

DURHAM REGION CAREER FAIR PREPARATION TIPS

PRE-REGISTER:

There is no substitution for in-person contact when engaging in job search. The Career Fair is your opportunity to briefly meet employers face-to-face and effectively sell your skills. It is equally important to prepare for a career fair as it is for an interview therefore we have prepared this summary sheet to assist you in your preparations. Space is limited at the Ajax Community Centre. Reserve your spot early to confirm your participation.

TO OPTIMIZE YOUR SUCCESS, YOU NEED:

1. A Tailored/Customized Résumé for each position that you have the skills/experience/training/education to apply for
2. Your Research Notes and Prepared Questions
3. A Business Card if you are applying for a professional position
4. A Portfolio containing copies of your résumé, a note pad, your research info, etc.
5. A professionally presented list of References
6. If you have it an iPhone/iPad etc., to do any last minute research inquiries
7. An appearance that demonstrates pride in oneself, good attitude, warm friendly demeanour, confidence, good self-esteem; fresh breath and smoke free clothes

1. Résumés

Bring several well prepared copies of your résumés. If you have multiple interests or job objectives, make sure that your résumés are customized for each employer prospect. Clearly label, with sticky notes or envelopes, your résumés in order to hand the correct résumé to the right employer (demonstrating your good organizational skills). Be prepared to hand one or two résumés to each employer. Check the website prior to the Career Fair to see if new employers have registered. . Attend [DRUHC's résumé workshops](#) prior to the Career Fair to ensure that you have an effective résumé that highlights your 'soft and hard' skills; is error-free; results-oriented; and professionally presented. You can make copies of your résumés free of charge when you attend our workshop and state that you are attending the Career Fair.

Research

You must research the company before speaking to an employer at the Career Fair. Develop a list of questions regarding each company you wish to connect with. You need to know:

- Where the company is located?
- How long have they been in business?
- How many employees?
- Have they expanded?
- What is their main product? / What other products? / Services?
- Are they a leader in the industry?
- Does the company have any achievements/awards?
- What appealed to you on their website?
- What skills do you have that you feel align with the work they do?

If you have done your research you will be prepared to state why you are interested in working for a particular company, e.g. “I have noticed from my research that your company is a leader in _____” or “that your company has experienced a great deal of expansion in the last year” or “that your company is using the software platform that I have many years of experience in”.

2. Business Card

Business people exchange business cards. Do you have one to handout if requested? Whether you are working or between jobs you can have business cards developed.

Business cards should include:

Name, Contact information including email and telephone, website if you have one or other social media you wish to refer to; Your Expertise, e.g horticulturist, Network Specialist, Registered Nurse, etc.

3. Portfolio

You should prepare a portfolio for Career Fair brief interchanges, this can either be an expensive leather version or a plastic, cardboard, or made from any other material that will protect and organize your papers and give you a professional organized look. A portfolio would include your résumés, a list of references, and if applicable samples or pictures of your best work. Not all employers will have time to view your portfolio, it's best to be prepared.

4. References/ Credentials

Included in your portfolio should be copies of professional references, certificates, professional standing, credentials, etc. that you can leave with an employer; it may be used to contact or verify references prior to scheduling an interview.

5. iPhone/ iPad

To carry with you, on mute mode, ready to conduct any research, or to advise friends they really need to get over to join you and take advantage of these employment opportunities.

6. Appearance

The first thing that an employer notices when greeting you is the way that you're dressed and groomed. Make every effort to dress appropriately for the type of position that you're seeking. It may not get you the job but a well-dressed appearance can give you a competitive edge and bolster your confidence. Consider the following:

- Dress conservatively
- Wear comfortable, clean and polished shoes
- Ensure that your hair is well-groomed and that fingernails are clean and trimmed
- Do not wear visible body piercing (e.g. nose, eyebrows) with the exception of earrings
- Make sure that your breath is fresh and that your teeth are clean
- Do not chew gum, eat candy or have any kind of food in your mouth when speaking to an employer
- Keep your jewelry to a minimum
- It's important to smell clean, however, in order to respect those with chemical sensitivities, please do not wear cologne or perfume
- Sit or stand up straight at all times
- If you need to use the phone, leave the area to avoid disturbing others (demonstrating bad manners)

Avoid any nervous habits that you may have (e.g. nail chewing, fidgeting, rocking) or demonstrating any frustration or impatience

MORE SUGGESTIONS

Meeting Employers

Make the most of your time. Your Career Fair time with an employer will be brief. This is an opportunity to be evaluated on more than just your résumé. Interpersonal, communication, and work-place-appropriate social skills are critical. These skills are important; employers are interested in hiring individuals who can make a good impression on their associates, clients and customers.

- Make eye contact, offer a firm handshake and show enthusiasm
- Introduce yourself in a strong, clear voice but don't speak too loud or soft.
- Develop a 20-30 sec introduction stating: 1. **who you are**; 2. **what type of position you are looking for**; and 3. **how your specific skill set and experience will benefit their company**. This is commonly referred to as an elevator pitch. Rehearse your elevator pitch to ensure that you are comfortable with the content; however, you don't want to sound like you are reading from a script. Some employers may take control of the conversation but it is best to be ready. Be prepared to leave information and request a business card and schedule a time to follow-up, or determine next steps, **if you have the skills the employer is seeking**.
- For interview tips, attend our [Interview workshop](#) at our Oshawa or Pickering location prior to the Career Fair.

Follow-up

You can follow-up with an employer after the Career Fair via telephone, mail or email. Thank the employer for his/her time and re-state your interest and qualifications for the position. If you send an email or a traditional letter, be sure to enclose your résumé and updated cover letter.

Networking

Networking should not be overlooked as a key component of your job search. Career Fairs are all about networking with employers. Having a simple, professional business card with basic contact information to hand to employers may set you apart from the crowd. Networking with job seekers may also be beneficial. You can share information about job leads, companies and their recruiting strategies. Reciprocal information sharing helps build strong relationships. It's good to use your iPhone or iPad to collect contact information and enter follow-up information into a calendar.

Presentations and Workshops

Many job seekers who are attending the fair have expressed interest in attending DRUHC's condensed workshops at the Career Fair. We encourage you to attend the full workshops offered in Pickering or Oshawa prior to the Career Fair in order to fully benefit from the information provided. Please [check our calendar](#) to view the workshops offered during the month of February.

If you are also interested in participating in the condensed workshops and listening to experts in the field during the Career Fair, please view the current [schedule of presentations and workshops](#).

Logistics

Due to an overwhelming response from job seekers, the day will be divided into three time slots in order to accommodate all of those interested in participating and manage parking. You will be prompted to identify the time slot that you are interested in attending when you are registering (10:00am-12:00pm, 12:00pm-2:00pm, 2:00pm-4:00pm). Prior to the Career Fair you will be issued with an entrance receipt to print and bring with you at the designated time, if you do not have access to a printer please advise.

A floor plan will be posted on this website at least one week prior to the event to allow you to identify the location of the employers at the top of your list for contact. There are several activities happening throughout the day including guest speaker presentations and job search workshops. Schedule your day accordingly.