

## How to Prepare for the Career & Graduate School Fair



### Why should you attend?

- Allows you to network with industry professionals:
  - Not all organizations will be recruiting, but it is a great chance to build your network and get a contact to follow-up with
- Allows you to explore different career pathways
- Learn about the various opportunities and professions
- Learn more about graduate school opportunities around the world
- Gain skills and values needed for today's workforce
- Market yourself

### Why do organizations attend?

- To fill current (or upcoming) job postings
- To showcase graduate studies programs
- To see the quality of MUN & CNA students
- To promote a profession or field
- To promote their organizations as a top employer
- To maintain relationships with universities/colleges

### There are three stages of a Career Fair:

1. Before – The Preparation
2. During – The Actual Event
3. After – The Follow-Up

## Stage 1: Before – The Preparation

---

- Know what you want to achieve by attending Career Fair (e.g. finding a job, networking)
- Know what exhibitors are attending
- Research organizations of interest
- Know the location of the event
- Know when the event begins and ends
- **Book an appointment with a Career Advisor or review the Tip Sheets on the Career Services website:** <https://www.mun.ca/student/career-services/>
- Our tip sheets include:
  1. Resume and Cover Letter Writing
  2. Networking
  3. Interview Tips
- **Develop an up-to-date resume**
  - Have it critiqued beforehand and/or review our Resume and Cover Letter Writing Guide for samples:  
[https://www.mun.ca/student/media/production/memorial/administrative/student-life/files/career/resources/Resume\\_and\\_Cover\\_Letter\\_Guide\\_2018.pdf](https://www.mun.ca/student/media/production/memorial/administrative/student-life/files/career/resources/Resume_and_Cover_Letter_Guide_2018.pdf)
  - Tailor your resume for each position that you apply to.
  - Have a business portfolio to carry copies of your resume, a note pad, a pen, etc.
  - Plan your visit.
  - Develop pertinent questions to ask the employers.
  - Develop a concise description of yourself, what your interests are & your future plans.
- **Prepare an introduction of yourself and your skills**
  - A 30-second “sales pitch”
  - Name, major, opportunities seeking, relevant experience, skills and strengths, and company knowledge

### ***30-second sales pitch:***

**PAWS** is a useful technique when answering open-ended questions about yourself (e.g. “tell me about yourself” or “why should we hire you”) during an interview but it can also be helpful during a sales pitch when speaking with industry professionals or attending events such as Career Fair.

- **Personal** – Who you are and why you are interested in the organization.
- **Academic** – Your academic interests and how your education/training relates to the organization.
- **Work** – Previous relevant work and/or volunteer experience, and what you gained or accomplished from these experiences.
- **Skills** – The skills you developed or demonstrated

## Stage 2: During – The Actual Event

---

- This is your chance to sell yourself.
- **Dress appropriately!**
  - The #1 complaint from past exhibitors has been students not dressing for the occasion.
  - First impressions are lasting ones that an employer has of you – make it a positive one.
  - Business casual attire creates a better professional image than jeans and a t-shirt.
  - Remember, you are representing the present and future of MUN and CNA students!
- **Introduce yourself!**
  - Approach the exhibitors to converse & find out more about what they offer.
  - Extend a warm greeting and a firm handshake.
  - Introduce yourself using your full name
  - Maintain good eye contact.
  - Show enthusiasm and zeal.
  - Hand out your resume.
  - Create small talk.
- **Ask good questions!**
  - What skills are important for this work?
  - Do you have any advice for someone who is interested in working in this field?
  - What positions will you be recruiting for and from which academic backgrounds?
  - Would I need more than an undergraduate degree for employment or advancement?
  - Informational interview questions may be useful when meeting exhibitors during Career Fairs. Learn more here: <https://www.mun.ca/student/career-services/career-resources/interview-tips/informational-interview/>

### ***Employers Not Recruiting for Your Discipline?***

Feedback from students/alumni who have attended:

- *“There is no one here recruiting for my major or degree...”*
- *“The other exhibitors are here for other degrees, not really mine...”*
- If you are interested in an exhibitor who hasn’t listed your discipline, you can:
  - Still approach them and give them your sales pitch;
  - Ask questions such as:
    - I know you’re here recruiting for \_\_\_\_\_, but do you hire individuals with my background?

- Would you be able to provide me with a contact from your organization who is better suited to address my background?
- What would you consider that I do to better enhance my chances of getting employed by your organization as I'm really interested in working with you?"
- Listen carefully to others.
- Be polite & turn off cell phones.
- Thank organizations for their time.
- Keep track of the exhibitors that you spoke with.
- If interested, ask if you can follow-up.

### Stage 3: Follow-Up

---

- Record/file the information provided for future reference.
- Follow-up with any contacts of interest that you have gathered by contacting them via LinkedIn or gather business cards/contact info.
- Send a follow-up email or LinkedIn message to the employers who you wish to pursue.

#### **Sample Follow-Up Letter/Email:**

*Hello [Name of Recruiter/Exhibitor],*

*Thanks again for the opportunity to meet you at the Career & Graduate School Fair on September 25th.*

*It was great learning about [details from meeting], and I believe my [relevant, personal experience] would make me a good fit for [Company].*

*I would love to connect regarding a potential career with [Company] and I look forward to hearing from you in the future.*

*Thanks again for your time!*

*Best,*

*[Name]*

**Takeaways:**

What can you takeaway from attending the Career Fair?

- Notes about the contacts you made & people that you spoke with
- Information about organizations that you've contacted
- Self-confidence when interacting with organization representatives
- A better sense of your career options

**Do's & Don'ts for the Career Fair:****Do:**

- Be assertive, not rude
- Be aware of others waiting to speak with exhibitors
- Recognize that the exhibitors like to speak to small groups
- Dress appropriately
- Have copies of your resume on hand

**Don't:**

- Wait for someone to approach you
- Ask obvious or redundant questions
- Ask about salary and benefits
- Monopolize someone's time
- Have a lack of direction and focus
- Interrupt then not listen
- Cruise the booths with a group of friends
- Carry your backpack, large purse, or other paraphernalia with you
- "Wing it" with employers
- Arrive during the last half hour of the event

**And Remember!**

Just be yourself and make the most of the day! Be sincere and don't come across as false ... and sell yourself as only you know how to!

**Tidbits from Employers:**

- "[Students] need more practical experience. Theory is great but real-life is somewhat different." – Co-ops, internships, summer job, volunteer, MUCEP, etc...
- "Previous work experience is highly valued – they (graduates with work experience) are aware of the environment, pressures, and norms in an industry environment. They also have tangible, hands-on skills that distinguish them from other students."

- “Hires with previous work experience ... bring a toolbox to the table.”

### **Career Tips and Resources**

- [Meet employers](#)
- [Career and Graduate School Fair](#)
- [Career Resources](#)
- [Interview Tips](#)
- [Building Your Network](#)
- [Memorial's Online Record of Experience \(MORE\)](#)

*For information or to book an appointment with a Career Advisor, please call (709) 864-2033, email [careerdevelopment@mun.ca](mailto:careerdevelopment@mun.ca) or visit our office in UC-4002.*

*We acknowledge that the lands on which Memorial University’s campuses are situated are in the traditional territories of diverse Indigenous groups, and we acknowledge with respect the diverse histories and cultures of the Beothuk, Mi’kmaq, Innu, and Inuit of this province.*

*For more information or to book an appointment with a Career Advisor, please email [careerdevelopment@mun.ca](mailto:careerdevelopment@mun.ca), call (709) 864-2033, or visit our office in UC-4002.*