

# PREPARING FOR A JOB FAIR

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## *What should I wear to the job fair?*

This is your opportunity to make an impression -- to impress upon someone who doesn't know you that you are capable of doing great work in a professional capacity. At a minimum, you should wear "business casual" -- neat, ironed, professional looking clothes (men -- think khakis, a button down shirt, polished/clean shoes, matching socks; women -- think slacks or skirt and a top, polished/clean shoes, matching socks or hose without runs). It would not be out of place to wear a suit -- even at a non-profit fair. It demonstrates that you respect the organizations present and are taking your search seriously.

Other tidbits: Make sure your hands and nails are clean -- you will be shaking lots of hands and you don't want potential employers to remember scruffy hands. If you wear cologne or perfume apply it VERY lightly -- you don't want to be remembered for your scent and many people are allergic anyway.

## *What should I bring to the job fair?*

**Copies of your resume/CV** -- at least one for every company/organization you are interested in. If you have not had your resume/CV reviewed and checked for typos, professionalism, etc., either visit the Office of Intramural Training and Education (OITE), see a career counselor, or ask a faculty advisor or friend to do it. Typos are the fastest way to get your resume tossed out.

**Place to put business cards** -- you should get a card from EVERY person you speak with.

**A pen/pencil** -- you should note any pertinent information on your discussions on either a notepad or directly on the back of the business card. This info will be critical in your follow-up with each person -- the more "personal" and specific your follow-up the better chance you will have for being remembered.

**A notepad** -- see above. You can use this to keep your notes on each organization -- both your research prior to the fair and any new information you gather at the fair.

**A handkerchief** -- if you have the tendency to sweat/perspire/glow in these kinds of situations -- come prepared and bring something that you can use to wipe off your face and hands as necessary -- better that than dripping on the person you want to impress. And, at the risk of getting too personal, if sweating, etc. is a problem for you, consider wearing an undershirt so that you can avoid sweat stains under your arms -- it can be distracting for the person you are talking with.

**Breath mints/strips** -- last thing you want is to be remembered for bad breath. A small thing -- but remember these are people who are trying to decide if they want to work with you. If you go the breath mint route, be sure to finish it BEFORE starting up a conversation. Do not chew gum while talking with potential employers -- it is distracting for them and it also detracts from the professional image that you are trying to convey.