

How to Stand Out at a Virtual Career Fair

When you log into a virtual career fair platform, you'll see different rooms or employer names. You can move between rooms to chat directly with recruiters. This experience can be exciting and a little intimidating because **you need a job and they need their next great hire.**

Many conversations begin with an online chat, **and first impressions happen fast.** Being prepared helps you engage confidently and start building a professional relationship right away.

Possible Outcomes for Students

- A job or internship offer
- A formal one-on-one virtual interview
- An interview scheduled by the employer at a different time

Your goal is to **put your best foot forward the moment you enter the virtual career fair.**

10 Ways to Prepare and Stand Out

1. Register Early and Test the Platform

Sign up ahead of time and log in early to troubleshoot any technical issues. You don't want technology to be the reason you miss an opportunity.

2. Research Participating Employers

Take time to learn about the companies attending:

- Visit their website and job board
- Review pay ranges, if available
- Learn about company values and social responsibility
- Connect with current employees on LinkedIn to hear about their experiences

This allows you to speak knowledgeably and authentically during conversations.

3. Polish Your Resume and Cover Letter

Prepare these documents well in advance. Get honest feedback to ensure they clearly tell your career story and highlight your strengths.

4. Update Your Portfolio (If Applicable)

If your field requires a portfolio (design, writing, tech, media, etc.), make sure it's current, organized, and easy to share.

5. Optimize Your LinkedIn Profile

Recruiters often look you up after chatting. Make sure your profile:

- Is complete and professional
- Aligns with your resume
- Clearly communicates your skills and interests

6. Upload Materials in Advance

If the platform allows you to upload resumes or portfolios ahead of time, do it. This makes it easier for recruiters to follow up.

7. Practice Your Elevator Pitch

Be ready to answer:

“What kind of position are you interested in?”

Clearly articulate:

- Your skills
- Your strengths
- The value you bring
- The roles you are targeting

A strong pitch leads to deeper, more meaningful conversations.

8. Check Your Technology

Make sure your computer has the required software, a working camera, and a stable internet connection.

9. Use Noise-Canceling Headphones (optional)

This helps reduce distractions and keeps conversations professional.

10. Create a Professional Environment

Choose a clean, quiet, well-lit space. A neat background signals professionalism and attention to detail.

Why This Matters

Preparation builds confidence. Employers can feel that confidence and it adds an extra layer of polish and professionalism to how you show up online.

Smart Questions to Ask Recruiters

A virtual career fair is essentially a **pre-interview**. Recruiters attend because they want to hire students for internships and entry-level roles. Asking thoughtful questions helps you stand out.

Here are strong questions to consider:

About the Role

- What skills or experiences make someone successful in this position?
- What does the onboarding or training process look like for new hires?
- What does a typical day look like in this role?

About Growth and Development

- What opportunities exist for professional development or advancement?
- How do interns or entry-level employees typically grow within the company?

About the Team and Culture

- How would you describe the team culture?
- What do you enjoy most about working here?

About the Hiring Process

- What are the next steps in the hiring process?
 - What advice would you give a student who wants to be a strong candidate?
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Final Tip

Career fairs are not just about resumes, they are about **connection**. Be prepared, be curious, and be confident. The goal is to leave recruiters thinking, *“I want to talk to this student again.”*

30-Second Elevator Pitch Template

1. Introduction (5 seconds)

“Hi, my name is [Your Name], and I’m a [year/major or program] at [school].”

2. What You’re Interested In (8–10 seconds)

“I’m interested in [type of role/internship], especially opportunities related to [specific skill, field, or function].”

3. Your Value (10–12 seconds)

“I bring strong skills in [2–3 relevant skills], and I’ve gained experience through [internships, projects, coursework, part-time work, leadership, or labs].”

4. Why Them + Close (5 seconds)

“I’m really interested in [company name] because [specific reason: values, mission, work, culture]. I’d love to learn more about how I could contribute.”

Example Version (So They Can Hear It Flow)

“Hi, my name is Jordan, and I’m a junior majoring in Marketing at State University. I’m interested in digital marketing and brand strategy roles. I bring strong skills in social media analytics, content creation, and teamwork, and I recently completed a marketing internship where I managed campaign performance reports. I’m excited about your company because of your focus on data-driven storytelling, and I’d love to learn more about your internship opportunities.”

Pro Tips for Students

- Keep it **conversational**, not robotic
- Practice until it sounds natural
- Customize the **last sentence** for each employer
- **Smile** even in virtual chats, it shows 😊

Below is a career fair prep worksheet.

30-Second Elevator Pitch Worksheet

Virtual & In-Person Career Fairs

Instructions

Complete each section below. Then practice reading your pitch out loud until it sounds natural and confident.

Step 1: Introduction (5 seconds)

My name is:

My year/major/program:

My school:

Draft your opening sentence:

“Hi, my name is _____, and I’m a
_____ at _____.”

Step 2: Career Interest (8–10 seconds)

Type of role or internship I’m interested in:

Field, industry, or focus area:

Draft this sentence:

“I’m interested in _____, especially opportunities related to _____.”

Step 3: My Value & Skills (10–12 seconds)

Top 2–3 skills I bring:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Relevant experience (check all that apply and list):

- Internship _____
- Class projects _____
- Part-time job _____
- Leadership/Clubs _____
- Volunteer/Lab/Research _____

Draft this sentence:

“I bring strong skills in _____, and I’ve gained experience through _____.”

Step 4: Why This Company + Close (5 seconds)

Company name:

Why I’m interested in this company (values, mission, culture, work):

Draft your closing sentence:

“I’m really interested in _____ because _____, and I’d love to learn more about how I could contribute.”

Step 5: Put It All Together

Write your **full 30-second elevator pitch** below:

Practice Checklist

- Sounds natural (not memorized)
- Clear and confident
- Under 30 seconds
- Adaptable for different employers

Reflection (Optional)

- What part of my pitch feels strongest?

- What part do I need to practice more?

Step 6: Recruiter Follow-Up Questions

Use these after your elevator pitch to keep the conversation going.

Instructions

Choose **2–3 questions** to ask each recruiter. Prioritize questions that show curiosity, preparation, and genuine interest.

About the Role

- What skills or experiences make someone successful in this role?
- What does a typical day look like for someone in this position?
- What challenges would a new hire face in the first few months?

My custom role-related question:

About Growth & Development

- What does onboarding or training look like for interns or entry-level hires?
- What opportunities are there for learning, mentorship, or advancement?
- How do successful interns or new hires typically grow within the company?

My custom growth-related question:

About Team & Culture

- How would you describe the team culture?
- What do you personally enjoy most about working here?
- How does the company support diversity, equity, and inclusion?

My custom culture-related question:

About the Hiring Process

- What are the next steps in the hiring process?
- What qualities stand out to you in strong candidates?
- Is there anything I can do to strengthen my application?

My custom hiring-process question:

Closing the Conversation Strong

Before leaving the recruiter's room, be sure to:

- Ask how to follow up
- Confirm preferred contact method (email or LinkedIn)
- Thank the recruiter for their time

Closing sentence I will use:

"Thank you for your time today. I really enjoyed learning more about _____. What would be the best way to follow up?"

Final Reminder

Your goal is not just to get answers, it's to **leave a positive, memorable impression** and move one step closer to an interview.

Step 7: Post-Career Fair Follow-Up Email Template

Send within 24–48 hours after the career fair

Instructions

Use this template to follow up with recruiters you spoke with. Personalize **at least one sentence** so it doesn't feel generic.

Email

Subject

Dear [Recruiter's Name],

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me during the [virtual/in-person] career fair on [date]. I really enjoyed learning more about [company name], especially our conversation about [specific role, project, or topic you discussed].

Our discussion reinforced my interest in opportunities related to [position, internship, or department], and I believe my skills in [1–2 relevant skills] would allow me to contribute effectively to your team.

Thank you again for your time and insights. I would welcome the opportunity to continue the conversation and am happy to provide any additional information.

Best regards,
[Your Full Name]
[Major / Program, University]
[Phone Number]
[LinkedIn URL]

Optional Add-Ons

- Attach your **resume** if they invited you to apply
 - Mention the **job posting ID or title** if one was discussed
 - Connect on **LinkedIn** with a brief personalized note
-

Quick Checklist Before Sending

- Recruiter's name spelled correctly
 - Company name correct
 - Personalized sentence included
 - Professional email address used
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Final Tip

This email isn't just a thank-you, it's a **soft reminder** of who you are and why you're a strong candidate. Many interviews start because of a thoughtful follow-up.

Step 8: Post–Career Fair Reflection & Tracking Sheet

Complete this within 24 hours of the career fair

Instructions

Use one sheet **per employer** you spoke with. This helps you remember key details, follow up strategically, and track next steps.

Employer Information

Company name:

Recruiter name:

Recruiter title/role:

Contact information (email or LinkedIn):

Date of conversation:

Conversation Notes

Role(s) discussed:

Key responsibilities or skills mentioned:

What the recruiter emphasized as important:

Personal Reflection

What went well in this conversation?

What could I improve for future conversations?

What stood out about this company or role?

Interest Level

My interest level in this company/role:

- Very interested
- Somewhat interested
- Exploring options

Why?

Next Steps & Action Items

- Sent follow-up email
- Connected on LinkedIn
- Applied for position
- Scheduled interview
- Waiting for response

Job title or posting link (if applicable):

Deadline to apply (if applicable):

Date I sent follow-up email:

Skills or Experience to Strengthen

Skills I should continue building for roles like this:

Final Takeaway

One thing I learned from this career fair experience:

Why This Matters

Career fairs move fast. This sheet helps you:

- Stay organized
- Follow up professionally
- Identify patterns in employer feedback
- Improve with every conversation

Used consistently, it turns one event into **multiple opportunities**.

Just tell me how students will be using it.

Customize this for internships vs. full-time roles

Excellent move — students *think* internships and full-time roles are the same conversation, but recruiters don't. Below is a **clear, side-by-side customization** you can plug directly into the worksheet so students know how to shift their mindset, questions, and follow-up.

Post-Career Fair Reflection & Tracking Sheet

Customized for Internships vs. Full-Time Roles

Instructions: Complete the section that matches the type of role you discussed.
If you discussed both, complete **both sections**.

Internship Reflection & Tracking Sheet

Employer & Role Details

Company name:

Internship title:

Department or team:

Internship term:

Summer Fall Spring Year-round

Duration & hours (if discussed):

Conversation Focus (Internship-Specific)

Skills the recruiter said interns need most:

Tools, software, or coursework mentioned:

Level of supervision or mentorship described:

Internship Value & Learning

What I hope to learn from this internship:

How this internship fits into my long-term career goals:

Conversion & Growth Potential

Did the recruiter mention future opportunities?

- Return internship
- Full-time conversion
- Early talent pipeline
- Not discussed

Notes:

Internship Next Steps

- Apply online
- Submit portfolio or transcript
- Follow up with recruiter
- Attend info session
- Wait for application review

Application deadline:

Internship Reflection

One strength I clearly communicated:

One skill I want to strengthen before applying/interviewing:

Full-Time Role Reflection & Tracking Sheet

Employer & Role Details

Company name:

Job title:

Department or team:

Location or remote status:

Start date or hiring timeline:

Conversation Focus (Full-Time-Specific)

Core skills and experience required:

Performance expectations in the first 6–12 months:

Team structure and reporting line:

Readiness & Fit

How my current experience aligns with this role:

Gaps I may need to address:

Hiring Process Insights

Interview stages discussed:

- Recruiter screen
- Technical/skills interview
- Panel interview
- Final interview

Timeline mentioned:

Full-Time Next Steps

- Apply online
- Submit resume/cover letter
- Send tailored follow-up email
- Prepare for interview
- Await recruiter response

Application deadline:

Full-Time Reflection

My strongest selling point for this role:

One area to refine before interviews:

Final Comparison (Optional but Powerful)

Which role type feels like a better fit right now?

Internship Full-time Unsure

Why?

Note for Students

- **Internships** = learning, mentorship, potential
- **Full-time roles** = readiness, impact, consistency

Adjust your pitch, questions, and follow-ups accordingly.

Career Fair Success Workbook

From Preparation to Follow-Up

Section 1: Career Fair Readiness Checklist

Complete this before the career fair

- Registered for the career fair
 - Logged into the platform early to test technology
 - Researched participating employers
 - Updated resume and cover letter
 - Updated LinkedIn profile
 - Uploaded required materials to the platform
 - Prepared portfolio (if applicable)
 - Practiced elevator pitch
 - Professional space, lighting, and background ready
 - Headphones and camera tested
-

Section 2: 30-Second Elevator Pitch Worksheet

Step 1: Introduction

Name: _____

Year / Major / Program: _____

School: _____

Draft:

“Hi, my name is _____, and I’m a _____ at
_____.”

Step 2: Career Interest

Type of role or internship I’m seeking:

Industry or focus area:

Draft:

“I’m interested in _____, especially opportunities related to _____.”

Step 3: Skills & Experience

Top skills:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Relevant experience:

Internship Coursework Job Project Leadership Research

Draft:

“I bring strong skills in _____, and I’ve gained experience through _____.”

Step 4: Why This Employer

Company name: _____

Why I’m interested:

Draft:

“I’m really interested in _____ because _____, and I’d love to learn more about how I could contribute.”

Full Pitch (Put It All Together)

Section 3: Recruiter Follow-Up Questions

Select 2–3 per employer

Role-Focused

- What skills are most important for success in this role?
- What does a typical day look like?
- What challenges would a new hire face early on?

Custom question:

Growth & Development

- What training or mentorship is offered?
- How do interns or entry-level hires typically grow here?

Custom question:

Culture & Team

- How would you describe the team culture?
- What do you enjoy most about working here?

Custom question:

Hiring Process

- What are the next steps?
- What makes a candidate stand out?

Custom question:

Section 4: Employer Conversation Tracking Sheet

Use one page per employer

Company: _____

Recruiter name/title: _____

Contact info: _____

Role(s) discussed: _____

Key notes from conversation:

Section 5A: Internship Reflection & Tracking

Internship title: _____

Term: Summer Fall Spring Year-round

Skills/tools mentioned:

What I hope to learn:

Future opportunities discussed:

Full-time conversion Return internship Not discussed

Next steps:

Apply Follow up Submit materials

Section 5B: Full-Time Role Reflection & Tracking

Job title: _____

Location / Remote: _____

Experience required:

Expectations in first 6–12 months:

Interview process discussed:

Recruiter screen Technical Panel Final

Next steps:

Apply Follow up Prepare for interview

Section 6: Post–Career Fair Follow-Up Email

Send within 24–48 hours

Email

Subject

Dear [Recruiter’s Name],

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me during the [career fair name] on [date]. I really enjoyed learning more about [company name], especially our conversation about [specific role, project, or topic].

Our discussion reinforced my interest in opportunities related to [position or internship], and I believe my skills in [1–2 skills] would allow me to contribute effectively to your team.

Thank you again for your time. I would welcome the opportunity to stay in touch and continue the conversation.

Best regards,

[Your Name]

[Major / Program, University]

[Phone Number]
[LinkedIn URL]

Section 7: Post-Career Fair Reflection

What went well today?

What will I improve next time?

Which employer or role excited me most? Why?

Skills I need to continue developing:

Final Reminder for Students

Career fairs are **pre-interviews**. Preparation, curiosity, and follow-up are what turn short conversations into interviews and offers.