

# Career Fair 101

Each fall and winter semester, over 300 employers come to BYU to collect resumes and vet potential future employees at the BYU Career Fairs. If you are looking for an internship or a full-time job, these events are the best place to start! However, if you want to succeed, you need to know both your skills and your goals for a future career. With a little preparation and research you can succeed at each event and have employers lined up to hire you by the time you graduate.



## BEFORE THE CAREER FAIR

The biggest complaint from employers at BYU Career Fairs is students who come to the event unprepared. Before you go to the Career Fair, you need to know your skills and how to introduce yourself to an employer. Ask yourself what skills and experiences you want to discuss to stand out to the companies, and then practice sharing those so you learn to be concise and direct. A good intro formula to follow is:

### 1. Present

What are you studying?  
Where are you currently working?

### 2. Past

Where have you worked the past?  
What made you interested in this field?

### 3. Future

What are your short-term or long-term career goals?  
Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

You should also understand the background of the employers you hope to speak with before the fair. When researching employers, be sure to use BYU Bridge and the BYU Career Fair+ app. In both of these resources you'll find brief company descriptions, available positions, and majors each company is most interested in hiring, along with a host of other useful Career Fair helps. You don't need to know everything about a particular company, but you do need to know enough to hold more than a surface-level conversation with a company rep. Identify top skills they look for in all their job descriptions, understand their mission statement or company-wide focus, and be familiar with recent newsworthy projects or initiatives they've been involved in.

The quickest way to be forgotten by an employer at the Career Fair is to know nothing about them and to ask questions you could easily have answered by a quick trip to their website. If the recruiter tells you to just "apply online," that usually means they weren't impressed because you didn't know anything significant about them.

By knowing both your own skills and the background of the company you wish to work for, you can use your prepared introduction to show the employer how your skills and experiences will benefit them specifically.

## BYU CAREER FAIR<sup>+</sup>



### FEATURES

- + Complete Employer Listing
- + Interactive Floorplan
- + Event Details
- + Announcements For Real-time Updates
- + Fair Tips Section To Help You Prepare

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## AT THE CAREER FAIR

Once you've prepared yourself for the Career Fair, it's time to make a plan. Don't just wander aimlessly around the event looking for the best swag. Use a map (like the interactive one in BYU Career Fair+ App) to determine where you want to go and who you are most interested in talking to. You should have at least 3-5 companies in mind, but it's also OK to talk to others too. This keeps you focused on places you'd really like to work and prevents you from talking yourself out of an interaction. Also, try setting goals regarding the number of resumes you want to give out, the number of quality conversations you want to have, or even the number of times you're allowed to walk by an employer without introducing yourself.

Bring many copies of your resume (between 10-20 depending on how much time you have) and dress as though you were going to a job interview. Company Reps make quick decisions simply based on your appearance and non-verbal cues, so look your best and be confident! If you struggle with talking to new people, try taking a friend with you to the event. You can encourage each other and brush each other off when a conversation doesn't go well and, seriously, it's ok to take a break if you feel exhausted or overwhelmed. Do a lap outside the Career Fair, or sit down to catch your breath and re-center. Then get right back to achieving your goals!

Lastly, the real secret to success at the Career Fair is being open to opportunities other than those you initially planned on. Large and popular companies will always have big lines, but most of the jobs available at the fair are found in smaller companies who get overshadowed by the bigger ones. Pull out the BYU Career Fair+ app, read the company description, and then introduce yourself! The smaller companies will be thrilled to have a meaningful chat with you while the bigger ones will be in a hurry to get through the line so everyone has a chance to hand in a resume.

## AFTER THE CAREER FAIR

Once you've introduced yourself and given out resumes to all of your target employers (and hopefully a few more!), your work is not done. Thank-You notes are a great way to make sure a company rep remembers you and your resume. You can either send a quick email (with your resume attached) or connect with them on LinkedIn in order to say thanks.

### FALL 2016 CAREER FAIRS STATS

**352**

Companies at Fairs

**6269**

Total Overall Attendance

**2059**

Total On-Campus Interviews

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With the thousands of students who come to each Career Fair and the pressure to introduce yourself and be compelling to employers, Career Fairs can be very overwhelming. However, there is a reason so many employers devote resources and people to these events...

# THEY ARE HERE TO HIRE YOU!

So, make a plan, prepare, and network your way to your future Career!

