

BEFORE YOU GO

- Know the attending employers. Most career fairs have a website with this information. If not, contact the sponsor to ask.
- Identify specific positions each company is seeking to fill.
- Gather information about each company and their culture so you will be prepared to converse knowledgeably with the organization's representatives.
- Do enough research to make "A" and "B" lists of employers to visit.
- Print plenty of copies of your resume on good quality paper (at least 20% bond, white, ivory, or pale grey). Prepare more copies than you think you'll need.
- Have a career counselor proofread and critique your resume at the Career Center.
- Prepare a 20-30 second introduction of yourself to use with employers (example below).
- Know the dress code. Usually, a business suit is appropriate when seeking a professional position or internship. Business casual is appropriate for a summer job or general information.
- Develop questions to ask employers based on your research of their organization.
- For the NWU Student/Employer Reception, upload your resume into the JobZone so participating employers can access your credentials in advance.
- Understand that not all employers may be filling immediate positions. Depending on hiring needs, an employer may be attending to increase name recognition on campus, survey the talent for future recruitment efforts, or collect resumes for upcoming hiring needs.
- Pack the items you're going to take with you the night before. This may include pens, a notebook, resumes, completed job applications, and a portfolio to carry items.

YOUR INTRODUCTION: PREPARE YOUR PITCH

- Prepare a two-to three-line script for yourself before you go.
- Tell the recruiter your name, your class year, and whether you're interested in a full-time or internship position. Follow with your career interest, your major(s), relevant experience or skills, and why you approached the recruiter.
- Tailor your speech to the employer based on your previous research of each company.
- Articulate how you'll fit with the company and what you can bring to the table.
- End your introduction by asking a focused question that will engage the employer in conversation. For example, "Could you tell me more about your manager trainee program?"
- Finish the conversation by asking the representative about the next step in the hiring process.
- Say thank you.
- Practice your introduction and seek feedback from others. Use their constructive criticism and try again.
- Incorporate positive nonverbal communication such as eye contact, facial expressions, body language, and posture.

SAMPLE INTRODUCTIONS

Introduction 1:

Hello, I'm _____ and I'm a junior English major at Nebraska Wesleyan University. I have completed three journalism courses and I am interested in obtaining an internship during spring semester that will provide me experience in the field of journalism. What internship opportunities do you have available?

Introduction 2:

My name is _____. I'll be graduating in May with a degree in psychology from Nebraska Wesleyan University. I'm looking for a position where I can apply my background in child and adolescent psychology and my internship at the Child Advocacy Center. Is this the type of background that would fit in at _____ ?

WHILE YOU ARE THERE

- Arrive early. Take time to survey the layout of the fair and determine the order in which you plan to visit with companies. Long lines may form quickly at large or high profile companies that interest you.
- If nametags are distributed, use one. Place it on the right side of your body, so it is easier to read when shaking hands with a representative.
- Watch your manners and mannerisms. Don't chew gum or fidget. Stand up straight, speak loudly and clearly, and have a confident handshake with good eye contact.
- Don't treat a career fair like a social event. Don't move from employer to employer with a group of friends.
- Have an open mind. Take advantage of the opportunity to meet employers you have not considered.
- Interpersonal skills, communication skills, and professional social skills are critical to an employer, yet difficult to demonstrate on a resume or cover letter. Act interested, focused, and enthusiastic. Be friendly, assertive, and sincere.
- Be concise, polite, and direct. You have a brief period of time to make an impression and get the information you need.
- Wear comfortable shoes.
- Find out about specific available positions, company culture, and diversity to help determine which companies provide the best match for you.
- Ask for a business card and jot down notes on the back of the card or in a notebook after each encounter. This will help you remember details and any follow-up instructions.
- Be prepared for some employers to not accept hard copy resumes; they may ask you to apply online instead.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR THE EMPLOYER

- What kind of entry-level positions exist within your company?
- What does your company consider the three most important qualities in an employee?
- What courses do you suggest candidates take to be successful?
- What personality traits are you looking for in candidates?
- What made you choose this company?
- How long have you been with the company?
- What goals does your company have for the future?
- Does your company hire seasonally or on a continual basis?
- How long is the hiring process for an individual hire?
- How many employees does your company have?
- Are graduate degrees important? If so, in what areas?
- For how many years does the entry-level employee typically stay with the company?
- What is the retention rate in the company?
- Do you expect your employees to relocate?
- What are the next steps in the hiring process?

AFTER THE FAIR

- If you didn't do so at the fair, take notes about each organization before you forget important information.
- Send thank you notes to the companies that most interest you. Address the companies' hiring needs, your qualifications, and your desire for an interview.
- Complete any requested online applications.
- Expect employers to follow-up with you within two to four weeks if they want to interview you.
- Employers expect follow-up from you in that time period as well, either in the form of an email, phone call, or completed job application.
- An employer may not extend an interview offer if you fail to take initiative to follow-up with them.

SAMPLE THANK YOU LETTER

Dear Mr. Barnett:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me at the NWU Student / Employer Reception yesterday. I certainly appreciate your time and attention in the midst of seeing so many job-seeking students.

You were extremely thorough in explaining Wells Fargo's customer service and marketing trainee program. Now that I have a better idea what the position entails, I am even more convinced that I would be an asset to your team and to Wells Fargo.

My solid education from Nebraska Wesleyan University's Business Department and the fact that I have worked my way through college show my work ethic and determination, two qualities you said were important to success at Wells Fargo.

I look forward to an opportunity to visit Wells Fargo's office and speak to you further about the trainee program. I will contact you next week to arrange an appointment.

Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ivanna Job