

How to Prepare for the Career & Graduate School Fair



Why Should You Attend?

- **Allows you to network with industry professionals:**
 - Not all organizations may be recruiting but it's a great chance to get an inside name you can follow up with
 - Some exhibitors will be recruiting for graduate level studies
- Learn about the various opportunities, professions, and graduate level studies
- Gain insight into skills & values needed in today's workforce
- Make a contact
- Promote yourself

Why Do Organizations Attend?

- To fill current (or upcoming) job openings
- To showcase graduate studies programs
- To see the quality of MUN & CNA students/alumni
- To promote a profession or field
- To promote their organization as the one of choice
- To maintain relationships with universities/ colleges

There are 3 Stages of a Career Fair:

- Before: The Preparation
- During: The Actual Event
- After: Follow-up

Before: The Preparation

- Know what you want to achieve by attending
- Know what exhibitors are attending
- Research organizations of interest
- Know the location of the event
- Know when it begins and closes
- **Book Appointment with a Career Advisor or Review Tips on [Career Services Website](#):**
 - Resume & cover letter writing
 - Interview tips
- **Develop an up-to-date resume**
 - Have it critiqued beforehand and/or review our [Resume and Cover Letter Writing Guide](#) for sample resumes- **Tailor your resume for each organization or job ad you apply for**

- Have a business portfolio to carry your resume, a pen, notepad, etc...
- Plan your visit
- Develop some pertinent questions
- Develop a concise description of yourself, what your interests are & your future plans
- **Prepare an Introduction of Yourself and Your Skills**
 - A 30-second "sales pitch"
 - Name, year, major, opportunities seeking, relevant experience, skills and strengths, and company knowledge

30- Second "Sales Pitch"

PAWS is a useful technique when answering open-ended questions about yourself (e.g. "tell me about yourself" or "why should we hire you?") during an interview but it can also be helpful during a sales pitch when speaking with industry professionals or attending events such as a Career Fair:

- **Personal** – who you are and why you are interested in the organization.
- **Academic** – your academic interests and how your education/training relates to the organization.
- **Work** – previous relevant work/volunteer experiences, and what you accomplished or gained from these experiences.
- **Skills** – the skills you developed or demonstrated in previous experiences and how they relate to the job or organization in general.

During: The Actual Event

- This is your chance to sell yourself
 - **Dress Appropriately:**
 - The #1 complaint from past exhibitors has been students not dressing for the occasion
 - First impressions are lasting ones an employer has of you—make it a positive one
 - Business casual attire creates a better professional image than jeans and a t-shirt
 - Remember, you are representing the present and future of MUN and CNA students
 - Approach the exhibitors to converse & find out more about what they offer
 - Extend a warm greeting and firm handshake
 - Introduce yourself by using your full name
 - Maintain good eye contact
 - Show enthusiasm and zeal
 - Hand out your resume
 - Create small talk
 - **Ask good questions**
 - What skills are important for this work?
 - Do you have any advice for someone who is interested in working in this field?
 - What positions will you be recruiting for and from which academic backgrounds?
 - Would I need more than an undergraduate degree for employment or advancement?
- [Informational Interview](#) questions may be used when meeting exhibitors during Career Fairs

Exhibitors Not Recruiting for Your Discipline?

- **Feedback From Past Students/Alumni Who Have Attended:**
 - "There is no one here recruiting for my major or degree..."
 - "The only exhibitors here are for other degrees, not really mine..."
- If interested in an exhibitor that hasn't listed your discipline, you can:
 - Still approach them and give your sales pitch.
 - Ask such questions as:
 - I know you're here recruiting for _____, but do you hire individuals with my background?

- Would you be able to provide me with a contact within your organization who is better suited to address my background?
- What would you consider that I do to better enhance my chances of getting employed by your organization as I'm really interested in working for you?
- Listen carefully to others
- Be polite & turn off cell phones
- Thank organizations for their time
- Keep track of the exhibitors you spoke with
- If interested, ask if you can follow up

After: Follow Up

- Record / file the information provided for future reference
- Follow up with any contacts of interest that you have gathered by connecting via [LinkedIn](#) or gather business cards/contact info
- Send a follow up email/letter, LinkedIn message to those exhibitors you wish to pursue

Sample Follow Up Email/ Letter:

Hello [Name of Recruiter/Exhibitor],

Thanks again for the opportunity to meet you at the Career & Graduate School Fair on September 27th.

It was great learning about [detail from meeting], and I believe my [relevant, personal experience] would make me a great fit for [Company].

I would love to connect regarding a potential career with [Company] and look forward to hearing from you in the future.

Thanks again for your time!

Best,

[Your Name]

Takeaways:

- Notes about contacts you made & people you spoke with
- Information about organizations you have contacted
- Self-confidence when interacting with organization representatives
- A better sense of your career options

Do's for the Career Fair:**Do:**

- Be assertive, not rude
- Be aware of others waiting to speak with exhibitors
- Realize that exhibitors like to speak to small groups
- Dress appropriately
- Have copies of your resume on hand

Don'ts for the Career Fair:**Don't:**

- Wait for someone to approach you
- Ask obvious or redundant questions
- Ask about salary and benefits
- Monopolize someone's time
- Have a lack of direction and focus
- Interrupt and then not listen
- Cruise the booths with a group of friends
- Carry your backpack, large purse, or other paraphernalia with you
- "Wing it" with employers
- Arrive during the last half hour of the event

And Remember!

Just be yourself and make the most out of the day! Be sincere and don't come across as false...
...and sell yourself as only you know how to!

Tidbits from Employers:

- "(Students) need more practical experience. Theory is great but real life is somewhat different."
– Co-ops, internships, volunteer, summer job, MUCEP, etc...
- "Previous work experience is highly valued—they (graduates with work experience) are aware of the environment, pressures, and norms in an industry environment. They also have tangible hands-on skills that distinguish them from other students."
- "Hires with previous work experience... bring a tool box to the table."

Career Tips and Resources:

[Meet Employers](#)

[Career & Graduate School Fair](#)

[Career Resources](#)

[Interview Tips](#)

[Memorial's Online Record of Experience \(MORE\)](#)

For more information or to book an appointment with a Career Advisor, please email careerdevelopment@mun.ca, visit UC 4002, or call (709) 864-2033.

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