

Career Fair Survival Guide

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Elevator Pitch Prep

A personal elevator pitch is a prepared, 30-second introduction. It is your opportunity to introduce yourself, provide a brief background, spotlight your professional interests and goals, and ultimately connect to other professionals.

Preparing for the Career Fair

When preparing your personal elevator pitch, keep in mind who, what and how.

- 1 **Who are you?** Practice common interview questions. Start with the questions on page three. Begin by jotting down bullet point answers, then speak each reply aloud. Think of several specific examples you can use to illustrate your responses.
- 2 **Who do you help?** Highlight the area where your personal values and professional goals align and communicate who you want to help. Here is also a good opportunity to link your interests to work for who you're trying to pitch to.
- 3 **What makes you unique?** Detail a relevant experience you've had and weave it into your pitch. Work experiences, research, or even personal connections are good inclusions. Sometimes, something as simple as a fun fact can help you stand out.
- 4 **What results do you want from the conversation?** You can't have a pitch without an ask. Get to the core of why you're talking to this person. Do you want a internship or job? Do you seek mentorship?
- 5 **How do you want to connect?** Close out your pitch by turning it into a conversation. Turn the tables and ask the person you're speaking with a question. Here is a good opportunity to show that you have done your homework in researching the company. If you're having a difficult time coming up with a question, you can also ask the recruiter to deliver their own elevator pitch to keep the conversation going. This is also a good time to exchange information or even hand a recruiter a copy of your resume.



Pyramid Preparation

Use pyramid preparation as a framework before attending a career fair.

Prepare. Prior to attending the career fair, assess what preparations you can take in order to be your most successful self. **Update your resume, tailor it to the employers present at the career fair and print out copies to hand out to recruiters.** If you have an online work presence, such as a LinkedIn page or professional website, be sure to include any details or experiences not captured in your resume. Practice your personal elevator pitch.

Prioritize. Review the employers that are going to be present at the career fair. Research employers and highlight your top companies. **During your research process, find at least three facts about each company that interests you to discuss further with the recruiter.** Further tailor your resume and personal pitch to match the work and goals of companies you are interested in.

Strategize. What time is the career fair hosted? When are peak traffic times at the fair? Where are your top employers located? Consider the logistics of the career fair, especially the layout, and make a game plan. **Arriving early and hitting your top employers first will help you have a successful career fair experience.**

Execute. Put your best foot forward on the day of your career fair has arrived. **If the career fair does not provide a dress code, the best practice is business casual.** Consider bringing a padfolio to hold copies of your resume, a notepad and pen, and any business cards.

Connect. Start with a smile and a handshake and introduce yourself to the recruiter. Say your name, where you are from, and your professional goals. **Share your interests and try to link them to the employer.** If you're having difficulty entering a conversation with the recruiter, fall back on your personal pitch. When your conversation with the recruiter is done, take their business card, or save their contact information to connect with them on LinkedIn. If an employer you highlighted is too busy, or their recruiters are not present at the time you attend, try and get their contact information and reach out later.

Follow-through. **Email or message the recruiters you spoke with and thank them within 24-48 hours of the career fair.** If appropriate, mail them a personal note. Demonstrate that you listened and took something away from your conversation with the recruiter: recall a point from your conversation or ask a question to keep a dialogue going. Be sure to follow up on any next steps you may have discussed with the recruiter.

Do	Don't
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be clear, concise, and to the point • Own your professional experiences • Leave a lasting impression by identifying yourself as an outstanding candidate • Have a goal in mind for the pitch you're delivering • Share a business card or contact information • Continue to practice and revise your pitch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go over 30-seconds • Ramble or list irrelevant experiences • Steer the pitch away from the goal of the conversation • End the pitch without getting to the purpose or the ask • Forget to thank the person for their time and attention listening to your pitch • Cut off a natural conversation to launch into a personal pitch

Advice From Our Recruiters



Manager of Recruitment, Lexie Seward says,

"I love starting introductions with three adjectives about myself. If a recruiter asks, 'Tell me about yourself', I would respond by saying, 'Hi, I'm Lexie. I would consider myself to be curious, detail-oriented, and hard working. Based off my previous experience doing...'"



Manager of Recruitment, Jake Landgraf says,

"Try and find a 'marker' that makes you unique. For example, in my interviews, I would always mention that my hometown is home to the world's largest refracting telescope. It says nothing about me, but it creates an easy marker to remember me by. Interviewers told that being known as the 'telescope guy' pushed my resume to the top."



Manager of Recruitment, Isabel Mosby says,

"You don't always need to throw out a personal pitch with an employer! Some recruiters just want to connect with you naturally to see if you're a good fit for their company's culture."

Personal Pitch Example

Hi, my name is Jane Doe and I'm a rising Junior studying Environmental Management at Indiana University's O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs. I'm interested in the intersection of public policy and environmentalism and I am passionate about working in the public sector to help communities and governments comply with environmental regulations. Last summer, I worked locally for the City of Fishers as an Environmental Education Program Instructor, but this summer I'm looking for more field experience and would love to get my foot in the door with Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM). I'd love to hear more about the IDEM Air Compliance Internship you're sponsoring this summer! Thank you for your time.