

Career Fair Preparation

BENEFITS OF ATTENDING A CAREER FAIR:

- Explore different fields and discover positions, companies, and alternative career paths
- Develop a network of contacts, 80% of jobs are found through networking
- Gain experience interacting in a professional environment

BEFORE THE FAIR:

- Check the fair website to learn about employers attending and positions available
- Research employers in advance (see “Researching Employers and Industries” handout for more information) and create a prioritized list of employers you are interested in
- Prepare your 30 second introduction (see below for examples)
- Update and print your resume, include enough for your prioritized list and about 10 extra copies in a portfolio or professional folder
- Check out the “Job Fair Success” online workshop at: www.ccse.umn.edu

DRESS AND LOGISTICS:

- Dress conservative, sensible, practical, professional (suit if possible)
- Arrive early and familiarize yourself with the floor plan
- When you approach an employer, give a firm handshake, make eye contact, smile, and offer your resume
- Consider “warming up” with organizations that are lower on your priority list before approaching your top choices
- Be polite, honest, and enthusiastic
- Speak slowly, clearly, and concretely
- Relax and be yourself
- Be prepared to discuss your qualifications and engage in conversation with the employer
- An employer may direct you to apply online, don’t be discouraged
- Ask for a business card and the preferred method of follow up
- Thank them for their time

AFTER THE FAIR:

- Send a thank you to the employers you spoke with within 48 hours via email, phone, or letter
- Maintain contact if seeking a position (1 message per 2-4 weeks)
- Hold on to company literature for future interviews
- Reflect upon what you did well on and what you can improve on for next time

30 SECOND INTRODUCTION OUTLINE:

- Name
- Year in school
- Major
- Brief overview of skills and experiences
- Your objective (what type of position you are seeking)
- Knowledge of the company

Example:

Hi, my name is Mark Simonsen-Warner, it’s nice to meet you. I’m a junior at the University of Minnesota majoring in Electrical Engineering. My background includes coursework in electrical circuits and digital system design and I’m familiar with the MATLAB and SPICE programs. I am looking for an electrical engineering internship for this coming summer. I know that your company has recently expanded their product line to include wireless communication devices and I am really interested in this area. I saw your posting on GoldPASS and I feel that I would be a strong candidate for your internship program.