ Do you avoid listing vague skills such as hardworking, good communicator, etc.?
- ☐ Are there any other relevant skills or experiences you have not yet included? (Ex. Personal projects such as rebuilding a car, attending a leadership conference, or an unpaid job for a family member?)

Have your resume reviewed by a career advisor!

Contact Career Services at (208) 885-6121 or
careerservices@uidaho.edu.



Pro Tip: If you have 2-3 specific companies you are targeting at the Career Fair, consider bringing tailored resumes to make the most of this opportunity to meet with them.

Resume Examples

JACKIE PSYCH

(208)577-3587 • psy8784@vandals.uidaho.edu
Linkedin.com/JackiePsych • Moscow, ID

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science | Psychology

Expected May 20xx

Bachelor of Science | Organizational Sciences

Minor: Communication Studies

University of Idaho (UI), Moscow, ID

Relevant Coursework

Psychology of Learning

Organizational Communication

Conflict Management

Adv. Non-Profit Organizations

Budgeting - Small Organizations

Social Psychology

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Researcher | Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship, UI, Moscow, ID

Dates

- Developed and submitted a research proposal, earning a grant of \$5000 from the university
- Designed and implemented study analyzing the impact of student involvement on feelings of depression
- Presented synthesized data and findings at the UI Undergraduate Research Symposium

MENTORING EXPERIENCE

Peer Advisor | Dept. of Psychology & Communication Studies, UI, Moscow, ID

Dates

- Guided students through the academic planning process to establish a course schedule that best fits their personal, academic, and career goals
- Maintained knowledge of University of Idaho policies regarding coursework and graduation requirements, and translate those policies to students
- Served new students in campus events such as Vandal Friday and Q&A Panel Nights

Resident Assistant | Housing & Residence Life, UI, Moscow, ID

Dates

- Served as a supervisor, role model, and mentor for students: creating and fostering a collaborative community, enabling students to be successful personally and academically
- Led team efforts to develop area wide programming for over 500 residents
- Created and facilitated tailored educational and personal development programs for 50 residents

SKILLS & CERTIFICATIONS

Computer | Proficient in: Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Publisher

QPR Suicide Prevention Training | UI, Moscow, ID

Dates

Mental Health First Aid Training | UI, Moscow, ID

Dates

Green Dot Violence Prevention Training | UI, Moscow, ID

Dates

ADDITIONAL INVOLVEMENT

Hotline Volunteer | Alternatives to Violence of the Palouse, Moscow, ID

Dates

Vice President | Psi Chi – Psychology Honors Society, UI, Moscow, ID

Dates

Volunteer | Latah Recovery Center, Moscow, ID

Dates

Volts N. Ohms

208-222-3333 | ✉ volts.n.ohms@vandals.uidaho.edu | 📍 987 Shocking Street, Moscow, ID 83843

Education	<u>Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering</u> <i>University of Idaho, Moscow, ID</i> GPA: 3.58 <u>Relevant Coursework</u> Power Electronics Energy Systems I,II Pulse and Digital Circuits Microcontrollers Electrical Circuits I,II Communications Circuits Digital Logic Signals and Systems I,II Advanced Electronics	Expected May 20xx						
Engineering Experience	<u>Electronics Design Intern</u> <i>Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories Pullman, WA</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Designed FPGAs in a fast paced environment utilizing VHDLDeveloped mixed signal circuits to meet project specificationsWrote reviews, plans, and product documentationImplemented firmware and software necessary for hardware product developmentAttended technical meetings with colleagues and supervisors	Summer 20xx						
Computer Skills	<table><tr><td><u>Proficient in:</u></td><td><u>Knowledgeable in:</u></td><td><u>Familiar with:</u></td></tr><tr><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">VHDLPSpiceMATLABJavaMicrosoft Word</td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">HTMLPERLC++Microsoft ExcelMicrosoft PowerPoint</td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">MPLABMicrosoft OutlookMicrosoft PublisherWindows OS, Mac OS X, Linux</td></tr></table>	<u>Proficient in:</u>	<u>Knowledgeable in:</u>	<u>Familiar with:</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">VHDLPSpiceMATLABJavaMicrosoft Word	<ul style="list-style-type: none">HTMLPERLC++Microsoft ExcelMicrosoft PowerPoint	<ul style="list-style-type: none">MPLABMicrosoft OutlookMicrosoft PublisherWindows OS, Mac OS X, Linux	
<u>Proficient in:</u>	<u>Knowledgeable in:</u>	<u>Familiar with:</u>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none">VHDLPSpiceMATLABJavaMicrosoft Word	<ul style="list-style-type: none">HTMLPERLC++Microsoft ExcelMicrosoft PowerPoint	<ul style="list-style-type: none">MPLABMicrosoft OutlookMicrosoft PublisherWindows OS, Mac OS X, Linux						
Leadership	<u>Senator</u> <i>Associated Students University of Idaho (ASUI) Moscow, ID</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Wrote and passed legislation that allocated funds, stated ASUI positions, and altered the structure and administration of student governmentAttended weekly senate meetings to discuss and implement ideas and policiesProposed senate structure modifications that were revised and passed by ASUI senate	Fall 20xx - Spring 20xx						
Other Experience	<u>Finishing Specialist</u> <i>Platinum Construction Idaho Falls, ID</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Remodeled and constructed homes specializing in finishing workUtilized power tools and precision instruments to finish interior woodworkCommunicated with co-workers to ensure timely completion of tasks	Summers 20xx - 20xx						
Volunteer Service	<u>Construction Volunteer</u> <i>Community Action Center Housing Rehabilitation Program Pullman, WA</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Led a team of four volunteers in repairing interior finish work in homesAssisted with repair and improvement of owner-occupied homesCoordinated with other teams to make efficient use of time on site <u>Server</u> <i>Idaho Falls Community Outreach Center Soup Kitchen Idaho Falls, ID</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Organized and distributed food once a monthInteracted with individuals coming to the soup kitchen for meals	Fall 20xx - Spring 20xx Summer 20xx						
Associations	<u>Member</u> <i>Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Moscow, ID</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Contributed to discussions during weekly meetings and networking sessions	Fall 20xx - Spring 20xx						

What do I **bring** to the Career Fair?

Bring

- 10-15 copies of your resume
- Pen/paper for notes
- Padfolio/notebook to carry resumes and notes in
- Portfolio or work samples if in a visual-based career field

Avoid

- Sweatshirts
- Hats
- Low/open necklines
- Jeans or shorts
- Backpacks (see "check in" on pg. 23)
- Strong scents/fragrances
- Overly worn-out clothing

How should I **dress**?

Professional dress is a big factor in the first impression you give, so it's important to put some thought into your attire for the Career Fair. However, your outfit should not steal attention from the skills and experiences you are prepared to share with employers.

While there is some distinction between dress across industries, at a minimum, your dress for the Career Fair should be business casual. Always err on the side of being more formal; you may be interviewed that day!



Pro Tip: When researching companies, look at what employees are wearing to better anticipate the culture and expected dress of the organization/field.

Outfit Ideas

Tops

In selecting a shirt or blouse, it is recommended to avoid distracting colors or patterns for professional events. Ensure your shirt is wrinkle-free. Avoid low necklines, open backs, and see-through materials.



Bottoms

Slacks or a skirt should be worn rather than jeans or leggings. For skirts, knee-length is recommended. Slacks or pants should not be too tight.

Suits

For a more formal look, a suit jacket can be paired with a coordinating pair of pants, skirt, or a dress. Business formal jackets are typically darker colors and should not be excessively loose.



Footwear

Shoes should complement the professional outfit, and will typically be black or brown. Avoid open-toed, flashy, or street shoes. Heels should be moderate.

Hair & Accessories

Hair should be clean, neatly styled, and out of your face. Facial hair must be trimmed and neat. Accessories should never detract from your professional image, so err on the side of more simple jewelry, ties, watches, makeup, etc.



How do I make a good **first impression**?

Here are four ways to help you start off on the right foot as you meet professionals:



Practice Your Handshake

Be prepared to shake hands frequently at the Career Fair. Reach out to shake the person's hand, making firm contact and matching the pressure from their hand. Shake from the elbow rather than the wrist. Practice with friends to avoid a limp or overly aggressive handshake that can set a poor tone before you even start talking. *Note-* If you are sick or otherwise unable to shake hands, it is professionally acceptable to skip the handshake.



Eye Contact

While there can be a lot of distractions, be sure to maintain good eye contact throughout your conversation. At the same time, it's not a staring contest, so allow natural breaks. Strong eye contact demonstrates your interest in both the person you are talking to and the organization they represent.



Smile

A friendly smile when introducing yourself and throughout your conversation conveys confidence in yourself and enthusiasm for the company. Win-win.



Good Hygiene

With no second chance at a first impression, good hygiene must be a priority. On the day of the fair be sure to shower, brush your teeth, and apply deodorant. Many people are sensitive to fragrances, so it is best to minimize or avoid perfume/colognes.

"Making a strong first impression is key when attending career fairs. Recruiters talk to hundreds (sometimes thousands) of students, so make sure you stand out! I'm always impressed by students who have done their research on the company, come prepared with thoughtful questions, dress professionally, and greet me in a positive way with a handshake and a smile."

-Deena | Technical Recruiter, Clearwater Analytics



What is an **elevator pitch**?

An elevator pitch is your opportunity to not only introduce yourself, but make a memorable impression by also communicating your strengths, interests, and experiences *and* how those can benefit the organization you're talking to.

Draft your pitch

Below are some suggested topics for your elevator pitch:

Who you are	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• major/year in school• why you chose to study your major (if relevant)
What you are looking for	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• seeking job or internship• exploring a new industry/career
Current or Past Relevant Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• previous job or internship/co-op experience• relevant class or personal projects• trainings or certifications• research experience
Why this company	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• what you know about them• what sets this company apart• how you fit into their mission, values, projects, and culture
What you can do for them	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• what sets you apart from other candidates• skill sets or strengths you bring
What's next?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• do you want to learn more about the application process or company internship program?• are you curious about certain projects or areas of the organization?

Sample pitch

Hi _____, my name is _____ and I am a Junior working towards my degree in English. I've had some great experience producing technical writing for my family's construction company. I wrote internal safety manuals and public facing documents for the business. I've enjoyed learning how to summarize technical information and ensure accuracy of my writing. I'm excited to see _____ here today because _____. Can you tell me more about your internship program?

Craft your pitch

In the space below, write a sample of your elevator pitch.

Who needs an elevator pitch? Everyone! It's not just entrepreneurs who pitch but anyone asking for support or collaboration or a job. All of us told stories when we were young and pitches are just that. They are stories about our business ideas, our pet projects that need support, or about us and how great we would be in that career position. Develop your pitch, practice it on everyone who will listen, and then be ready when opportunity strikes. Always remember, "Life's a Pitch!"

-George Tanner | Director, Idaho Entrepreneurs

Career Fair Day

Time for all of your preparation to pay off! The following details what you can expect on the day of the Career Fair with some additional tips on how to stand out to employers.

"I would highly recommend attending the Career Fair. Not only does it give you an opportunity to potentially get a job or internship, but it also gives you a chance to practice interview skills with professionals in industry. "

-Nick | Senior, Mechanical Engineering



How do I **plan** my time?

Whether you have an hour between classes or all afternoon, it is important to plan well in order to budget enough time to visit with your top choice employers.

Use the Map

Upon arrival, you will be given a map of employers and their booth locations. Take a few moments before entering the fair to identify where your priority employers are located and make a game plan.

Cushion your time

Average conversations last about 5 minutes, but remember that you may need to wait in line to speak with busy recruiters.

Warm Up

While you may be eager to go talk to your dream company about your future internship, talk to one or two other employers first to work out the jitters. Also, probably avoid telling them they're "not your top pick". Warming up will get you more comfortable in the setting and give you the chance to practice your elevator pitch.

Career Readiness for College Students

Top competencies that prepare students for a successful transition into the workforce.

Critical Thinking & Problem Solving

Oral & Written Communications

Teamwork & Collaboration

Global & Intercultural Fluency

Digital Technology

Career Management

Leadership

-Job Outlook Report, Fall 2018

National Association of Colleges and Employers



Pro Tip: You may be given free swag after your conversation with a recruiter. Remember your purpose at the fair is to have meaningful conversations with employers, not fill a tote bag with freebies. Try to make sure anything you're carrying doesn't impede your conversations.



"You want to be impressive to recruiters, but remember that they're people too. A little courtesy and friendliness goes a long way. If you have a chance, ask them about what they like about the company, about what they think about working there, and even just about how their day has been or how much traveling they had to do to get there. And of course, thank them for their time."

-Shelby | Junior, Electrical Engineering

How do I **check in** to the Career Fair?

Arrival

You will check in to the Career Fair through the east side of Kibbie Dome at the student check-in tables. You may sign in using your Vandal ID card or username.

Name Tag

Once you have checked in, a printed name tag with your name and major will be created for you. We suggest sticking it on your lower right shoulder to make it easy for employers to read when you shake hands.

Colored Dots

Career Services has created a colored dot system to help employers easily identify students by college. You can select the dot(s) and stick them on your name tag.

Backpacks/Bags

To land that professional first impression (and since space can get a bit tight), we suggest not carrying a backpack or other large bag into the Career Fair. Secure, on-site storage is not available for personal belongings, so make a plan to leave your bag elsewhere or stow it in the bleachers at your own risk.

Employer Profiles

An Employer Information Guide is also available at check-in, allowing you to take a few minutes to read up on company bios before entering. Employers look very positively on candidates that know about their company and what they do.

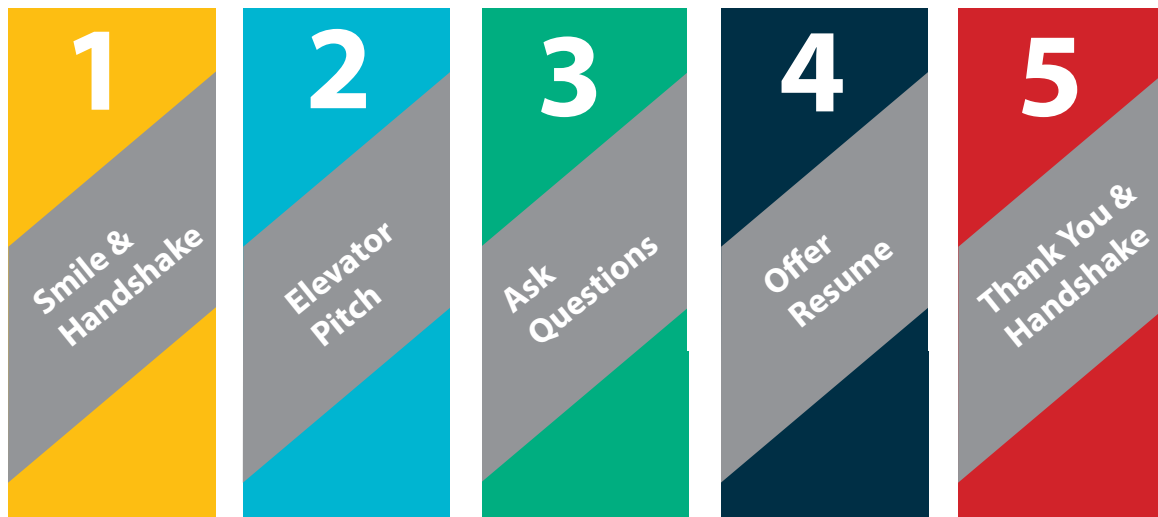
Map

Also available is a two-sided Career Fair layout map, allowing you to form a plan for weaving through the fair and hitting all your favorite booths along the way.

Last Minute Advice

Career Advisors are available at the Career Services booth near the entrance of the fair if you have any questions or want to practice your elevator pitch before meeting employers.

How do I talk to recruiters?



Getting started

Initiate

While some employers may eagerly reach out to you, others may not. Employers look fondly upon candidates that approach their booth with confidence.

Communicate Key Information

Employers are excited to hear about your major, year in school, and what brought you to the fair. They also want to learn about experiences you have had, whether it's past jobs/internships, club involvement or leadership, school projects, or other relevant information. Above all else, be honest and be yourself!

Stay Open-Minded

There will be opportunities at the Career Fair that you were not aware of when you arrived. Try not to rule out a company before you've learned more about their opportunities and company culture. You may see an engineering firm and think, "They wouldn't be interested in my International Studies degree." When in fact, companies require diverse skill sets in order to operate successfully. Knowing and articulating your transferable skills can open exciting new doors.

Asking good questions

One sided conversations are awkward, so be prepared to ask some well-thought-out questions. Good questions demonstrate your interest in the company and position, as well as your ability to communicate professionally. Whenever possible, ask questions specific to each company. Avoid asking about salary/benefits and try to steer clear of questions that reveal a lack of knowledge about the company such as “What do you do?”

Sample Questions:

Exploration

- Do you have any advice for someone pursuing this career path?
- What experiences have led to your current position?
- How do you see this career field changing and how can I best prepare?

Hiring Process

- Could you describe the hiring process at your company?
- Do you have any specific tips for navigating the hiring process at your company?

Company/Job Specifics

- What are 2 or 3 of the most important skills required in this position?
- What is one of the biggest challenges for this role in your company?
- Could you describe an average day for someone in this role?
- What types of internships does your company offer?
- What has been your experience with the culture of your organization?

Write down two more questions you may ask a recruiter:

1.

2.



Pro Tip: Know your audience. Recruiters at career fairs may be human resources professionals or representatives from a specific department. Be mindful of who you are talking with and be strategic with the types of questions you ask.

Directing the conversation

You will likely speak with a company that does not have any opportunities currently available that would be a good fit for you. Rather than just walking away, make your conversation count by using your time to gather more information about the company/industry, or how to stand out as a new professional in the job market. This is what networking is all about!

Examples:

Recruiter: "I'm sorry, we don't have any internships."

"Do you have any recommendations for ways I can best build my experience to prepare for a career in [career field]?"

Recruiter: "We're only hiring for (x) major today."

"Ok, I'd love to hear how you started working at [company name] and how you knew it was a good fit for you?"

Recruiter: "Unfortunately, our company does not sponsor visas."

"Thank you for letting me know. As a professional in this field, would you mind taking a quick look at my resume and offering some advice if time allows?"



Exiting the conversation

You've had a great conversation, but it's important to sense when your interaction is coming to a natural close and gracefully wrap up.

The Steps:

- 1 Offer Resume.** If you haven't already, offer your resume to the employer. Not all employers accept resumes at career fairs, but offering demonstrates your enthusiasm for the company.

“ May I leave you with a copy of my resume? ”

- 2 Confirm Next Steps.** If you are interested in applying for an opportunity with the company, make sure you discuss next steps with the recruiter. It's important for you to understand the hiring process and any additional follow-up you may need to take.

“ This sounds like a great internship/position. What is the best way for me to move forward? ”

“ May I have one of your business cards to follow up if I have any additional questions? ”

- 3 Thank You & Handshake.** After you have gathered the information needed, thank the recruiter for their time with a smile and handshake to close your conversation. If you are excited about an opportunity and intend to apply, you may reiterate your interest in the position.

“ You have been extremely helpful and I want to respect your time. Do you have any last questions for me? ”

“ I've really enjoyed our conversation. Your internship program sounds like a great opportunity and I'm excited to apply. ”

“ I appreciate your advice about careers in this industry; it was really helpful. Thank you so much for your time! ”

What if I get an **interview**?

You may be interviewed on the spot at the Career Fair, or invited for an interview the following day. If this happens, congratulations! Your resume and first impression have demonstrated that you are a good candidate for the company. Be fully ready to talk about the top strengths and experiences you want to communicate.

Favorite interview questions of recruiters:

- Tell me about a project you are proud of and challenges you overcame to accomplish it.
- What sets you apart from other candidates?
- Why are you interested in our company?
- What is the most important strength you possess?
- Can you give me an example of a time you faced a conflict on a team. How did you handle the situation?
- Tell me about a time you failed. How did you deal with the situation?
- What motivates you?

The S.T.A.R. Method

The STAR method is a technique that can be used to give clear and concise answers in an interview, particularly for behavioral-based questions (“Tell me about a time when...”).

Situation

Describe the context of your story/example. Be specific, giving enough detail for the listener to imagine the setting.

Action

Describe the actions *YOU* took in the situation. Avoid describing what the group or a supervisor may have done.

Task

What was the problem, task, or goal set before you or your team? Describe any constraints or challenges you needed to overcome.

Result

What happened? What was accomplished? What did you learn and how have you applied that knowledge?

How can I **network** effectively?

Networking is all about relationship building. It is the process of establishing and fostering connections to develop a reciprocal support system. Your time at the Career Fair can create these professional connections that may lead to opportunities right away or down the road.

6 ways to network well during and after a career fair:

1 Don't forget about the recruiter.

Though you have many questions about the job and company, try asking the recruiter about their own experience or background as well.

2 Actively listen.

Intently listening and maintaining eye contact with the recruiter will communicate that you value their time and the knowledge. Watch out for getting overly wrapped up in what you'll say next. Listen.

3 Find Vandal alumni.

They have walked in your shoes! Look for the alumni ribbon on their name tag.

4 Take notes.

It's hard to follow up when you've forgotten the recruiter's name, so take a few notes and make sure you have all the contact info you need.

5 Future opportunities to connect.

Ask the recruiter if they will be back on campus for any future events or career fairs. Connect with them and their company on LinkedIn.

6 A thoughtful follow-up.

When following up, try to reference a part of your conversation that stuck out to you. (Turn the page for more tips on follow-up.)



Following Up

Don't let your interactions with employers end after the Career Fair! Like any relationship, building your professional network requires intentionality and following up with contacts new and old.

200+ on-campus interviews take place after the Career Fair each semester.

-Employer Relations, Career Services



Should I send a **thank you**?

Whether it's a tasteful handwritten note you drop in the mail the next day (How great do you feel when you get snail mail?) or a brief email you write, gratitude is an excellent way to stay connected to your new contacts and to keep your interaction on their mind. Try to include a detail or two to help them remember you and what you valued from the conversation. Remember to use a professional subject line if sending via email.

Sample follow-up with employers

Follow-up after the Career Fair

Dear [recruiter's name],

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me at U of I's Career Fair earlier this week. It was exciting to hear more about [company]'s innovative culture and your own career path in the company.

After learning more about the position, I would like to reaffirm my interest in your entry-level copywriting opportunity. My recent experience writing web content at Gritman Medical Center has given me skills and experience that align with this position's needs.

As you suggested, I have submitted my resume to the online portal. Thank you again for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

I hope you enjoyed your conference in Seattle!

Sincerely,

Jane Vandal

Follow up after an interview

Good morning [interviewer name],

I had a fantastic experience meeting you all at [company] and learning not only about the software engineering position, but your office and culture as a whole. I'm eager to use my coding and customer service background for your company.

I want to especially thank you all for how inviting and friendly you were toward me; it really made the entire process comfortable and rewarding. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or follow-up. I look forward to hearing any updates you can share.

Thank you again for the great conversation and your interest in me.

Best,

Joe Vandal

How can I use **social media** to follow up?

As you are now a professional, it's time to join a professional social network! Before the Career Fair is the perfect time to create or brush up your LinkedIn profile. Career advisors can assist with developing your profile. It is very possible that recruiters will look you up after the fair, wanting to connect. Adding recruiters or other professional contacts on LinkedIn is a great way to stay in touch.

Though LinkedIn is the preferred social media platform for professional networking, know that any part of your public online presence could be accessed by an employer. Make sure you are leveraging these to best represent the professional identity you want to be known for.

70% of employers use social media to screen candidates before hiring.

-CareerBuilder Survey, 2017

What happens **next?**

Phone Calls

If you are expecting phone calls from recruiters to set up interviews or follow up from conversations at the Career Fair, try to avoid answering your phone with, "Hello?" Instead, use phrasing like, "Hi, this is _____."

Voicemail

Go ahead and double check that your voicemail message: 1) has been set up and 2) is updated to something more professional than, "If I'm not answering, I'm probably out _____." Keep it short, courteous, and include your name so they're confident they got the right number.

Email Etiquette

Even if (and maybe especially if) using your phone to send a quick thank you or follow-up, strong email etiquette still applies. Use proper greeting/salutations, grammar and punctuation, and don't forget a subject line and any attachments!

Patience & Persistence

A final word of encouragement. This process takes grit and you'll likely pursue many opportunities before securing a good fit. Keep positive. Stay the course. Your hard work will pay off! Literally.

Notes



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