



JOB FAIRS – Make Them Work for You!

Job fairs, both in person and virtual, are highly effective and personal ways to interact with several employers at one event. A wide variety of companies participate, giving you an excellent opportunity to learn, connect, and gain perspective on the job market.

Who should attend? YOU! FVTC job fairs are designed to connect students and alumni with local, regional, and national employers. Job fairs provide excellent opportunities to learn about companies that are hiring in your field, and if you are already working, attending will help you learn about the industry and grow your network. Employers participate in FVTC job fairs because they want to meet with and hire FVTC students and alumni. By participating in a job fair, you can:

Top Ten Tips for Attending a Job Fair

1. Research the companies attending and prepare questions for the companies that interest you.
2. Bring several copies of your resume in a padfolio or folder with a notepad.
3. Prepare your “pitch” or introduction and be prepared to use it.
4. Dress for success! Look your best and treat this as a job interview.
5. Be independent! Don’t travel in a large group, work through the fair on your own.
6. Be confident, smile, and make eye-contact.
7. Say ‘thank you’ and ask for business cards.
8. Network with as many companies as possible, try to keep each conversation under 5 minutes.
9. Don’t collect too many freebies, a few are okay.
10. Follow up with employers that you found interesting.

- Meet multiple employers and learn more about your industry or field.
- Discover current openings and ask questions about the job.
- Share your resume with recruiters and hiring managers.
- Demonstrate your interpersonal and communication skills, enthusiasm, and passion for the work you want to do next.
- Network with professionals in your field and with other job seekers.
- Gain insight that will help you in your job search and career development

Before the Fair

Many students are nervous attending a job fair for the first time. A little preparation will increase your confidence and make the experience more worthwhile. Here are some things you can do to make the most of a job fair:

1. **Use [Handshake](#) to Register & Get the Info:** All FVTC job fairs and recruiting events can be found under the “Events” tab on Handshake. Click on the fair that interests you to **register**, get **event details**, and find out what **employers** will be attending.
2. **Research Employers Attending the Fair:** When you click on an event in [Handshake](#), you can view the employers who will attend the fair. Click on the “All Employers” tab and make a list of the employers you most want to connect with during the fair. From this list you can also link to the employer’s Handshake profile to see posted jobs and additional information. Do your company research just like you would for an interview: check out their website, open jobs, products, customers.
3. **Update Your Resume:** Make sure your resume effectively presents your current education and experience by using our [Resume guidance](#) and meeting with an FVTC Employment Advisor. Plan to take several copies of your resume to the fair and know how to forward your resume (as a .PDF) from your smartphone via email, text, or airdrop should the recruiter request it.
4. **Practice Your “Pitch” or Introduction:** You only have about 30 seconds to make an impression on a recruiter, so check out our [Elevator Pitch guidance](#) and prepare a 30-60 second conversational introduction that you can easily work into your conversation with a recruiter. Keep it conversational, so avoid memorizing. Be prepared to discuss what you are studying, your skills and relevant experience, what you’re looking for in a job, and why you are interested in the company.



At the Fair

1. **Dress for Success:** This is the day to look your best, make sure your grooming and attire are clean, tidy, and professional for your industry or field.
2. **Arrive Early:** Long lines can form for some employers; by arriving at the fair early you'll be able to easily connect with most of the employers on your list.
3. **Bring Your Resume:** Bring 5-10 copies of your resume to the fair in a professional padfolio or folder.
4. **Prepare Questions to Ask Employers:** Every conversation is a mutual exchange of information; this is an opportunity for you to learn more about employers and opportunities in your field so come ready to ask questions about what you want to know:
 - What types of career opportunities are available with your company?
 - Does your company offer internship opportunities?
 - Can you describe your company's hiring/application process?
 - What are the main skills or qualities that you look for in an employee?
 - Are you aware of related jobs or occupations that I would be qualified for?
 - Can you tell me about your career path with _____?
 - May I contact you if I need more information?
5. **Wear a Name Tag:** When you check in at an FVTC job fair you'll be able to make a name tag. Include your first and last name and your program. Example: Kenny Williams Cyber Security. This will make it easier for recruiters to engage with you!
6. **Get a Map:** Some fairs are very large and utilize multiple spaces. Your fair packet will include a map of the entire fair, make sure you visit all the areas and employers you are interested in.
7. **Be Independent:** Employers want to hire YOU, not you and 5 of your friends, so navigate the fair on your own or with one other person. This is absolutely essential to job fair success!
8. **Talk to the Recruiter/Representative!** Make eye contact and introduce yourself using your conversational "pitch." Share your enthusiasm for the work and what you want to do next. They can train you to do a variety of jobs, but you bring the energy! Respect the representative's time and limit your conversations to 5 minutes. If you notice other attendees waiting to talk to the employer, wrap up your conversation and thank them for their time.
 - PROTIP: Ask the recruiter/representative for their business card and pick up informational materials to refer to later.
9. **Say Thank You and Ask to Connect:** Thank the representative for their time and ask if you can connect with them on LinkedIn.

After the Fair

1. **Send a Thank You Note:** Send a thank you note via email within 24 hours of the fair to the employers you spoke with. This is a small effort that pays big dividends.
2. **Connect on LinkedIn:** Send personalized connection requests to those recruiters with whom you want to maintain contact. Remember to use the desktop version of LinkedIn which allows you to include a personal note with your connection request. The mobile application does not include this feature.
3. **Apply for Open Positions:** If you learned about opportunities you are interested in, apply for them within a few days of the fair and reference the fair in your cover letter or job application so that recruiters readily make the connection.