

# Job Fair Tips



Job Fairs can be a great way to experience a large number of companies in a short period of time. They can also be a fast way to shoot yourself in the foot if you are not prepared. Below are some tips on the Job Fair scene.

## ▶ Definitely attend.

And no, not just Juniors and Seniors. Freshmen and Sophomores who are just getting started with the process of seeking job opportunities in construction should go. Note: An employer's expectations are oftentimes more forgiving when talking to a Freshman or Sophomore versus a Junior or Senior... so go and explore.

## ▶ If you are talking to GCs and CMs...

...feel free to dress like the company recruiters dress... comfortably. An exception would be if you know in advance that a company you've targeted has a formal "suit" culture, then be sure to be in a suit.

## ▶ Do homework on the companies in advance.

At the very least, read the brief company descriptions in the Job Fair booklet so you know the basics of what a company does. This includes preparing some questions.

## ▶ When you walk up to a company...

...make sure you deliver a solid handshake, look 'em in the eye, and have a brief self-intro ready to go. For instance, "Hi. My name is Jim Smith and I am a Junior in the CM program. I am interested in learning how your internship program compares to that of other companies."

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- ▶ **Be prepared to answer questions.**

While this is not an interview, a Job Fair is a useful mechanism for companies to filter possible candidates. Be ready to discuss why you chose your major, the school itself, your GPA, your experience so far in construction, your extracurricular activities and interest, etc.

- ▶ **Be energized and positive. A flat tire goes no where.**

- ▶ **Don't be afraid to pay a company a second (short) visit...**

...at the end of the fair. Reinforce what impressed you or maybe how you compare and contrast certain companies at the fair. This is your opportunity to ask follow up questions and gather data for comparison.

- ▶ **Think twice about the trinkets.**

A bag full of goodies that gets in the way of pulling out your resume or shaking hands is an unnecessary hurdle. Save the shopping for another time.

- ▶ **Follow-up with an email to those people you spoke with.**

Express appreciation for their interest in your school and for taking time to talk with you. Reference something specific from your conversation... perhaps what you understand the next step to be. And be sure your writing is grammatically correct.