

Make the Job Fair Work for You

The Student Employment Job Fair will be a perfect chance to meet several employers and impress them with your potential to be a great employee. Here are a few tips to help increase your chances of landing a job offer.

Think realistically about how many work hours you can successfully balance with your academic schedule, volunteer activities, and memberships. A general rule of thumb is to plan on spending 2 hours of study time for every hour of class lecture.

Dress to impress. Wear clothes that are clean, pressed, and suitable for a work setting. Let the employer focus on your qualifications, not your appearance.

Show interest in the employer. Be prepared to ask some questions, such as: What skills are required for the job? How much training would I receive? Are the hours flexible if needed for studying? What is your policy on providing references?(You will need a minimum of three strong references when you begin applying for internships and post graduation positions. It is the policy of some employers, when asked for a reference, to state only the dates someone worked for them. They don't discuss work performance, etc. It is good to know this so you can make a point of developing references outside of that work setting. Besides work references, possible resources are faculty, academic or organization advisors, and volunteer position supervisors. Begin to foster these relationships early, so they will know you well enough to give a solid reference when you need it.)

Expect to answer questions, such as: Why do you want to work here? What have you done that shows initiative or dependability? What are your plans for the future? What is your greatest strength/weakness? Why should I hire you?

Be prepared to fill out applications. Take a data sheet with the information typically requested on applications or a copy of an application from a previous job so that you can easily transfer information to the employer's form. If you have a resume, take several copies to attach to the application forms you complete. A resume generally will not replace an application form, but will impress employers with your preparation.

Some employers will make job offers at the fair. Others will wait to review applications later. If an offer is made to you at the fair, it's ok to tell the employer you would like a few days to think about it. Follow up with them even if you decide not to take the job. This maintains the good impression you have already made and it may serve you well if you decide to apply with them in the future.

Employers suggest that you not bring food and beverages into the fair with you.

Check the CAP Center web site for the employers who will be at the fair. This will be updated as changes occur, so check it often.

If you have questions about the job fair or other career issues contact the Career and Academic Planning (CAP) Center at 688-4425, susan.fredrikson@sdstate.edu. The One-Stop Career Center, located in the lower level of the CAP Center, can assist you with part-time and work-study jobs. Stop in; call 688-6668, or email nancy.popowski@sdstate.edu. The CAP Center and One-Stop Career Center are located in Medary Commons, across from Ag Hall.