Preparing for a Job Fair
Northampton Community College Career Services
Why prepare?

- Employers say many students at job fairs are not prepared to meet employers. Preparing will make you stand out in a crowd of applicants.

- Wandering around a career fair with no plan means you are missing a great opportunity to connect with employers.
Be Professional

- Dress comfortably, but professionally. If you need clarification on how to dress, go to http://bit.ly/amUVJV.
- No food, gum, or drinks while you’re talking with employers.
- Have your resume ready and know what you want to discuss.
Target Employers

- Time is limited at a job fair. Focus on specific employers.
- Read the list of employers attending.
- Who is hiring for positions for which you qualify?
- Check the list again a day before the job fair to find last minute additions.
Research Your Targets

 Employers are impressed by students who know about their company and the industry.

 Look at the company’s website. Read the mission statement, any products made, the human resources area. See how the organization describes itself.

 Search for info online:
   fortune.com
   vault.com
   wetfeet.com
Strategize

- Identify the information you want from the employers.
- Be clear on your own goals.
- Practice your one minute introduction.
- Plan to begin with employers that are a lower priority to give yourself practice and gain confidence.
At the Job Fair

- Arrive at the beginning of the event. You’ll have more time to meet with all the employers you want.
- Bring at least two copies of your resume for each employer you want to see.
- If an employer won’t take your resume and instructs you to apply online, don’t take it personally. You’ve made a connection.
- Ask about the organization’s recruiting timetable. Solicit information about the next step in the process.
- Get business cards from each employer you talk to.
Your One Minute Introduction

- Make eye contact, offer a firm handshake.
- State your name, program major, and graduation date.
- What appeals to you about the company?
- State one or two unique skills or experience that qualifies you for a job at the company.
- What type of position are you pursuing?
Questions to Ask

- Prepare one or two questions for each employer.
- Avoid sensitive topics like pay, benefits.
- Do not monopolize the company’s time. Keep it brief, focused.

Question topics:
- What kinds of skills and experience do you look for in the employees you hire?
- What are the characteristics of your most successful employees?
- Which courses or types of experience do you suggest to be a successful candidate?
- What kinds of entry level positions exist within your organization?
After the Job Fair

- Send thank you notes to each recruiter you’ve met.
- Follow up with recruiters two weeks later.
- Organize your information. Make note of when you follow up and the results of any contacts with employers.
Questions?

Contact Career Services
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Northampton Community College Professional Network