

Virtual Career Fair Tips

Before the Fair:

Dress professionally- Present yourself appropriately. Even though this is a Virtual Career Fair, and perhaps you will be attending from home, you still need to dress appropriately. This is your opportunity to make a lasting positive impression. Dressing the part also helps you feel more prepared and confident during the virtual career fair. Aim for a neat and polished look, including well-groomed hair. When choosing your attire for a virtual career fair, a classic look appears best on video instead of clothing with patterns. Patterns can sometimes create camera distortion issues or distractions.

Easy Virtual profile, resume, and social media profiles- Make sure your Easy Virtual profile is updated. Employers are viewing this. Target your resumé and cover letter - Present your experiences, education and skills in a way that showcases your assets and piques employers' interest in you. Upload the updated version of your resumé in the Easy Virtual platform before joining the Virtual Career Fair. Employers are also at their computers and can easily look you up. So, take the time to update your social media profiles, such as LinkedIn, and make sure the information presented is consistent with your resume.

Have your questions ready - Come prepared with specific questions. Ask career-oriented and company-specific questions, and do not forget to take notes of your conversation. Having several questions ready will help you if one or more of the questions are answered early by the employer. Below are some sample questions you could ask:

- What advice do you have for a University graduate entering this field?
- What skills do you look for most in a candidate for the X position?
- What are the entry-level positions available in your company?
- Does your company offer any internships or training programs?
- Can you tell me a little bit about the different stages in the hiring process?
- How would you describe the company culture?
- What is the best way to stay in touch with you?

Visit company websites in advance, so you are familiar with the participating employers. Check out the mission statement, vision, and values of each company of interest, as well as the openings listed on their career site.

Set up your space and eliminate distractions- In addition to your professional attire, you will also want to plan out where you will be attending the virtual career fair from. Make sure you have appropriate lighting and the background behind you is neutral and clean. Be in a quiet place where you will not be interrupted by other people, remove distractions in your environment, including turning off the TV, putting your cell phone in silent mode, and closing any nearby windows.

During the Fair:

Be comfortable and confident on Camera- Just like in a traditional career fair, you will want to present yourself as a confident and competent job seeker. During video conferencing, others can only see your head and upper body, so be conscious of your posture, gestures, and

expressions. Speak clearly, avoid slouching, keep the camera at eye level, sit up straight, look directly into the camera when speaking and listening, smile, demonstrate enthusiasm and be natural with limited use of arms and hands movement.

Visit employers' booths in priority order- Make a list of booths you want to visit. Visit your top employers' booth **first**. If you are live chatting, you may be able to talk to multiple people at the same time, but if you are on a video call, that might limit how much time you have, so make sure you get a chance to visit your top booths first. If you have time, visit other employers' booths as well – you might find out some great information from these employers. Keep track of whom you meet and what you discuss; ask for contact information so you can follow up after the event.

Greet/Introduce Yourself- Be ready to greet and introduce yourself and engage in a conversation. Introduce yourself with a smile and a friendly greeting. During a Virtual Career Fair, some of your communication (including your introduction) will be done through written interactions, such as live chat. Be proactive, and take the initiative, tell the organization who you are. An initial introduction can include your first and last name and a welcoming comment. For example:

- "Good morning, I am, and I'm glad to meet you."
- "Hello, I am It's a pleasure to meet you."

Be prepared to give your elevator pitch - After you greet and briefly introduce yourself, make sure to give your elevator pitch, which is a short overview of your experiences, studies, and career goals. Tailor it to the event or audience and keep it brief and concise. Your elevator pitch can include some of this information:

- Education/program of study
- Highlights of relevant experience
- Relevant skills, knowledge & assets
- Personal qualities that will help you do well on the job
- Your career goals & job target (long-term/short-term)
- The reason for your interest

It should provide essential information and be relevant to the purpose or goal of your conversation.

Maintain a positive attitude throughout the day- Even though you may be introducing yourself many times during the day and articulating similar statements, remember that it is the first time that each employer will hear from you. Sit up straight, make sure you are in the video frame (if you are using video call), engage in the conversation and practice active listening. Consider smiling and occasionally nodding as you would during an in-person conversation, project positive energy, use the right tone of voice or write positive statements if using live chat. This will be critical to your success during the virtual career fair.

Interact effectively with employers - Be courteous. Respect the employer's time. They will probably be seeing hundreds of students. Please be understanding of their situation and try to be patient. Just like at face-to-face career fairs, you may have to wait in line. Employers will try their best to connect with the people who come to their booths first. This is another reason why it is important to prioritize your list of booths! At the end of your conversations through video call or live chat, share your appreciation with the person who took the time to connect with you.

Engage in the conversation- It is equally important to make connections at a virtual career fair same as during in person events. Once an employer engages you in a chat, be prepared to introduce yourself and ask questions about the organization and open positions. You must present yourselves to employers and feel confident doing so.

Use professional business communication- To create and maintain a first good impression, your professional verbal and written communication needs to be on point. Polish your communication skills and be mindful of grammatical errors, wordy sentences, text lingo, emoji's, and slang. Be prepared for communicating via chat, open your chat with a greeting and be sure to say goodbye and thank you.

Ask for next steps and contact information- Be proactive in asking the employers about the next steps in the process, whether it is to get in touch with the human resources, filling out a job application or sitting down for a formal interview. Some employers may have their contact information uploaded and accessible within the virtual career fair platform. If not, ask how you can stay in touch. You will need this information for following up with them after the virtual career fair.

Do not stress over technical glitches- Some technical glitches may occur during these virtual meetings, such as screen may freeze, audio may pause, or the call may cut off. In such situations do not panic, employers know these distractions may happen during online meetings and they will not judge you for them. Based on the situation, go with the flow and continue the conversation.

After the Fair:

Reach out with a thank you note- Be sure to reach out to the recruiters and employers you meet at the Career Fair through email or LinkedIn for thanking them for their time and for further expressing your interest to work with them. Because recruiters at career fairs come in contact with many candidates, you can use this chance to refresh their memory and remind them about why you are a promising candidate, why you are interested in the company and the skills or experience you bring to the table. The best way to keep in touch with them is on LinkedIn.