Attending a Virtual Career Fair

Preparing for your Virtual Job Fair Experience

**FIND A QUIET SPACE WITH A NEUTRAL BACKGROUND**

Try to limit potential distractions for yourself and for the employer. Plan where you will be sitting during the event ahead of time—make sure it’s quiet and there is a plain background behind you. Keep the employer’s eye focused on you.

**MAKE SURE YOUR TECHNOLOGY IS READY TO GO**

Allow yourself to become familiar with the platform which will make the day of the event seamless. Be sure your device is capable of supporting you in the virtual job fair. Have your device on a solid tabletop to avoid shaky camera syndrome. It is recommended you use a device with camera capabilities. You may want headphones if you cannot attend from a quiet, private location. Be sure to check the lighting when you are testing your videocam to ensure your face can be seen. Conduct a dry run to ensure everything is working before the event.

**REVIEW COMPANIES BEFORE THE JOB FAIR AND PRIORITIZE**

Review the employers attending before the job fair. Google the employer name to gather information about them, their mission, recent news stories as well as reviewing at their job openings. Prioritize the employers you want to visit. Plan on visiting your lower priority employers first to practice and fine tune your approach. When you are ready, proceed to the top priority employers on your list.

**PREPARE AN ELEVATOR PITCH**

Create an Elevator Pitch that summarizes your skills, goals, experiences, and the kind of employer with which you want to associate. Consider what impression you want to leave with the employers, and what they may be looking for in you. Our [Design Your Elevator Pitch](#) handout will help you prepare!

**MAKE A LIST OF QUESTIONS**

Prepare two or three questions to ask each employer. Be sure these questions relate to the company or position(s) you are interested in. As part of your research before the job fair, make sure your questions are insightful and not easily answered by looking at their website. See sample questions below.

**DRESS PROFESSIONALLY**

Dressing professionally shows them you’re serious. While virtual job fairs may seem less formal and more relaxed than traditional job fairs or in-person interviews, they are not. Companies make significant investments in virtual job fairs—in registration and set-up costs, in personnel time and in technology. They take the events very seriously and are looking for job seekers who do the same. Dressing up can put you in a better mindset for the virtual job fair and help you make a good first impression when you are on camera.
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During the Fair

VIRTUAL FIRST IMPRESSION
When you speak with an employer representative, remember to make virtual eye contact and introduce yourself. Remember to look at the camera for eye contact, not where the person’s face is if it is not under the camera! This is your chance to make the best first impression.

MAINTAIN EYE CONTACT AND PRACTICE ACTIVE LISTENING
Consider smiling and nodding occasionally as you would during an in-person conversation. Limit any distractions around you so that you’re not tempted to look away from your computer screen. For example, be sure to turn your phone off while at the fair.

BE READY TO PUT YOURSELF OUT THERE
Once you engage with an employer in a chat, the ball is in your court to introduce yourself and ask questions about the company and available opportunities. It is expected that you will be confident and eager to present yourself to the employer representatives. A virtual job fair requires you to exert yourself to make connections and initiate conversation.

KEEP IT LIVELY
Talk to every employer that fits your experience and ambitions. If you meet with 20 recruiters, at the end of the day you will know 20 people by name. That sure beats sending a blind résumé to “Personnel Director”.

GET THE INTERVIEWER’S NAME, COMPANY NAME, AND EMAIL, AND FOLLOW UP!
When the conversation ends take a moment to jot down any notes or highlights. If interested, follow up with an email within a couple of days that reinforces the points you made and the facts you learned.

- Always refer to the date and location of the job fair.
- Highlight parts of the conversation that stood out to make it easy for the employers to remember you.
- Include a copy of your résumé - tailor it based on your conversation.

For help during the Fair, please email or Google Chat with usmcareers@maine.edu or call 207-228-8505.
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Question Examples to Ask at a Job Fair

Select a Few

To learn more about what the employer is looking for in an employee:

• What kinds of skills and experience do you look for in an employee?
• What are the characteristics of your most successful employees?
• What level of education (bachelor/graduate/other) do you look for in a candidate?
• What type of degree (major) do you prefer?
• Which courses or experiences do you suggest to be a successful candidate?

To learn more about the positions, hiring process and deadlines:

• What kind of entry-level positions (or internships) exist within your organization?
• What details can you share with me about this/these positions? (hours, salary, benefits)
• Does your company hire on a continual basis or just at certain times of the year?
• What does the hiring process entail?
• How long does the hiring process take?
• Do you offer informational interviews or job shadowing opportunities?

To learn more about the company and opportunities:

• What can a typical employee in your division expect to be doing 2, 5, or 10 years after hiring?
• What is your organization’s culture like?
• For how many years does the typical employee stay with the company?
• Are there opportunities for ongoing training through your organization?
• Do you expect your employees to relocate?
• Is there travel involved? How much travel is involved?

To learn more about the employees at the company:

• What made you choose this company and why do you stay?
• How long have you been with the company?
• What’s the one thing that most surprised you about this company?

Always thank the employer for speaking with you and offer your resume.
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Virtual Job Fair Checklist

**BEFORE THE FAIR**

- Have your resume updated and reviewed by a Career Advisor ([How to Make an Appointment and Walk-In Hours](#))
- Upload your resume into the job fair site
- Draft and practice your sound bite
- Plan your professional dress wardrobe
- Have a notepad and pen ready
- Research employers you want to meet
- Practice video interviewing
- Register for the virtual job fair and understand the login instructions, software requirements, format, etc.

**DURING THE FAIR**

- Take time to confirm the login procedure
- Give yourself a pep talk and take a deep breath before you login
- Have your notepad and pen easily accessible. In case an employer has not downloaded your resume yet, be prepared to electronically send it to them upon their request
- Locate the employers you want to meet; plan the order in which you will check in with them
- Collect contact information from the employers you meet
- Thank the employer for speaking with you and ask what the next step is in their process
- After speaking with an employer, you will have the opportunity to Take Notes in the system

**AFTER THE FAIR**

- Send a thank you letter or email to the employers you had conversations with
- Follow up with each employer based on what they instructed you to do
- Keep all your notes from the fair, as this will help if you are selected for an interview
- Maintain contact with the employers – perseverance pays off

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