



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

FISHER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Preparing for a Career Fair

Office of Career Management



What is a Career Fair?

A career fair is a NETWORKING event

It is NOT an event where students receive job and internship offers

Purpose:

- To meet employers that you want to work for
- To introduce yourself and make a good first impression
- To make contacts that you can follow up with during your job search

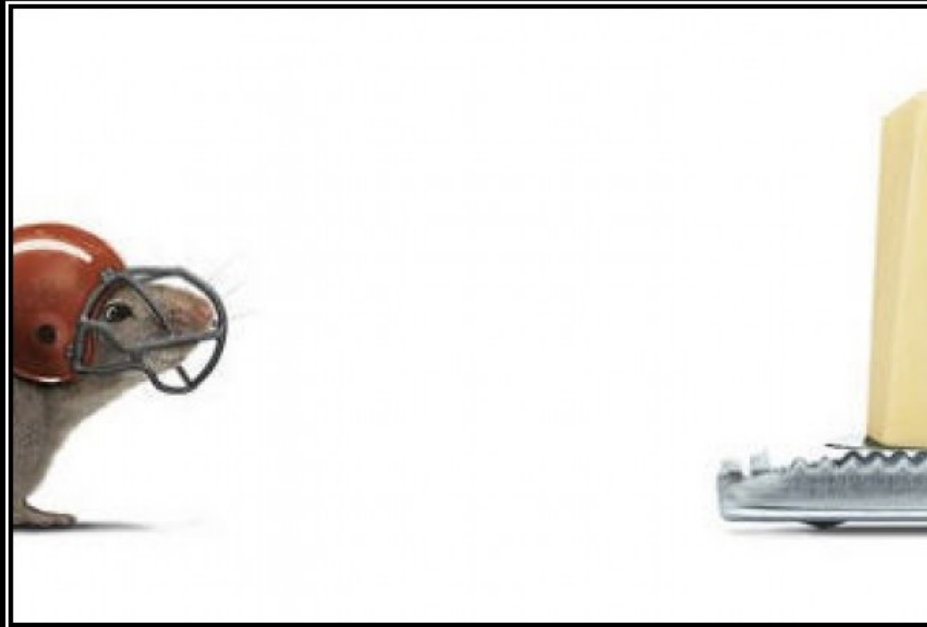


The Three Parts of a Career Fair

1. Preparation- done before the fair
2. Execution- actively participating in the fair
3. Follow Through- done after the fair



Before the Fair



PREPARATION

“By failing to prepare you are preparing to fail.”
Benjamin Franklin



Things to DO:

Utilize Handshake

- Update your profile
- Update your most current resume
- Click “Events” to view the details about employers attending

Get Your Supplies

- Portfolio
- Resumes
- Clean & ironed suit
- BuckID (to swipe into the event)
- Download the OSU Career Fair Plus App
- Get \$1 bills for coat check



Clarify Your Goals

Why are you going to the career fair?

Job or internship search

Looking to network with recruiters

What are you hoping to accomplish?

Get a feel for what companies and industries you want to pursue

Plan with the next steps in mind

Grab business cards from the recruiters you spoke with



Select Your Companies

Set Criteria:

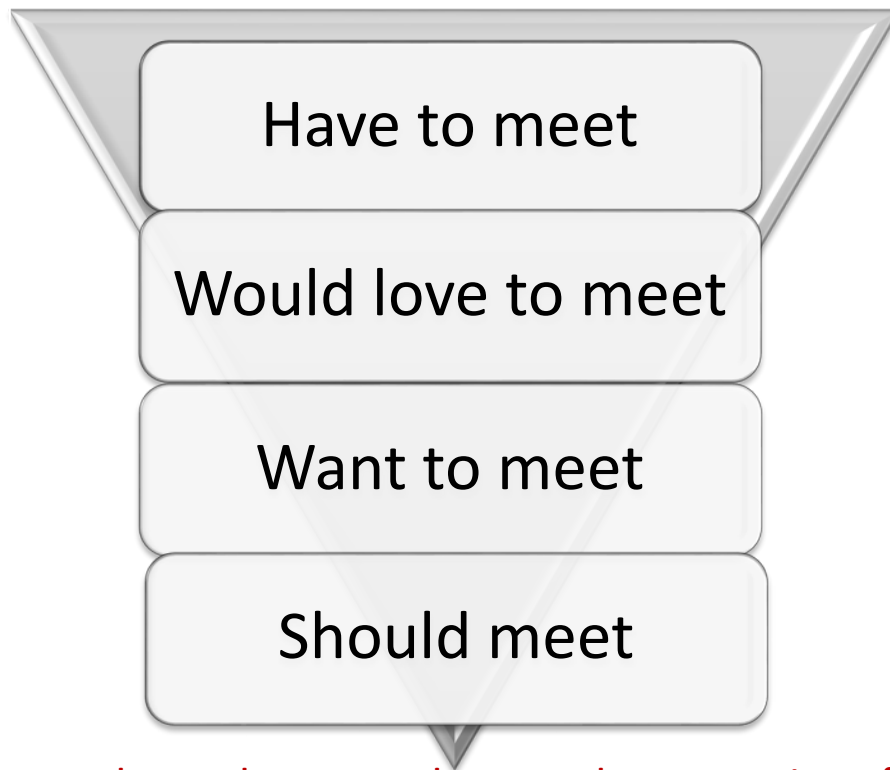
- What industries am I interested in?
- What geography can I work in?
- What values am I looking for in a company?
- What companies am I excited about?

Make sure you are not being *too specific* (software companies in Kalamazoo, MI) or *too general* (a big company on the east coast)



Select Your Companies

Select Companies and Prioritize:



Once you have chosen and research companies of your interest prepare your **Personal Commercial...**

Do Your Homework:

- Read up on company news
- Review company history
- Review company values and mission
- Look at information relevant to your major



Your Personal Commercial

This is a professional, enthusiastic, and comprehensive introduction of yourself.

It includes:

- Name, major, year
- Why you are interested in the company
- Your intent and a question

Be sure to initiate contact with a firm handshake and smile!



Career Fair App

Find employers, research companies and jobs, and get announcements.

Download the Mobile App: Career Fair Plus by Career Soft

- **Go to “Ohio State University”**
- **Select a specific career fair**
- Search by Company
- Filter Companies Based on Major or Position
- Star your Targeted Companies
- Keep up to Date on Announcements and Events
- And More!



Professional Dress

A career fair is a business professional event:

- Wear a clean and ironed suit
- Look presentable (haircut/freshly shaven)
- When in doubt go conservative
- Use a portfolio- not a backpack
 - Take advantage of the coat check if available



Now You Have a Plan

Your plan includes:

- What you are at the fair to accomplish
- A priority list of your companies (with notes)
- An outline of your commercial
- How you will present yourself professionally (dress)

Bring this plan with you and refer to it at the fair to keep yourself on track



During the Fair





Strategize and Break the Ice



- Get a map of the room and learn where your companies are located
- Create an order of attack
 - Be conscious of time and long lines
- Consider approaching a low priority company to practice your commercial



Speaking with Employers

- Initiate conversation (use your personal commercial) and have a firm handshake (**first impression**)
- Show enthusiasm by smiling and speaking clearly
- Be as **clear and direct** as possible (what roles are you interested in) and **get follow-up instructions** (interviewing, on-line app, taking resumes, etc.)
- End conversation with a thank you
- Ask for a business card



Other Tips

- Pick up company info as well as giveaways
- When accepting business cards do not put them away until you have walked away from the employer
- Write notes on the backs of business cards
- Stay positive and enthusiastic
- Have fun! Make sure you are relaxed and confident



After the Fair

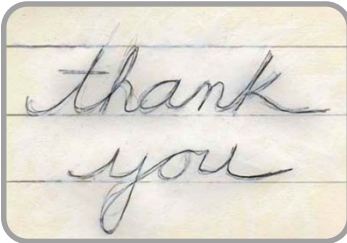
FOLLOW
THROUGH



Immediate Follow Up



Pull together all notes from the back of business cards and keep them organized



Send thank you emails to all employers you spoke to



Follow through on submitting requested information



In the Weeks Following the Career Fair...

- Review your goals and company selection criteria
- Create a method for managing and recording your follow up



Long Term Follow Through

- Research when your companies will be back on campus
- Keep up on your company's latest news
- Maintain contact: emails, letters, phone calls
- Set up informational interviews
- Keep their hiring process in mind
- Think like the recruiter

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