

Top 12 Tips for Making the Most of Job Fairs

1. Register for job fairs in your desired work location; check with local colleges, universities and school districts for upcoming events. You may even check with your state department of education for state-wide events that may be taking place. Depending on the event type, you may be asked to register in person, via mail or online.
2. Create a placement file/packet (online or paper) with your résumé and letters of recommendation.
3. Carry extra résumés or placement files with you! If you know that you want to leave résumés with certain schools at this fair, attach a customized cover letter with each résumé.
4. Contact the job fair coordinator(s) to find out which school districts will be in attendance, if interviews will be held on-site, and whether there are any other last-minute details you should know.
5. When a district plans to host interviews on-site, call the district before the scheduled fair, to see if you can get on their interview roster.
6. Don't be intimidated if you happen to see 500 people in the parking lot. If you are prepared, you will stand out!
7. Take time between registering and attending the job fair to research all of the school districts that interest you.
8. Plan and rehearse (speak out loud in front of a mirror) the introduction you will use when approaching the recruiter's table. Plan concise, professional comments and practice speaking clearly. Consider including your name, specific skills, grades or content you hope to teach, and why you want to work in that district (based on your research). Be prepared for follow-up questions about yourself and your goals.
9. Craft your responses to standard interview questions in case the opportunity for a full interview arises.
10. When the big day arrives, dress for success and be ready to give your best marketing pitch as to why you are the best candidate for the job.

11. Be sure to collect the business cards for each school recruiter with whom you speak! This is a great way to follow-up after the event is over. Make notes on the backs of the cards to help you remember distinctive things about each.
12. Following the job fair, take a few moments to write a brief, hand-written thank you note to each administrator you talked with and send any pertinent follow-up paperwork or a link to your online portfolio to the appropriate school recruiters.

Dress for Success

What should you wear? You want to look neat and reasonably conservative. No piercings (other than an earring or two per ear for women) or tattoos should show. No heavy make-up, expensive jewelry, overly short skirts, or overly high heels. Do not show too much skin.

Overall, a business suit is the most appropriate apparel for an interview. On both men and women, suits look professional and make a great impression. When you wear professional attire, you are telling an interviewer that you are serious about fitting into the school community. You want interviewers to notice you, not your clothing.

Women: A woman's suit should be conservative in color and style, the skirt knee-length or longer. Slacks are acceptable as long as they are tailored and match the suit jacket, and classic pumps of 1-2 inches look best with either choice. A conservative style extends to accessories also. Jewelry should be understated. For example, a small necklace and basic post earrings are preferable to multiple bracelets and large hoop earrings. You can carry a purse along with your portfolio; however, the less you have to carry, the easier it is to manage your load, shake hands with your interviewers, and even make notes while standing up.

Men: Men, you can't go wrong with a conservative approach. A dark suit with a white or matching shirt and a conservative tie keeps the focus on you as a professional. Save those wacky ties for your students to enjoy once you've been hired. Avoid the blazer and khakis look—and, of course, carry your portfolio to the interview.

When attending job fairs and distributing copies of your résumé, it is appropriate for either sex to carry either a briefcase or attaché case. Remember to take a working (test it!) pencil or pen and paper for taking notes. Save the tote bag for the classroom.