

PREPARING FOR A CAREER FAIR



Career Planning
& Resource Center

BEFORE THE FAIR

✓ Identify and Research Organizations

See who is attending the fair on the Career Planning and Resource Center website. Identify organizations hiring people with your major or similar majors and with internships or positions related to your major/career.

✓ Write Your Resume and Have it Critiqued

Bring multiple copies and have it reviewed before the fair by a staff member at the Career Planning and Resource Center during walk-in advising.

A resume is not necessary if you are not looking for a job and are attending to gather information for making decisions about your major or career. However, you never know when an opportunity might present itself.

✓ Develop and Practice Your Introduction

Create an elevator speech and rehearse it out loud to help you make a strong first impression.

Examples:

"Hello, Mr. Jacobs. My name is Linda Montana and I'm graduating in May with a degree in psychology. Last year I was a marketing intern at XYZ where I assisted with customer support and increasing their social media presence. I am interested in learning about opportunities within your organization that would utilize these skills."

"Hello, Ms. Gilliam. My name is Jeff Smith. I'm currently undecided on my major, but an area I am interested in is finance. Can you tell me about the types of financial positions you have in your company and the qualification: you prefer someone to have for those positions?"

WONDERING WHAT QUESTIONS TO ASK?

Look on the back of this page

WHAT TO WEAR

If you are looking for an internship or job,
dress professionally!

Search online for "career fair dress" for specifics on what is appropriate and what is not.

If you are not looking for a job, but attending the event to gather information to make decisions about your major or career, it is still expected that you are well-groomed and dressed nicely.

Always look your best!

DURING THE FAIR

- Sign in at the registration table, get a map, make a name badge, and place it on your right side.
- Identify the locations of the organizations you plan to speak with and prioritize them if you have limited time. You may need to wait in line to speak with some representatives.
- Carry a pen and notepad to take notes after speaking with each employer.
- These notes will be helpful for follow-up and writing a thank you letter.
- Politely request a business card for follow-ups.
- It is perfectly normal to be nervous. Take a few deep breaths and seek out a UWM staff member for support.

AFTER THE FAIR

- Within a day or two of the event, email a thank you letter to all employers you spoke with.
- Follow up in a timely manner on any actions that were recommended or asked of you such as completing an application, sending your resume to another person in the company, etc.

QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK

Learn About Majors and Careers

- “I haven’t chosen a major yet, but I know I’m interested (or skilled) in x, y, and z. What types of positions in your organization (or industry) utilize these areas of interest/skill?”
- “I’m considering a career in ____ (or a major in ____). What positions in your organization are related to this career area?”
- “What majors do you most hire for _____ positions?”
- “What responsibilities would someone in the career of _____ have within your organization?”

Skills and Experiences Needed to Succeed

- “What skills and qualifications do you most look for in candidates for internships and/or recent graduates?”
- “What types of work experiences would prepare me for a career in _____?”
- “What are the characteristics of your most successful employees?”
- “What skills do you find most marketable in your industry today and what skills do you predict being necessary in the future?”
- “Are graduate degrees important to advancing within your organization? Which ones?”

Hiring Needs and Application Process for Internships and Full-Time Positions

- “What entry level positions do you typically have available?”
- “How many positions in your company are currently open in my career field?”
- “Could you please describe the hiring process for your organization and how long it takes?”
- “Does your company only hire at certain times of the year or on an ongoing basis?”
- “What is the most effective way to learn about and apply for positions with your organization?”
- “Do you offer internships or part-time positions to help people gain career-related skills?”
- “Have you hired past interns for full time, permanent positions?”

Position and Company Information

- “Please describe the qualifications, responsibilities and specific time requirements of an internship with your organization.”
- “What are the day-to-day responsibilities of this job?”
- “What can I expect to be doing the first year?”
- “What is the work environment/culture like at _____?”
- “What training programs does your organization offer?”
- “For how many years does the typical employee stay with the company?”
- “What is a realistic time frame for advancement?”
- “What are the company's strengths and weaknesses compared to its competition?”
- “What makes your organization different from your competitors?”
- “How long have you been with the organization?”
- “What made you choose this organization and why do you stay?”
- “What initiatives/steps has your organization adopted towards diversity?”