

Career Fairs & Expos

Whether you are looking for an internship/job opportunity or simply looking to network, Career Fairs and Expos are excellent avenues for connecting with employers. The Office of Career Services at Southeast provides two (2) Career & Internship Expos each year (one during the Fall & Spring semesters) and are open to ALL students and recent alumni.

Prior to the Fair or Expo

- Prepare your resume. Attend a resume workshop or make an appointment with Career Services to get feedback.
- **Visit the Career Fair/Expo website** for a complete list of employers who will attend the event. semo.edu/careers
- **Attend workshops and programs** sponsored by Career Services leading up to the Career Expo.
- **Research participating companies.** Research organizations to determine fit paying attention to details such as mission statement, work climate, etc.
- **Develop a plan of attack.** Determine your list top companies to meet with first.
- **Polish and prepare copies of your resume.** Review for errors and customize for each targeted organization. Print out multiple copies to bring with you.
- **Professional and Appropriate Dress** is critical for the field you are going into. Make sure clothes are clean and wrinkle free. Wear shoes that are comfortable yet professional. Choose modest accessories covering cleavage, body art and piercings.
- **Bring a portfolio or folder** with pad and paper. Do not bring a large distracting bag or purse.

Preparing your “Elevator Pitch”

Your elevator pitch is your quick, personal selling statement that can be used when meeting employers at events such as a Career Expo.

It should include:

1. Who you are, plus a credential. Your name and something that differentiates you from your peers (major, athlete, veteran).
2. Your specific goal/career interest.
3. Demonstrate your interest in the field using specific examples.
4. Why you are qualified. Demonstrate qualifications by sharing leadership and work experience, skills, strengths.
5. A question or request for assistance.

Craft Your Pitch

1. Hello my name is _____ and I'm completing a degree in _____.
2. I am interested in a career (or position) in the _____ industry.
3. I have been involved (during college in _____).
4. I have developed skills in _____. I also had an internship/employment with _____ and discovered that I really enjoy _____.
5. Could you tell me more about _____?

Pitch Example

“Nice to meet you, I’m Alex Biondo. I’m currently a junior studying Computer Science and hope to become a computer programmer when I graduate. I enjoy developing computer applications for simple business solutions. The position you have listed on Redhawkjobs.com seems like it would be a good fit for someone with my skills. I’d like to hear more about opportunities with your organization.”

At the Fair/Expo

- Establish rapport with a firm handshake, good eye contact, body posture and remember to smile. Use your elevator speech!
- Gather information and materials, but don’t be greedy with the goodies (pens, magnets, etc.)
- Answer questions, showcase your knowledge of each company, and don’t forget to ask questions.
- Ask about their recruitment timetable, find out next steps in the process.
- Don’t overstay your welcome. If the recruiter starts looking over your shoulder, it’s time to move on.
- Don’t forget to collect business cards. If you can’t get a business card, be sure to get all the contact information spelled correctly.
- Remember, politeness counts! Don’t forget to thank each person for their time.
- Network, network, network! Make connections with people, not just recruiters. The more people in your network, the stronger it becomes.

Potential Questions to Ask Employers Career Fairs & Expos

1. What positions does your organization have open to recent graduates?
2. Are there special qualifications (besides a degree) required for these positions?
3. What are typical career paths for college graduates starting in an entry-level position with your organization?
4. What skills are most important to your organization?
5. Can you tell me more about the application and hiring process?
6. Does your company offer internships?
7. What advice do you have for someone wanting to enter the field?
8. What is the current demand and outlook for the field/industry?
9. What do you like about working for your organization?
10. May I contact you later if I have further questions?

After the Fair/Expo

- Send thank-you notes to recruiters thanking them for their time, interest and help in your job search.
- Reflect on your experience. Is there anything that you could have done differently?
- Plan to follow-up with recruiters about two weeks after the fair to communicate your continued interest.
- Track your contacts and leads.