

Connecting with Oswego Students

Job Fair Tips for Recruiters

Oswego State students may behave like most other college students at a Career Fair. They may wander around for a while with a friend before deciding to leave. They may feel intimidated and nervous about starting a conversation with a stranger. Our office works hard to help students get the most out of this event. You as the organizational rep. can do a great deal to generate interest in your organization and meaningful conversations with our students as well. Below are a few tips that may help you be successful at our Career Fair.

Preparing

Set a goal and design your entire effort around that aim:

- Recruiting students for full/part time employment or internship positions
- Sharing personal career information and typical steps to success
- Introducing a new program or service
- Enhancing image and gaining name recognition
- Anticipate problems before the event--be prepared for anything (ie. VCR doesn't work, need electrical extension cords, etc.)
- Take advantage of set-up times during the day - often, the best and most motivated students are waiting at the door and you don't want to be unpacking boxes when they walk by.

Display

- A good exhibit is simply a stage for information exchange - you are the focus, not your exhibit
- When staff don't perform well, its the booth that communicates.
- Your visual message should give even a casual observer a clear idea of what you do.
- 60% of a person's initial reaction is based on color; 80% choose blue as their favorites:
 - Blue = low key and low stress
 - Red = high energy
 - Orange = cheap, inexpensive
 - Black = power
 - Yellow = #1 attention grabber
 - Green = comforting (unless its khaki)
 - Metallic = premium, pricey
 - White = good guy

Literature

- Do have brochures on hand, but keep paper to a minimum. You can use handouts to initiate a conversation with students but it should not be your entire presentation. They will base their opinion of your organization and whether they want to learn more on you more than anything else.

Exhibit Staff

- It's personalities, not the display, that visitors remember.
- **Make a good first impression** - students will base their opinion of your organization on YOU.
- Staff must be very knowledgeable - know yourself, your position, your organization, and where students may fit into that entire scheme.
- **Visitors are potentially long-term leads**; don't expect an immediate "sale." Students will get turned off if you try a "hard sell" with them.
- Visitors prefer a short, overall view of what you have to offer.
- Ensure your exhibit is staffed at all times - like it or not, if you are absent, it "shows" you don't care.
- Avoid eating at your exhibit - it takes away from the "professional" look.
- **Stand, don't sit, at your exhibit.** Sitting in the chair behind your exhibit doesn't connote a sense of excitement and a welcoming atmosphere.
- **Wear name tags prominently** - we recommend that students try to get your name/title from them.
- Visit other exhibitors when your shift ends - it is a great way to meet other professionals in your field.

Exhibit

- Entertaining exhibits get results - remember, students live in a colorful world of multimedia. If you don't have a wonderful exhibit, it comes down to you to make the right impression.

Questions

- Don't wait for visitors to approach you - be assertive, friendly and sincere.
- Ask passersby friendly, open-ended, yet specific questions such as : "Are you interested in a career in finance?" or "Do you want to put your communications skills to work in a great career?"
- Based on the response, you can separate leads from tire-kickers.

Demonstrations

- 75% of Career Fair attendees want to see more demonstrations.
- Keep them short and simple, ideally 3 to 5 minutes.
- Students tend to remember what they visualize and participate in rather than what they hear.

Multimedia

- Taped presentations should be no more than 5-10 minutes long. Many students see a Career Fair as a buffet - they want to explore all their options before getting more in-depth information.

Survival

- Take brief, brisk walks to keep your feet and back from hurting - visit the refreshment table often!
- Negotiate for peace with neighbors that have noisy presentations - make it a win-win situation.

After the Fair

- Respond to all inquiries personally ASAP to reinforce your good image and to "strike while the iron is hot."