

MOUNT HOLYOKE  
**CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER**  
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## **Presenting Yourself at Career Fairs**

As with any course or summer job, having a purpose behind your participation results in a more profitable experience. Career Fairs can prove to be excellent networking opportunities if you prepare in advance.

### **Before the Career Fair:**

#### **What do you want to get out of this event?**

- Company information?
- Better understanding of positions?
- Job opportunities?

*Knowing your goals at the outset will help you target your questions.*

#### **What do I need to bring?**

- Carry a folder or portfolio with at least 10 copies of your resume.
- Prepare questions in advance that will help you gather the necessary information to answer the first question above.
- Optional: You may want to include a transcript, a list of references, a portfolio of written materials or other job-specific information.

*Have your materials easily accessible. You don't want to fumble to get them out!*

#### **How should I prepare?**

##### Study the list of participating organizations – who do you want to see?

- Prioritize your list
- Target your efforts – to whom do you want to speak in the morning, in the afternoon, etc. Think about your energy levels.
- Will the information gathered from one organization help in my presentation to the next?

##### Research the organizations

- Check the employer files, Hoover's Handbook (business section of the CDC Library), Fortune Magazines, and the World Wide Web.

- Learn as much as you can and target your questions accordingly. What is this organization looking for in an ideal candidate?
- Prepare a list of questions for each general industry in which you are interested.

### Prepare a 2-3 minute commercial of yourself

- Who am I?
- Why am I interested in this organization?
- What knowledge, experiences and skills can I offer?
- Demonstrate what you know about the organization.
- Practice your approach in the mirror, with friends, and then test it out on a company at the fair. Rework it if necessary.

## **During the Career Fair**

- Make a good first impression
- Show enthusiasm!
- Have a firm handshake
- Maintain eye contact
- Remember that body language can often speak louder than words
- Speak clearly
- Listen carefully to what the representative has to say
- Show confidence through your voice
- Present your resume
- Ask for a business card before leaving
- Ask how the organization would like you to proceed from here
- Are you speaking to the appropriate contact for your area of interest?

## **After the Career Fair**

- Write a targeted thank you within 48 hours of the fair
- Reiterate your interest and why you are a good candidate
- Enclose another copy of your resume