



How to Navigate a Career Fair

A career fair is an excellent place for students to make connections with recruiters and companies, to learn more about what companies are looking for in a candidate, and to find out about available internships and full-time positions. For first-year sophomore Isenberg students, this is a great opportunity to practice your elevator pitch, network, and explore opportunities you want to begin working toward.

Before the Career Fair

- ✎ **Research companies** (internet search, company website, social media, press release, [Career Insider](#), [Mergent Intellect](#), and [IBISWorld](#)) ahead of time so you know which ones most interest you.
- ✎ Create a **game plan** for the companies you've targeted. [IsenbergWorks](#) lists all the companies in advance that are attending the Isenberg Career Day. [Handshake](#) will provide company information related to other career fairs on campus.
- ✎ Write each targeted company on an **index card** and jot down a few details about the company, as well as how you believe you can contribute to it. (*This is part of your own research and preparation, and should not be conducted in front of a recruiter*).
- ✎ Create your **priority list** of companies to talk to. (*At the fair, do not start with priority company #1; practice with other companies first*).
- ✎ Practice your **elevator pitch**, including reasons why you are interested in the targeted company.
- ✎ Finalize your **resume** using the Chase Career Center's [The Resume Guide](#). It is recommended that you have your final resume reviewed two weeks prior to the career fair.
- ✎ Print your **resume on high quality resume paper** and store your copies neatly in a folder or padfolio. Make sure to bring enough resumes to provide each employer on your priority list, plus 10 more (*i.e. if you've targeted 10 companies, bring 20 resumes*).
- ✎ Plan your **professional business outfit** (see Chase Career Center's online [Dress for Success guide](#)).
- ✎ Prepare **specific questions** you want to ask each company based on your company research. Examples could include:
 - *What positions are you looking for right now? Why you are interested in such positions?*
 - *What do you like best about working at company X?*
 - *What kinds of projects would a new hire be working on in the first couple of months?*
 - *Could you share examples of how interns/new hires have contributed to the team?*
- ✎ Prepare **comments/information** that you want to get across to each recruiter. Recruiters can meet hundreds of students in a day, and you need to **find a way to stand out** by highlighting:
 - A significant experience or project that you have completed,
 - Why you are driven to learn at Isenberg or pursuing your specific career interest
 - Your three most significant traits and skills that be of value to an employer
 - Why you like X company and why you are interested in working there



At the Career Fair

- ☞ **Arrive early.** Pick-up the floor plan at the registration table, locate your top companies, and map out your route.
- ☞ Make sure your **phone is turned off or set to vibrate** and out of sight.
- ☞ **Practice first.** Rehearse your elevator pitch and networking skills with representatives from a company that is not on your priority list before approaching the ones you are most interested in.
- ☞ Note that the lunch hour is often the busiest with one recruiter (if there are two) breaking for lunch. Also, most students will show up during that time period.
- ☞ Avoid the last hour of the fair, if you can. Recruiters can be burnt out by then.
- ☞ Offer a strong **handshake**, make **eye contact**, smile, and try to be relaxed enough to show your personality.
- ☞ Provide each recruiter with your resume and **discuss your accomplishments**. Do not simply leave your resume on the employer's table.
- ☞ **Listen** to how other attendees talk to the recruiters. You might learn something.
- ☞ **Don't interrupt** another student talking with a recruiter. **Be mindful** that other students want a chance to speak with the recruiters too, so watch your own time. If the conversation is going well, you can tell the recruiter: *"I am mindful of other students who want to speak with you and I would like to continue this conversation at another time. May I follow-up with you by email?"*
- ☞ Don't leave an employer's table until you have asked for their **business card** so you have the correct spelling of the recruiter's name and **contact information**.
- ☞ After visiting each table, but out of sight from the recruiters, jot down **notes about who you met** and any important information you discussed. As an alternative, you can jot down your notes immediately after attending the career fair.

After the Career Fair

- ☞ Send **thank you notes** via email or LinkedIn message within 1-2 days of the career fair to each recruiter you met. Make the notes personal and reference something specific that you discussed. A good trick is to write your notes on the back of each recruiter's business card, so that you can refer back to them and remember specific details of your conversation when following up.
- ☞ Complete any **online applications**, if companies require them.
- ☞ **Explore the companies** you are most interested in further, and make a detailed, chronological action plan to pursue those opportunities.