How to Navigate Career Fairs?

Why do students go to career fairs?
● Explore career options
● Gather information about employers & careers
● Get job/internship leads

Why do employers go to career fairs?
● Attract and hire top notch candidates
● Advertise opportunities to prospective students
● Promote awareness about their organization

TO PREPARE FOR THE CAREER FAIR

● Prepare your résumé, have it reviewed by Career Services, and make several copies of the final version on résumé paper.

● Determine which organizations are attending.

● Have a “game plan”—make a list of employers to visit in order of importance to you; consider visiting your lower priority organizations first to gain confidence before meeting with your top priority.

● Do not limit yourself to employers who you feel “fit” your major or industry preference; many employers hire for a number of positions that cross disciplines—for example, the non-profit organization that is seeking accountants or the accounting firm who is seeking Marketing or English majors to develop and edit print materials.

● Prepare a “30-60 second commercial”.
  ○ Introduce yourself (name, major, why you are talking to the organization).
  ○ Demonstrate what you know about the organization (research early).
  ○ Express interest in the organization and their opportunities and explain why you are interested.
  ○ Briefly describe what you have to offer; skills, leadership experiences, athletics, volunteer work, internships.

● Prepare questions to ask employers to show that you have thought of your career interests and goals.
  ○ “I saw on the Career Services’ website that you have opportunities in your marketing department. Can you tell me more about the job duties of a marketing analyst”?
  ○ “What skills are most important for your Analyst position”?
  ○ “I have tailored my studies by combining my Sport Management courses with my business courses to better prepare for a career in sports marketing. Can you tell me more about possible sports marketing opportunities with your organization?”

● Professional attire is appropriate. Dress as if for an interview.
  ○ Men: shirt, tie and preferably suit or sports coat.
  ○ Women: dress, pants suit, or skirt suit.

● Act professionally and demonstrate confidence.
  ○ Speak clearly and concisely and answer questions readily.
  ○ Be open and honest; show enthusiasm and interest.
  ○ Do not just go to get free stuff!

FOLLOW-UP

● Ask for a business card or contact name.
● Inquire about the best method for following up with an organization.
● It is important to TAKE INITIATIVE and FOLLOW-UP with opportunities through phone calls, e-mails, letters—do not wait for them to contact you if you are interested.