



Preparing for the College & Career Expo

College and career fairs are a great opportunity to speak with many college admissions representatives and potential employers in one place. The college and career reps will share basic information about their college or businesses. For colleges, this information may include where they are located, how many students attend the college, a list of majors they provide, admission requirements, and social life on campus. Businesses might share their location, the different types of job opportunities they offer, what the work might entail, and what type of employee they are looking to hire.

It is important for students to bring a list of questions and have a notepad or paper to jot down important information they want to remember. Here are some tips:

Tips for Pre-Event Planning

- Before you arrive at the fair, do your research. Which reps do you want to meet? What do you know about their college or business already and what do you want to know?
- If you have a conversation with a rep and they can clearly see you are interested and familiar with the school or business, that impression can have an impact. A few thoughtful, well-researched questions are best.
- If possible, buy a box of Avery address labels and print out a sheet or two of labels with your first and last name and email address on them. When you get to the expo, you can place labels on the reps' information cards instead of writing your information 20 or 30 times.
- Dress a little nicer than you would at school; casual, but put-together. College and career reps will remember students who seem well put-together and who demonstrate serious interest in their schools or businesses. Show them you're interested by smiling, making eye contact and being polite. Demonstrate that you are an intelligent, likeable, inquisitive person who would make a great addition to their school or business.

Tips for Day of College & Career Expo

- Locate the reps you want to speak with first. If you have time afterwards, speak with colleges or businesses not on your list. You might add them to your favorites after you hear what they have to offer.
- It's okay to approach a school or business you are unfamiliar with. Take advantage of the event to learn about new opportunities, understanding that one of these freshly discovered post-secondary pathways might be the perfect place for you. Be prepared to talk about yourself and what you are looking for.

- Make sure you get the reps' contact information. Within a day or two, send them a follow-up email thanking them for answering your questions and to let them know you're interested in their school or business. Keep it short, polite and professional.
- If there are other students at the booth who also have questions, make sure you don't take up too much time. Also, pay attention when the rep is talking to other students, chances are they will be answering some of the same questions you have.
- Listen closely to the college majors or look at the literature and brochures they provide to see if they have your major of interest. If you have not decided on a major, that's okay, most colleges provide an undecided major that you can pursue until you declare a major later.

A few good questions to ask college reps:

- What is the school known for?
- Ask about class size & student to teacher ratio.
 - How many classes have 500+ students?
- What percentage graduate in four years?
- Is the SAT/ACT required for admittance to your school?
 - What is the average GPA and SAT/ACT test scores?
- Ask how much the total cost of college is for one year.
- What type of scholarships are offered and what are the requirements to attain them?
- Ask about dorm rooms if you plan to stay on campus
- How safe is the campus and its surrounding neighborhoods?
- Do they offer academic support, i.e. EOP, tutoring, services for foster youth, etc.?
- Ask about athletics, if interested.
- Ask about activities on campus during weekends.
- What are their deadlines?
- Do they require a deposit with "intent to attend"?
- Is the school "impacted"? If so, which majors? ("Impacted" means when more applications are received in the initial filing period from eligible applicants than can be accommodated.)
- For specialized or trade schools, what different kinds of job opportunities are available to graduates
 - Does the program assist students with finding jobs after graduation?

A few good questions to ask business reps:

- What kind of special training is required for this field?
 - In general, how long does it take to get a certificate or other qualification?
- What kind of job opportunities are they offering?
- What are the minimum requirements for a starting position at the business?
- What opportunities are there for upward mobility?

You may have only a few minutes to speak with the college rep. Make it count!