



**PROFESSIONAL**  
Professional Development Throughout Your College Career.



# Getting Ready for a Career Fair

Center for Professional Development and Career Experience (CPDCE)  
201 Warren Student Services Center

# GETTING READY FOR A CAREER FAIR

Congratulations! By signing up to attend a Career Fair, you are one step closer to landing that job, internship, job shadowing experience, or finding a graduate school to further your education. This guide will help you to make the most out of a career/job fairs/expo, employer networking events, or any virtual or off-campus job fairs you may attend. It can also help you prepare to interview with employers who recruit on-campus at other times during the school year.

## About Us

In addition to career expos and on-campus recruitment, the department of Alumni and Professional Engagement, through the **Center for Professional Development and Career Experience (CPDCE)** provides professional development programs and career services for students throughout the year:

- Individual career coaching
- Free career development workshops
- Resume/portfolio assistance
- Professional dress assistance through BU's Career Closet
- On-Campus Recruitment
- Husky Career Link

Learn more at [www.bloomu.edu/careers](http://www.bloomu.edu/careers) or visit the office at 201 Warren Student Services Center.

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The Career Connections Expo is a *Professional U* activity that is organized and hosted by the Department of Alumni and Professional Engagement. Learn more about *Professional U* and other ways to get professional experiences throughout your college career by visiting [www.bloomu.edu/professionalu](http://www.bloomu.edu/professionalu)

## CENTER FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CAREER EXPERIENCE

# HOW TO PREPARE:

## TIPS TO GET READY AND IMPRESS RECRUITERS

A career fair, or the *Career Connections Expo* at Bloomsburg University, is like an open house where you can have friendly, informative chats with organizations who are interested in speaking with Bloomsburg University students about your aspirations and their company, non-profit or graduate school programs. The expo allows you to explore career options, develop a network of career contacts, and identify job and internship opportunities or even land an interview.

**Students who prepare before attending a career fair have the best experiences:**

- Attend career-prep workshops offered by the **Center for Professional Development and Career Experience** if you need help in resume prep, interviewing skills, elevator pitch and more. Visit [www.bloomu.edu/careers](http://www.bloomu.edu/careers) and pre-register through **Husky Career Link** for upcoming workshops.
- Research the list of organizations/academic institutions that are attending the expo and the students in what majors they are interested in. For the Career Connections Expo at Bloomsburg University, the employer list will be posted online at [www.bloomu.edu/careers-expo](http://www.bloomu.edu/careers-expo) and updated as employer registrations are confirmed.
- Make a plan by creating an “A” and “B” list of organizations you want to visit. Be open to all possibilities.
- Review the floor map for the expo so you can find your top organizations
- Prepare a general, error-free resume that is appropriate for a wide-range of positions and make enough copies to distribute (10-15). Additionally, create a portfolio to show case your work, such as artwork, writing samples, and lesson plans, etc. If you already have a target employer, bring a tailored resume for them as well.
- Prepare and practice your 30-second elevator pitch or what you will say about your career interests and academic and extracurricular experience.
- Research the organizations that are attending and prepare a list of questions you would like to ask them.

Sample questions:

1. How do students get started in this field or industry? What can make me competitive?
2. How does your recruiting process work?
3. What do you like about working for this company?

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**Recruiters will decide whether or not to take you seriously within the first four to nine minutes of meeting you based on your appearance and confidence:**

- Dress for success by being well-groomed and wearing appropriate attire for the industry you are targeting. Bring some breath mints (not chewing gum) along!
- Visit the on-campus Career Closet if you are in need of free professional clothing.
- Show confidence with a smile, firm handshake, positive attitude and courteous manners. Hint: Look for the recruiter’s name on their name tag.
- Wear your expo nametag so recruiters can identify you by name.

## *“Boost Your Brand”* CAREER CLOSET

BU’s Career Closet, at the Fenstermaker Alumni House, has gently used items that have been donated by BU faculty, staff, and alumni. Each student is eligible for one entire free outfit. Bring your student ID. Call 570-389-4058 for hours and to make an appointment.

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# WHAT IS PROFESSIONAL DRESS?

A variety of styles is appropriate for attending the career fair, ranging from formal business suits to business casual wear, depending on industry standards.

**APPROACH THIS LIKE AN INTERVIEW; SHOW UP WELL-GROOMED AND DRESSED TO IMPRESS**

## PROFESSIONAL DRESS

### Dos

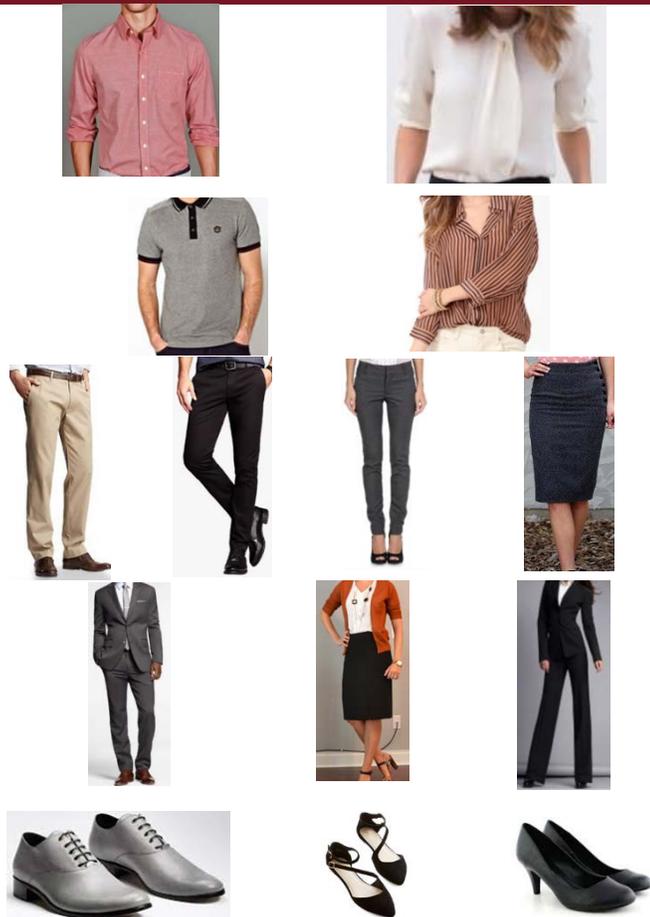
- A two-piece matched suit is the most formal; dress slacks (navy, dark gray and black) or pressed khakis, skirt; solid colored ironed dress or button-down shirts/blouse are most conservative (and safe) for most settings
- Add a tie (silk or silk-like)
- Socks should match your pants and/or shoe color. Belt color should match shoes
- Polished, closed-toe dress shoes. Basic dark flats or low pumps

### Don'ts

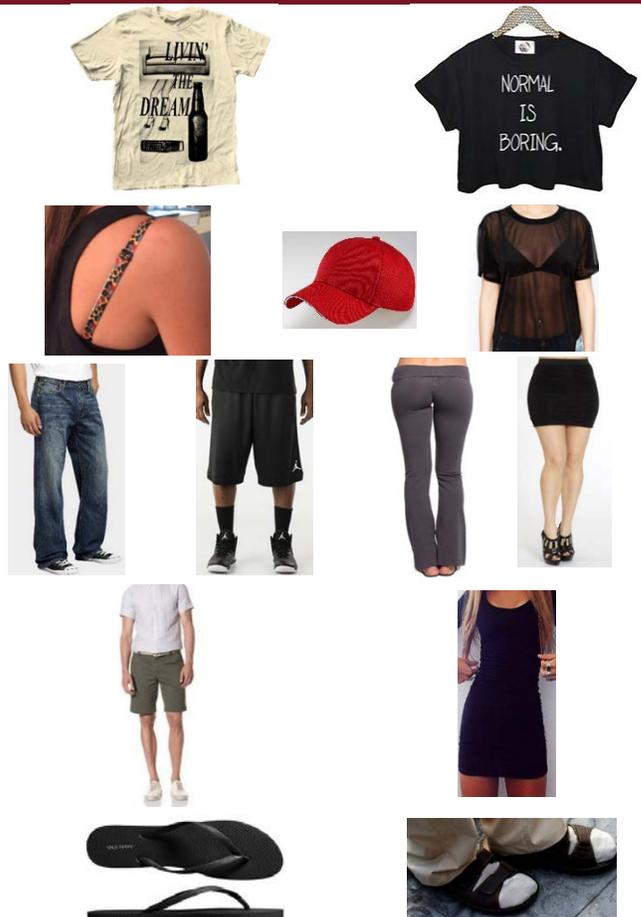
- Avoid strong cologne/perfume
- No sneakers, not even the black kind!
- Avoid revealing clothing, gym/loungewear
- If wearing hosiery- only plain style
- Avoid wearing too much makeup and/or jewelry
- No chipped nail polish. Clean nails or clear polish that is not chipped

**NOTE: Candidates in inappropriate attire will not be permitted into the Career Connections Expo.** If you have ANY questions on what is appropriate to wear, check the information provided below or consult with the CPDCE staff well before the Career Connections Expo.

### ACCEPTABLE ATTIRE FOR THE EXPO:



### NOT ACCEPTABLE ATTIRE FOR THE EXPO:



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# WHAT TO EXPECT:

There is not a universal template for a job fair so be prepared for the expected and unexpected!

## WHEN TO ARRIVE

- **Arrive 15 minutes early**, if possible. You will have access to the employer area at the designated start time of the fair. Though you are not required to arrive right when the doors open, recruiters are generally more alert and enthusiastic at the beginning of the fair.
- After arriving, you will need to **check in** at the registration desk. **Be sure to have your BU ID.**

## EMPLOYER AREA

- Each recruiter is assigned a booth with a table and chairs. Most organizations send one or two representatives, so there may be one or two lines at each table. If a recruiter's line is long, consider coming back later and speak to another organization in the meantime.
- **Take breaks** between talking with recruiters. This will allow you to take notes, organize materials, and evaluate your responses and questions before moving on to the next booth.
- Although official interviews may not happen the day of the event, **expect screening interview questions from recruiters**



# HOW TO APPROACH RECRUITERS:

If you are not prepared to talk with recruiters, it can be both nerve racking and awkward.

## HAVE A PLAN

- Before going into the employer area, **take some time to make a plan of action**. Decide which “A” and “B” organizations you will approach first.
- **Keep your options open!** You never know what you’ll learn about an organization if you don’t explore it.
- Don't be disappointed if an organization doesn't show up that you wanted to speak with. It happens quite often for some organizations to not show up the day of the event. You are still welcome to send a cover letter/resume to the appropriate contact. Ask a CPDCE staff member for additional information.

## APPROACHING A RECRUITER

- Introduce yourself in a positive and confident manner. Smile, make eye contact, project enthusiasm and offer a firm handshake after **your 30 second elevator pitch** including your name, brief information about your education, experiences and skills as they relate to your field and positions they are recruiting. Give the representative your resume and be ready to discuss your background, qualifications, and career goals.
- Show that you have done research by **tailoring your responses and asking questions about the position/organization**.
- **Collect business cards** and literature before you leave (\*write notes on the back of business cards to help you remember when/where you met).
- **Take notes** on anything important that was discussed to reference in a thank you note or email after the event.

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## WHAT NOT TO DO AT THE EXPO:

MISTAKES ARE BOUND TO HAPPEN BUT TRY TO AVOID THEM BY FOLLOWING THESE TIPS!

- **Don't cruise the booths with a group of friends.** Interact with recruiters on your own. Make your own positive impression!
- **Do not carry your backpack or large purse with you.** Carry your resume in a professional-looking portfolio or small briefcase. It will keep your resume neat and handy, and gives you a place to file business cards of recruiters that you meet.
- **Don't ask "So what do you guys do?" or "How much does this position pay?"** Tell the employer what you know about them to show that you have done your research.
- **Silence your cell phone** and **don't text while speaking with a recruiter.** Excuse yourself from the recruiting area if you need to make or take a call.

## WHAT TO DO AFTER THE EXPO:

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU FOLLOW UP WITH RECRUITERS AND CONTINUE TO DEVELOP PROFESSIONALLY

- **Write/email thank you notes to the recruiter within 48 hours!** Follow up with all recruiters and reiterate your interest in the organization/position. Follow up via LinkedIn is also professional depending
- **Consult CPDCE staff members** for additional job search and professional development assistance.

