

Bethel's Career Compass



Location:

Huffman Administration Bldg.
Room A316
574.807.7096

Hours:

Monday—Friday
8 am—5 pm

Staff:

Sherry Weldy—Career Development Coordinator
Hermalena Powell—Career Development Specialist
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Visit us online: CareerServices@BethelCollege.edu • www.BethelCollege.edu >Campus Services >Career & Internships

Career Fair 101

Career Fair: Myths & Strategies

From the Career Center for the University California Berkeley

In these more challenging times, it helps to start your job / internship search earlier, and, whenever possible, make direct contact with potential employers.

Fear not! The Office of Career Services is here to help. Leave the heavy lifting to us. You just need to show-up. But show-up where? Try the **7th annual Career and Internship Fair** on Friday, April 1st, 10 am – 2 pm, at the IU South Bend Student Activities Center.



Do not miss this great opportunity to meet actual human beings from real employers with whom you'd like to work. Plus, don't worry; attending a career fair is easy. By quickly dispelling some common career fair myths you'll be ready to shine at this upcoming career fair.

Myth # 1: Career fairs are only for seniors seeking a job.

This is by far the most dangerous of all career fair myths. The reality is that **all current students should attend career fairs** (notice the dramatic use of bold applied to the font — it must be important). Career fairs are not only excellent places to find jobs, but they are also one of the best places to network, get leads on internships and, best of all, learn more about specific jobs and industries.

Myth # 2: Bring a few resumes.

Don't bring a few resumes. **Bring a lot of resumes.** Bring more resumes than you think you'll need. Running out of resumes, or not handing over a resume because you are saving that precious last one for later is a tremendous loss. Recycling is acceptable; missing a job opportunity is not.



Myth #3: "I have no idea what to say to the recruiters."

Let's crush this myth right now. You've got what it takes. And if you don't, don't worry, because here's the perfect recruiter pick-up line. **First and foremost, smile.** Psychologists have proven that people who smile are better liked than those who don't. Second, identify yourself by name—pretty easy so far. And the final step, (aka the uppercut) ask, "What types of positions do you have for a Bethel grad with a major/background/skills/interest in X?" There you have it. The conversation should be safely underway.

Just in case you're still unsure about what to say, here is an example:

"Hi, I'm Billy Ray. I was wondering what types of positions you have for someone with a degree in sociology and some quantitative skills?"

As you can see, even if you are extremely nervous and have done no prior research, it's fairly easy to get the ball rolling with any employer.

Keep in mind, this is for the beginner. Ideally, with just a little bit of research a day or two before the fair, you can easily expand this introduction into something which will not only introduce yourself but also display knowledge of the company and express why you're the best hire. This leads us to myth number four.

Myth # 4: It's a hassle to research and figure out which companies will be attending the fairs.

In all fairness, even a little preparation can make the difference between a successful or an unsuccessful career fair. This can be a problem at some off-campus career fairs. To keep tabs on what employers are signed up for the **7th annual Career and Internship Fair** visit www.iusb.edu/~iusbjf

Myth # 5: Rollerblades, goatees and multiple face piercings are impressive to recruiters.

Granted, college is the time to express yourself before you sell out to corporate America to pay off your school loans. And, of course, it is your right to dress however you please. However, if you can bear the thought of conforming for just a few hours, even remotely professional attire will send a positive signal to employers that you're serious about finding a job or internship. Even though rollerblades are convenient (and undeniably demonstrate your heartfelt commitment to non-petroleum based modes of transportation), they are the number one sign that your participation lacks sincere commitment. If your friends tease you and look at you in disgust for shaving, covering your midriff, wearing a shirt with cuffs and a collar, or wearing a sensible set of heels, tell them you have a court date or something similarly rebellious.



Career fairs are one of the most potent weapons in your job finding arsenal; don't be afraid to use them.

If you still have questions or concerns, visit the Office of Career Services and take advantage of our resume editing services to make sure you are ready to take on a career fair! Better yet, send your updated resume to:

CareerServices@BethelCollege.edu



Top 10 Tips for Attending Career and Job Fairs

Compiled by **Randall S. Hansen**, Ph.D.

- * Have a **pen/pencil and paper** available for notes.
- * **Bring resumes** and a folder or portfolio to hold your materials.
- * Take the time to find out what companies will be represented before the day of the career fair.
- * **Research information** about the participating companies and organizations prior to approaching the recruiters. Use the Internet, news sources and career fair materials to learn about the companies' booths you plan to visit. You can impress a recruiter by knowing about his or her company and can discuss its current situation.
- * **Use time wisely.** Determine where employers are located and in what order to visit them. Focus on three companies that you are truly interested in.
- * **Broaden your focus** and include many types of employers. For instance, you may not have considered working for a hospital, but hospitals recruit and hire professionals in many different fields (e.g., management, information systems, or health care).
- * Be aware of time demands on employers. Do not monopolize an employer's time. **Ask specific questions** and offer to follow up after the fair, as appropriate.
- * **Be direct.** Introduce yourself, including your name and career interests. If you are job-seeking, state the type of position in which you are interested. If you are gathering information, let employers know that you are only interested in materials and information. Remember to **use good eye contact and a firm handshake.** Career fairs are the perfect place to use your elevator speech.
- * Make sure you learn from the recruiter employment and/or hiring trends, skills necessary for different jobs, current openings, salary, benefits, training, and other information about the organization. Also make sure you know whom to contact for follow-up discussions.
- * Ask the employer for the next steps in the recruitment process and try to **obtain the recruiter's business card** for follow-up discussions/correspondence.



SHERRY'S CORNER

Sherry Weldy, Bethel's Career Development Coordinator, a.k.a. **'the crazy chapel announcement lady'** shares trivia, tips and tantalizing tidbits for student jobseekers!



Making a good first impression. We only get one chance, guys! Did you know we often only have a few seconds to 'seal the deal'? When you approach, be sure to greet the employer with a firm handshake and good eye contact. Be enthusiastic and demonstrate positive verbal and nonverbal communication at all times. Lasting impressions are often made within the first few seconds of an introduction.

Sounds like common sense, right? Yet time and again I have witnessed behavior at career fairs that are *'things that make ya go hmmmmmm'*! Let's tackle some of these puppies:

DON'T BE WEARIN' SWEATS OR JEANS TO THE CAREER FAIR! Really? Guys! It's the first impression!!! I guarantee that if you show up on April 1st in sweats or jeans, you will be asked to leave and you will **not** be admitted to the career fair floor!

IF I CAN SMELL YA, BE IT GOOD OR BAD, BEFORE I CAN SEE YA, WE'VE GOT TROUBLE! Yes, you may have showered, but then fell into a vat of cologne or perfume! This is a turn-off for someone who may have allergies.

THIS AIN'T A FRAT PARTY! LOSE THE 'MUST TRAVEL TOGETHER IN A HERD' MENTALITY. This is a time that YOU want to stand out as the unique person that you are. A few years back a group of our guys showed up, lookin' sharp! But they sauntered around as a group of 5, and had a great time — but did not come off as professional. They were a group of dudes tryin' to make each other laugh the whole time.

LEAVE THE: MOTHER/FATHER/BOYFRIEND/GIRLFRIEND/BABY IN STROLLER AT HOME!!! Want to make a great first impression, drag one of them around and see how far you get!

SAVE THE FREEBIE PICK UP FOR THE END OF THE CONVERSATION WITH AN EMPLOYER. Employers have all kinds of free give-a-ways to keep their name before you. Keep your hands free to be able to shake hands, take a business card, or hand them a resume. Besides, look at it from the view point of the employer—do you think they really want to talk to someone who's suckin' on a big ole' peppermint in their mouth. Then again, maybe you should be worried if they *insist* that you take one.



Conversation with Communication Careers

Date: 3/15/11
Time: 11:30-1:30
Trustee Board Rm,
4th floor of the
Academic Center

Come over the lunch hour and talk one on one with a communication professional in advertising, TV, radio, newspaper, PR, and publishing to find out what you do with a Bethel communication degree!



<http://facebook.com/pages/Bethel-College-Communication-Department/160049787342862>

Career
and
Internship
Fair
Annual

- Friday, April 1, 2011
- 10 am - 2 pm
- IU South Bend Student Activities Center

<http://www.iusb.edu/~iusbjf>