

Preparing for the Career Fair

Remember that a Career Fair is different from a Job Fair. A Career Fair is an opportunity for an employer to brand their organization on campus and educate potential applicants on career paths, their hiring processes, etc. This provides you opportunities to learn more about a particular employer, show interest in potential jobs, create a connection with a recruiter and brand yourself with a variety of organizations. Here are some suggestions on how to make the most of your experience at the October 8th Career Fair.

Step 1: Target and Research Employers:

- ✚ Visit http://careerservices.neu.edu/career_fairs to review the list of companies attending the Career Fair.
- ✚ Choose five companies that you are very interested in learning more about and then select 5 additional companies you would also like to speak to at the fair.
- ✚ Research the companies and visit their websites to learn more about their products, services and employment opportunities for college students.
- ✚ Search *HuskyCareerLink (HCL)* to review the positions the companies have posted for Northeastern students.
- ✚ Use the information you gather to ask relevant questions about the company and their employment opportunities.

Step 2: Prepare Your Resume:

- ✚ Be sure your resume reflects all of your work experience including internships and co-op positions. You should also list your campus activities and the volunteer opportunities you have participated in recently.
- ✚ **Have your resume critiqued! Northeastern students should take advantage of *Walk-In Hours* offered Monday through Friday from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. in the Career Services Office.**
- ✚ **Participate in Resumania!** – A resume critique workshop for students and employers scheduled for October 5th from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. Select the *View Upcoming Calendar* option on the main page of HuskyCareerLink to learn more about this event.

Don't have a resume?

- Review the *Resume* section on the Career Services website (<http://careerservices.neu.edu>).
- Complete a draft of your resume.
- Visit Career Services (located in Stearns 202) during *Walk-In Hours* (Monday through Friday from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.) to get feedback and advice.

Helpful Hint: Be aware that federal regulations may prevent some employers from accepting your resume. In this instance ask the recruiter if you can leave your name and contact information.

Step 3: Practice Your "60 Second Commercial":

- ✚ Your "commercial" should advertise your skills and accomplishments to a recruiter.
- ✚ Be sure to have specific examples you want to use when you visit a company's table at the Career Fair.

- ✚ Verbally rehearse your “commercial” before the fair to make sure your message is clear and concise.

Additional advice for international students -

- Know your visa status beforehand and which jobs you will and will not be eligible for with a US company.
- Identify which participating employers will consider hiring international students.
- Avoid companies that express interest in hiring US Citizens or Permanent Residents only.
- When speaking with employers - be sure to focus on your skills, experiences and interest in the company and not your visa status.
- Know which companies have branch offices in your home country.

Step 4: Attend a Workshop: Northeastern students should take advantage of the following workshops to learn more about how to interact with employers at the Career Fair.

- ✚ **International Students Career Fair Prep: September 24th/2:00 to 4:00 p.m./CSC Ballroom**
Explore cultural elements in body language, presentation of self, levels of formality and more that will help increase your confidence as you approach employers at the upcoming career fair. You will develop and practice a short introduction (“the elevator speech”) that you will use widely in your job search at career fairs, networking events, and in making other contacts.

- ✚ **Career Fair Survival Guide: October 5th/6:00 to 7:00 p.m./Curry Center – Indoor Quad**
Learn directly from a panel of company recruiters what they expect of you, and what you can do before, during, and after the Career Fair to make the most of the experience. Students can also learn how to market themselves to employers by practicing a "60 Second Commercial".

Step 5: “Dress for Career Fair Success”: Students want to be sure to present a professional image at the Career Fair. Decisions are made more quickly at a career fair than at a regular interview, so image is crucial. Business attire is a must, as is good grooming. Be sure to try on the clothes you intend to wear in advance, and make sure all items are cleaned, ironed, and fit appropriately. Here are helpful guidelines.

WOMEN	MEN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wear a two-piece suit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wear a two-piece suit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wear a button down shirt or blouse with a conservative neckline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wear a white or light blue button down shirt
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If a skirt suit - skirt length no more than 2” above the knee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wear a conservative tie (both color and pattern)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Closed-toe shoes with heels no more than 2” high 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wear business-style leather shoes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hair styled neatly (i.e. away from face or pulled back) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clean shaven or neatly trimmed facial hair
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wear understated make-up and small earrings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Your socks should match your suit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Carry a briefcase or portfolio instead of a purse or backpack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Carry a briefcase or portfolio instead of a backpack

During the Career Fair

- ✚ Turn your cell phone off.
- ✚ Be independent! Approaching an employer by yourself (vs. with a group of friends) shows that you're confident, prepared and ready to speak with a recruiter.
- ✚ Make a good impression! Greet the employer and introduce yourself. Be sure to smile, make eye contact and use a firm handshake.
- ✚ Use your "60 Second Commercial" to sell yourself! Be ready to state what you can offer a company in regards to your skills and experience. Remember to initiate the conversation and make the employer want to know more about your background.
- ✚ Demonstrate your knowledge of the company's mission including its products and services.
- ✚ Remember to ask the employer if they have any questions for you to answer.
- ✚ **Helpful Hint!** Be sure to get the recruiter's name and a business card whenever possible. Jot down notes after speaking with a recruiter so you can personalize the thank you notes you send after the fair.

After the Career Fair

- ✚ **Get Organized!** Review your conversations and what you learned from employers. Organize business cards and other company materials.
- ✚ **Follow-Up:** Send a thank you to the recruiters you spoke to at the fair (email or snail mail). This reaffirms your interest in the position and company.
- ✚ **Contact Employers:** Call or email employers to ask about the status of the position(s) and express your continued interest. Sometimes recruiters will collect resumes and keep them on file for months after a career fair. That is why following up with them is crucial.

Best wishes for success at Northeastern's Regional Career Fair!
The University Career Services Staff