Career and Internship Fair Preparation

Career and internship fairs are great opportunities for you to showcase your skills and to meet many employers seeking to hire from BC into a wide range of industries and functions. They can also be a great place to begin to explore career options and industries.

This is a checklist to help with the mechanics of preparing for a fair. To discuss your goals and career development more broadly, schedule an appointment with a Career Coach through EagleLink. Visit bit.ly/bccareerfairprep for a list of our on-campus career fairs and for more information on preparing for career fairs.

What should I do before a Career and Internship Fair?

☐ **Craft your elevator pitch** - (also known as your “30-second commercial”) Ask yourself: How do you want to introduce yourself to recruiters at the fair. Your pitch may include:
  - Your name and major
  - One or two skills, strengths, and/or accomplishments that show how you could be an asset to their organization. Consider mentioning a few of the skills employers are most seeking in candidates – bit.ly/BCcareerready.
  - An open-ended question to get the conversation started

☐ **Sample Pitch:**
  - "Hello. I’m Baldwin Eagle, a junior studying Communication. I’m looking for an internship related to marketing for next summer. I read on your web site that (name of company) has an internship program in your corporate marketing department, and I’ve done some project work that I believe gave me skills related to the internship work. Can you tell me more about the types of projects your marketing team is currently working on?"

☐ **Identify organizations that interest you** - Visit the EagleLink to obtain a list of organizations attending the various career and internship fairs. Ask yourself: Is this fair right for me? Keep in mind that the Career Center hosts several tailored fairs throughout the year, with different employer industry representation based on hiring timelines. Look at which organizations are hiring students with your intended job function interests and what kinds of opportunities they have (full time or internships). Begin to plan your time so that you connect with the employers that are most relevant to you.

☐ **Research potential employers** - Conduct research on organizations of interest to you.
  - Read through their websites: Who are their clients? What is their product or service? What is their mission? Where are they located?
  - Check their social media platforms: What kinds of content are they posting?
  - Search GoogleNews to find recent news about the organization

☐ **Compile a list of questions** you plan to ask your target organizations at the fair. You may only be able to ask a couple of questions of each organization if lines are long, so consider which questions are most important to you. Remember, this is as much about you finding a good fit as it is about them! Sample questions to ask:
  - What specific skills/qualifications does your organization look for in prospective employees/interns?
  - What is the hiring timeline/process at your organization?
  - What qualities does a successful employee at your organization possess?
  - What has been your experience at this organization?
  - What professional development/training opportunities are available for new hires?
In doing my research, I noticed [blank]; do you mind telling me a little bit about this?

- Are you recruiting on-campus?
- Do you have active job postings in our system?
- How can I position myself as an applicant for one of your positions?

☐ **Make sure your resume is polished** - Ensure your resume is error free and tailored to the industries of interest. Find more information about resumes at [bit.ly/bcresumeguide](http://bit.ly/bcresumeguide).

☐ **Have your resume reviewed** during drop-in hours at the Career Center. Once you are satisfied with your resume, print copies of your resume to distribute to employers.

☐ **Plan what to wear** - The focus of the conversation should be on your qualifications, not your clothes, so avoid bright colors and bold patterns. Generally, you’ll want to wear a well-fitting suit to career fairs. When in doubt, err on the conservative side when considering fragrances or strong-smelling aftershave.
  - For men, a shirt and tie, polished shoes, styled hair, clean shaven.
  - For women, a pants or skirt suit (make sure your skirt falls to your knees and that the slit isn’t too high), shoes (1” heel or less) and pantyhose, styled hair, minimal jewelry and neutral makeup.

☐ **Download the Careers by Symplicity app** to search for employers at the career fair, find table numbers, and see for which positions companies are hiring.

### What can I expect at the Career and Internship Fair?

☐ **Bring a nice folder or padfolio** and a pen so that you can take notes following each conversation.

☐ **Take a Career Fair Tour, if offered**. At many career fairs, the Career Center hosts tours to help show you around, provide some last minute tips, and ease your anxiety. These are particularly beneficial for first-time fair attendees, though all are welcome.

☐ **Make a good first impression** - Approach recruiters with a firm handshake. Remember to stand tall, make eye contact and smile.

☐ **Deliver your elevator pitch** and begin your conversation with the recruiter about their organization, open positions, and the hiring process.

☐ **Ask relevant questions** - Show that you’ve done your research by asking questions based on your knowledge of the career field and the organization.

☐ **Offer your resume and ask for a business card** - Some recruiters won’t accept resumes at a career fair, don’t take it personally – it is simply a procedural matter. In this case, you should ask about the application process. Write down what you discussed with the recruiter on the back of their business card so that you can include that information in your follow up email.

### I’ve been to the Fair, now what?

☐ **Celebrate**! You made it through the Career fair – great job! Hopefully you created some great relationships with people who want to hire you. Take some time to relax or treat yourself.

☐ **Follow up** - Send thank-you notes (email or written notes) promptly to any recruiter in whom you are still interested. Reiterate your interest in their organization and/or position and make references about topics you discussed with them at the fair.

☐ **Develop a system** for keeping track of recruiters and potential job leads. This could be an Excel spreadsheet with the status of applications and a record of contact with each organization.

☐ **Keep working** - Continue networking, conducting exploratory career conversations, and using other search strategies to find a job or internship. For more information on job and internship searching visit [bit.ly/bcjobsearchguide](http://bit.ly/bcjobsearchguide).