



UNM | Office of Career Services

## Career Fair Guide

An employment fair is a great place to : network, gather information and make a great impression.

### Why should I attend a career fair?

- To make connections between you and various employers.
- To sell yourself, and to build your network.
- To make a great impression.

Making your best impression could be life changing...it could be the difference between you getting a job over someone else. Recruiters will put in a good word for the candidates who make the best impressions.

- It can open up your view beyond just your major.
- It allows you to get an impression of an employer and learn about the culture of an organization before you interview.

### How should I prepare for a career fair?

- Attend a career fair workshop offered through the Office of Career Services.
- Identify the list of attending employers. Research the industry, company and position.
- Build a bridge between you and employers. Target the employers that are the best fit.
- Prepare a tailored resume specific to the company and the position. Schedule an appointment with the Office of Career Services to have your resume critiqued.
- Prepare your 20 to 30 second introduction.

(<http://youtube/90FL67poFYQ>) Things to include in your introduction: academia, professional experiences, and relevant competencies and skills. It might be something like, "Hello. I'm Lucy Lobo and I'm a junior majoring in Marketing at Anderson School of Management. I'm looking for an internship related to marketing for next summer. I read on your web site about the internship program in your corporate marketing department, and I've done some project work related to your internship. I'm very interested in your program. Could you tell me more about it?" Always end with a question to get employers talking about their organization.

Sample questions:

- What are you looking for in the employees you hire?
- What are the characteristics of your most successful employees?
- Are there specific career tracks within your organization?

- Can you tell me more about your company's culture?
- Who is your ideal candidate?
- What made you choose this company and why do you stay?
- How long have you been with this company?

### What should I bring?

- Plenty of copies of your resume, depending on the number of employers in which you are interested.
- Professional portfolio or folder with pen and notepad to take notes.

### What should I do once I'm there?

- Observe others. See what works and see what doesn't.
- Stand up straight, speak clearly, use your best interpersonal communications skills.
- Target the employers you want to meet.
- Take the initiative to introduce yourself.
- Be prepared to talk about the following possible questions: Can you walk me through your resume? What are your strengths? What are your career objectives and goals? What are your skills and abilities? How would you be an asset to our company? Why are you interested in our company?
- Answer the questions fully and talk about the next steps.
- Collect business cards from each employer and leave them with a firm handshake.

### How should I follow up?

- Contact employers you are interested in after the career fair via email, by handwritten thank you notes or by phone.
- Follow through regarding your discussions with each employer. For example, if they suggest to apply online, follow through and attach an additional copy of your resume with a fresh cover letter. For more guidelines on cover letters and thank you note etiquette visit [www.career.unm.edu](http://www.career.unm.edu).
- Some employers cannot accept hard copy resumes and will ask you to apply online. This is to comply with federal regulations about the way employers keep data on applicants. Note: This does not mean the employer is giving you the brush-off, and it does not mean the employer is wasting time

by attending the fair and talking with you. The employer reps may well be taking note of candidates — you and others — in whom they are interested, but they have to follow certain procedures to comply with law.

### What should I NOT do?

- Do not use your cell phone.
- Do not cruise the booths with a group of friends.
- Do not come dressed casually.
- Do not peruse tables for the free giveaways.
- Do not ask, “How much does this position pay?” or “What does this company do?”.
- Do not carry your backpack into the event.
- Do not wear your sunglasses on your head or neck.
- Do not chew gum or smell like cigarette smoke.
- Do not wear jeans, hats, shorts, or midriffs.
- Do not wear strong perfume or cologne.
- Do not expect to be hired on the spot.

### How can I increase my chances of getting a job?

- Use Lobo Career Connection. Update your profile and upload a copy of your resume, check for new employment opportunities with your favorite recruiters, find out when recruiters are coming back for upcoming info sessions, on-campus interviewing opportunities and future career fairs.
- Schedule an appointment with the Office of Career Services for a videotaped mock interview, resume/cover letter tips, professional correspondence etiquette, and further assistance in job search tactics and strategies.

### Professional Dress

- Investigate the organizations in attendance to see if you can get an idea of what the average employee wears. Tip: Always dress as or more formally than would be expected on the job.

- Remember that it is easier to dress down conservative clothes than to dress up in formal attire; always dress to impress.
- Go with your instincts - if you feel like you should not wear it, then don't. Appropriate clothing for a bar setting is not acceptable for a career fair or a job interview.
- Make sure you are well groomed and your attire is laundered, pressed and wrinkle free.
- Make sure clothes fit correctly and are not too loose or too tight.
- No undergarments (camisole or bra straps, boxers etc) should be visible.
- Most employers prefer accessories such as, makeup and fragrances be kept to a minimum. To avoid being screened out consider removing facial piercings, covering visible tattoos, and fixing hair in a widely accepted manner.

### What should I wear?

According to recent surveys of recruiters seeking to hire UNM students, the following are some great tips for all candidates:

- Two-piece business suits with a skirt or pants, long-sleeved dress shirt.
- Conservative neckline/Conservative necktie in terms of color and pattern.
- Business-style shoes. Avoid wearing a business suit with sandals or sneakers.
- High-fitting dark socks with slacks.
- Match shoe and belt color.
- Minimal cologne or perfume.
- Breath mints. Use one before greeting recruiter.
- Briefcase or portfolio instead of a purse.

