

# How to Work a Career Fair





# What's the point?

- Chance for students and employers to meet with one another
- Discuss potential internship and job opportunities
- Build your job search network
- Learn about organizations hiring UMKC students and graduates



# What you need to prepare

- Resume(s)
- Elevator pitch
- Prioritized employer list and research notes

## Resumes

- One page, up-to-date, error free, easy to scan quickly
- Bring multiple copies
  - And a few extra
- Multiple versions if needed
- No cover letters needed

## Elevator Pitch

1. Identify your goal
2. Explain what you do
3. Communicate your USP (unique selling proposition)
4. Engage with a question
5. Put it all together

## Elevator Pitch

Hi, my name is Brad. I am currently a sophomore student attending UMKC. I am currently studying business, specifically in the area of finance. This summer I did an internship with the XYZ Company and I hope to work for a local credit union next fall. Ever since I can remember I have always had an interest in numbers and I feel certain that this is something I want to do in my future career. Next summer I hope to get another internship learning more about how the international financial market operates which is why I am so interested in your company. Could you tell me more about your internship program?

## Employer Research

- Create your list of top employers
- Research the companies on your list
  - Website– Also, look at current openings
- Google news search
- Take notes on your research

# What to wear

- Everyone
  - Traditional, conservative clothing
    - Neutral colors are best
  - Washed, pressed, polished
  - Groomed hair, styled neatly
  - Closed toe shoes





# What to wear

- Ladies

- Pants or skirt suit- dark colors
  - Skirt length should fall at or barely above knee
- White or light colored blouse, nice sweater, or a shell
- Minimal accessories and nothing too large
- Minimal or natural looking make-up



# What to wear



- Gentlemen
  - Two piece suit- dark colors
    - Skirt length should fall at or barely above knee
  - White or light colored, long sleeve collared shirt
  - Conservative tie. Stripes or small pattern okay
  - Belt, socks and shoes should match

# What *not* to wear

- Short skirts
- Shorts
- See-through or low cut shirts
- Sandals
- Jeans
- T-shirts
- Bright or busy patterns



# The night before

- Gather all the items you'll need for the day
  - Business professional clothing
  - Padfolio- with pen and notepad to keep you organized and take notes
  - Resumes
  - Top employer list and research notes
  - Breath mints for in between tables
  - If you tend to have sweaty palms, bring something on which to wipe your hand.
- Remember to get a good nights sleep!

# The big day

- Allow yourself adequate time to attend the event.
  - Busiest over the lunch hour
  - There may be a line for some of the employers
  - Some employers start packing up early
- When you arrive
  - Check-in and get your bearings
  - Drop off any large items in the student lounge
  - Figure out where your top employers are

# The big day

- Develop your strategy
  - Top employers first
  - Go to lower tier employers first
  - Start with non listed employer
- Be flexible!



# Speaking with representatives

- Introduce yourself
- Firm handshake, make eye contact and smile
- Be prepared
  - With your rehearsed (not memorized) elevator speech
  - To talk about career interests, education and experience
  - To discuss your strengths and skills



# Speaking with representatives

- Example topics:
  - Specific roles
  - Recruiting timetable
  - What they look for in candidates
  - Next steps in the recruiting process: Should you apply online? Follow up with that rep? Is there another person you should contact?
  - Talking points and notes from your research
  - Where do you see the company five years from now?





# Speaking with representatives

- Keep it to a few minutes
- Ask for a business card
  - “I appreciate the insight you’ve shared with me today. I want to be respectful of your time as I’m sure you have a lot of people to speak with, but I’d like to follow up with you about \_\_\_\_\_. Do you have a business card?”
- Don’t take anything without asking

# After the conversation

- Take notes as soon as you walk away
  - This will help you to have something to reference in your follow up note
- Keep yourself organized
  - Put away all materials from last employer
  - Find a safe spot for your business cards
- Go over your research notes about the next employer on your list

## After the career fair

- Keep all of your materials, business cards and notes organized
- Follow up with each representative you met
  - Be specific about where you met
  - Send a connection request on LinkedIn with a personalized message thanking them for their time
  - Send a thank you email to each representative
  - Reference something you spoke with them about- it helps them to remember you!
  - Keep all messages gracious, concise and timely