

Making the Most of a Career Fair

Presented by:

Center for Career Services & Community-based
Learning

Morehead Hall, Room 337

973-655-5194

www.montclair.edu/careerservices



Introduction

- Purpose of this workshop:
 - To assist you in identifying what you want to get out of the Career Fair.
 - To teach you how you can prepare for the Career Fair by understanding what employers may want to learn about you.
 - To demonstrate ways in which you can make a good first impression and make the most of your time at the fair.

Goals

- What do you want to get out of the Career Fair?
 - Career exploration - gather career information
 - Job search
 - Internship search
 - Develop your network of career contacts

Goals

- *Career Fair Strategy*
 - Who do you want to visit?
 - Broaden your focus and include many types of employers; many recruit and hire professionals from a variety of fields.
 - Go it alone; friends may keep you from visiting booths that are of primary interest to you.

Goals

- **Career Fair Strategy (cont.)**
 - Arrive early...the fair is least busy when it begins.
 - Don't arrive at the end of the fair.
 - Listen to what the recruiter is saying. When you are finished, walk away and take notes to help you recall important information.
 - Remember, this is not an interview; it is your opportunity to make a crucial first impression.

Preparation

- Identify and research the companies you are interested in
 - Career Services website:
www.montclair.edu/careerservices
 - Career Services Library: Company Information Files
 - Visit individual company web sites

Preparation

- **What you should bring:**
 - Copies of your resume
 - List of questions for recruiters
 - Pen and paper for note-taking
 - Leather portfolio to neatly store your resumes
 - Briefcase/bag to carry information/brochures picked up at the fair

Preparation

- What to learn from employers:
 - Employment and/or hiring trends
 - Skills necessary for different careers/jobs
 - Current/future openings
 - Training, responsibilities and other information about the organization
 - Who to contact for follow-up discussion

Day of the Fair

- What makes a good impression?
 - Dress: wear a suit
 - Firm handshake
 - Greeting: demonstrate confidence, enthusiasm & interest
 - Clear & concise answers to questions
 - Asking good, well thought out questions that demonstrate your knowledge of the company

Day of the Fair

- **60 SECOND COMMERCIAL**

Purpose: To initiate conversation, make a good impression on the employer...should be practiced ahead of time

- **Describe position/type of work you are interested in.**
- **Include relevant information about education, skills, experience, and specific knowledge relevant to the position.**
- **Identify your most important personal attributes.**

Day of the Fair

- **60 Second Commercial (cont.)**
 - **Request information on the organization/position, if relevant.**
 - **Be aware of time demands on employers; do not monopolize an employer's time.**
 - **Ask specific questions and offer to follow-up after the fair, as appropriate.**

Day of the Fair

- **WALK-ABOUT TECHNIQUE**

1. Walk-about the Career Fair:

- **Get a feel for the layout of the room and employer booths.**
- **Know specifically who you want to talk to and in what specific order.**
- **Be ready to change your plans if long lines appear.**

Day of the Career Fair

2. Walk-about the Employer:

- **Instead of standing in line, approach booth from the side and pick up some of the company literature.**
- **Take a few steps back. You now have valuable information about the company and you can get a preview of the company and the recruiter.**
- **Listen to the conversations taking place and pay particular attention to the types of questions the recruiter asks. Be prepared to answer some of these same questions.**

Day of the Career Fair

2. Walk-about the Employer: (cont.)

- **Based on your research, the literature you've picked up at the fair and the conversations you've listened to, ask yourself:**
 - **Is this something I'm interested in?**
 - **Am I able to show that I'm qualified for this position?**
- **If YES, get in line. Use this waiting time wisely by reading through the material you picked up previously. Many people may not have gotten this ahead of time so you will be at an advantage.**

Day of the Career Fair

2. Walk-about the Employer: (cont.)

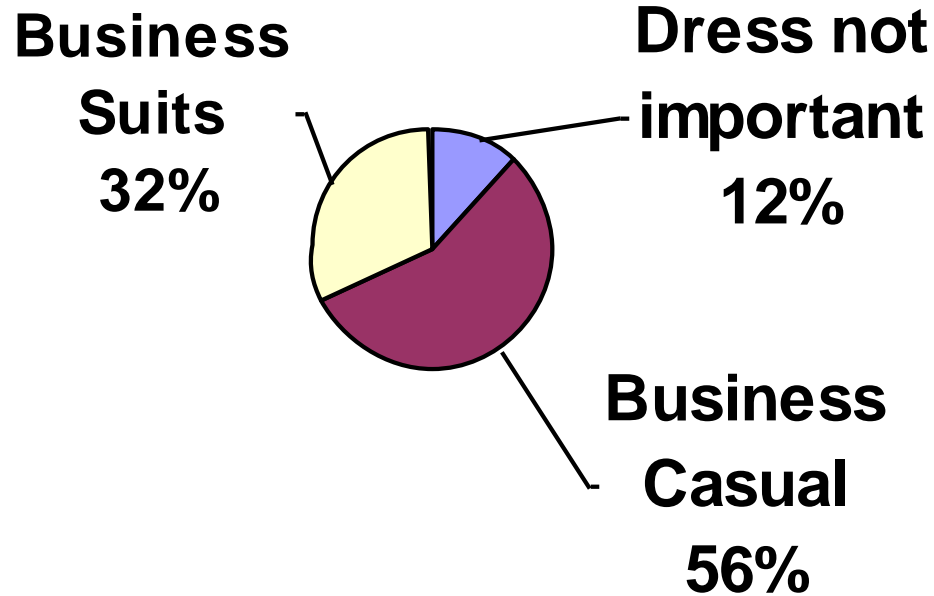
- **Stay alert and focused on what is important to the company/recruiter, and how you can help further the company's goals. How can you be an asset to them?**
- **Remember to ask for business cards so you can send a thank you note!**

Employers Want to Know...

- Specific career/job objectives
- Individual strengths and limitations
- Contributions you will make to the organization

Facts & Figures from NACE

How employers expect students to dress for job fairs



Facts & Figures

What employers expect students to bring to job fairs

	Total Responses	% Yes	% No
Resume (hard copy)	120	87%	13%
Scannable resume	115	13%	87%
Cover letter	116	28%	72%
Professional Portfolio	115	9%	91%
Reference letters	114	13%	87%
Knowledge of company or organization	117	38%	62%

Facts & Figures

Employer practices at job fairs

	Total Responses	% Yes	% No
Formally Interview students	115	13%	87%
Discuss salary	116	45%	55%
Discuss company benefits	119	84%	16%
Provide information on job openings	120	97%	3%
Provide company information	120	97%	3%
Make job offers	118	13%	87%

Facts & Figures

Follow-up employers expect from interested students

	Total Responses	% Yes	% No
Cover letter	116	58%	42%
Phone call	115	55%	45%
Completed job application	115	48%	52%

Facts & Figures

Job Fair no-no's for candidates according to employers

- **Lacking focus and not knowing what type of position to look for. Admitting, “I’ll take anything” or answering, “I don’t know” when asked about interests.**
- **Not dressing neatly or professionally.**
- **Not bringing a resume.**
- **Lacking knowledge of a company and/or confusing the company with a competitor.**

Facts & Figures

Job Fair no-no's for candidates according to employers (cont.)

- **Lacking enthusiasm or interest in the company or job opportunities.**
- **Asking about salary.**
- **Not asking any questions, asking inappropriate questions, and/or having a poor or unprofessional attitude.**

Facts & Figures

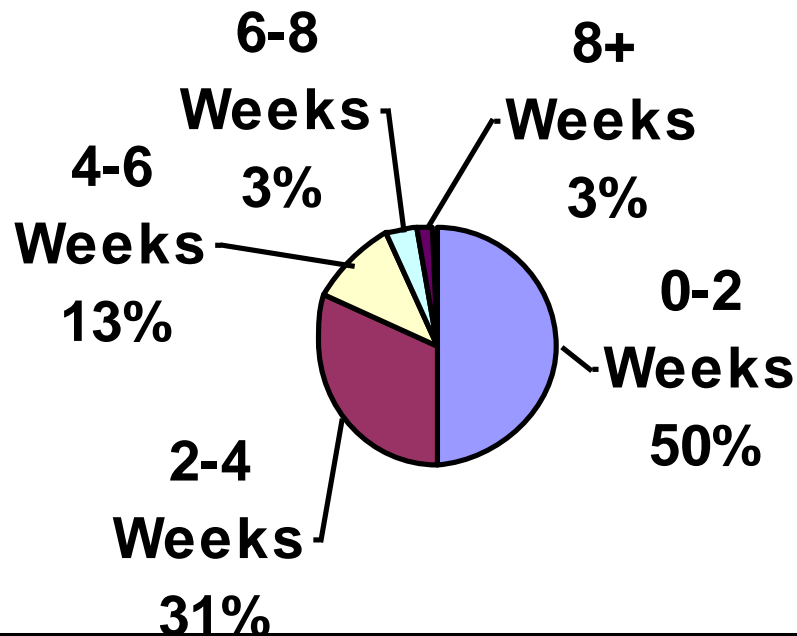
Job Fair no-no's for candidates according to employers (cont.)

Other student mistakes cited by several respondents:

- **grabbing free stuff**
- **not making eye contact**
- **lacking communication skills**
- **not being able to relocate**
- **not bringing anything to write with or on**
- **giving a weak handshake**

Facts & Figures

When students can expect to receive an invitation to interview following job fair



Conclusion

For more information, visit:

**Center for Career Services & Community-
based Learning**

Morehead Hall, Room 337

Drop-in hours: Tues & Thurs 1:30-3:30

Wed 2-4

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Thank You!

Please complete an evaluation