

Career Fairs & Employer Information Sessions



Find the comprehensive *Job & Internship Guide* on Handshake.

The Career Center is committed to help all students achieve:

CAREER CLARITY | CAREER COMPETITIVENESS | CAREER CONNECTIONS

Career Fairs & Employer Info Sessions

Job & Internship Guide



Career fairs give you a chance to explore organizations and career fields through conversations with employer representatives that include recruiters, Cal alumni and hiring managers. Employers provide information about job and internship opportunities within their organizations. Upcoming career fairs can be found in Handshake.

Before The Fair

1. **See which employers are attending the fair in Handshake** and develop a list of those you'd like to speak with.
2. **Research these employers** and, in addition to their websites, see where they are mentioned in articles, current events, etc. If there's time, speak with peers who have done internships there or alumni who currently work there to get the inside scoop on qualities they look for in candidates.
3. **Look for internship/job postings on Handshake** or on their company website. Develop questions for positions of interest. If there aren't positions posted, ask the representative about upcoming positions and desired qualifications.
4. **Develop and practice your elevator pitch** to confidently introduce yourself to employer representatives. Reflect on and be ready to talk about your:
 - a. Academic background
 - b. Career interests/what you are looking for
 - c. Experience related to role/employer/industry (internship, volunteer, research, leadership, projects, etc.)
 - d. Skills and strengths
 - e. Ask a question at end to keep conversation going
5. **Prepare questions** to help you decide whether this is an ideal role or employer for you. Answers to your questions should not be easily available online. See p. 14 for examples of questions to ask at a career/internship fair.
6. **Print multiple copies of your resume.**

During The Fair

1. Make a good first impression with attire appropriate to your industry of your interest. See "What to Wear" p. 33.
2. Example introductions/elevator pitch
 - a. "Hi, Mr. Smith, my name is Susan Tran and I'm a junior here at Cal majoring in Economics. I'm very interested in working for an organization like yours that supports diversity and is engaged in a variety of community development projects. Last summer, I worked in a team of 4 to recruit and manage community volunteers to create more housing for the homeless. What types of internship opportunities are available at your organization during the summer?"
 - b. "Hello Ms. Rodriguez, my name is Steven Hall and I am a sophomore at Cal planning to major in Molecular and Cell Biology. I am doing research with a MCB professor and am looking for an internship in the field of genetics research that will allow me to gain more professional skills and hands-on experience for my future career. Can you tell me about your internship program and the type of projects that students typically get involved in?"
3. Be flexible and talk to additional companies that you previously didn't consider.

4. Ask them about upcoming events such as employer info sessions, coffee chats, or other employer hosted campus events.
5. Ask for business cards of employers for follow-up purposes and next steps.
Take notes during the conversation or take a few moments to write notes before you speak with the next employer.
6. You will speak with many employers and these notes will help you to write tailored follow-up messages.

QUESTIONS TO ASK AT A CAREER OR INTERNSHIP FAIR

- What types of skills and experience are you are seeking for this role?
- What type of training is available for entry-level staff?
- What advice would you give to someone who wants to break into this field?
- What is the hiring process like at your organization?
- Are there immediate openings in your organization? What jobs do you anticipate will open?
- What are the typical entry-level opportunities?
- What do you like most about your organization?
- What skills are most important for a position in this field?
- Considering my particular career interest, are there additional people in the organization I should contact?
- Can you describe the typical career path in your organization.

●●●● EMPLOYER INFORMATION SESSIONS ●●●●

These sessions typically cover an organization's mission and culture, career opportunities, and products or services. Because they provide an opportunity for direct dialogue with employer representatives, try to find 1-1 time to build a personal connection during the networking portion at the end.

Professional or business casual dress is appropriate, unless otherwise indicated.

Some employers require attendance at these sessions if you have a scheduled interview with them, but many sessions are open to all interested students. Visit Handshake for a listing of upcoming employer information sessions. Employer info sessions may also be advertised through academic department and student organization listservs.

For more information about what to expect and how to prepare, search the Career Center website for "Employer Info Sessions."