



How to Have an Effective Conversation at a Career Fair

Model for Talking to Recruiters

- 1 Introduce yourself [Me in 30 Seconds] statement
- 2 Ask one of your prepared questions
- 3 Listen, then align yourself by sharing a relevant skill or experience
- 4 Respond to what they say and ask a natural follow-up question
- 5 Ask a second question using the same pattern if time permits
- 6 Ask for their contact info, to connect on LinkedIn, and thank them

1 INTRODUCE YOURSELF, SHARE YOUR NAME, MAJOR, AND A BRIEF INTEREST AREA OR CAREER FOCUS.

Example:

1

"Hi, I'm ____, it is nice to meet you. As a Humanities major with a focus on writing and critical analysis I'm really interested in roles that involve communication and problem-solving. I am excited to learn more about your company and roles that may align with my skills and experience."

2 START WITH A PREPARED QUESTION YOU HAVE PLANNED AHEAD OF TIME.

Example:

2

"How do students with my background contribute to your company's goals?"
"What qualities do most successful interns have in common?"

3 LISTEN, THEN SHARE YOUR ALIGNMENT - CONNECT YOUR SKILLS OR EXPERIENCE DIRECTLY TO WHAT THEY SAID.

Example:

3

"That's great to hear, I've been doing similar work in my ____ project this semester."
"I enjoy solving those types of problems. In my last class project, I ..."

4 FOLLOW UP NATURALLY, ENGAGE WITH THEIR ANSWER, SHOW INTEREST BY ASKING A FOLLOW-UP QUESTION

Example:

4

"How does your team collaborate across departments?"
"Do interns get to be involved in some of those projects?"

5

ASK A SECOND PREPARED QUESTION (IF TIME ALLOWS) USING THE SAME PATTERN.

6

CLOSE THE CONVERSATION PROFESSIONALLY, ASK FOR CONTACT INFORMATION AND TO CONNECT ON LINKEDIN. THANK THEM FOR THEIR TIME.

Example:

"Thank you for sharing all this. I'd love to stay connected. May I have your contact information and connect with you on LinkedIn?"

Types of Questions to Ask at a Career Fair

Asking thoughtful questions helps you have a more meaningful experience at the Career Fair. The list below shows the kinds of questions that lead to strong conversations with recruiters. Let the conversation flow naturally. There may not be time to ask everything you prepared, and that is okay. It gives you a reason to follow up afterwards. Relax, be curious, and enjoy learning about the opportunities available to you.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CAREER FIT

- What would an entry-level position look like for someone in my major?
- Are there specific departments or projects that regularly hire students with my skill set?
- What skills do you appreciate most when looking for a candidate in ____ role?

CAREER EXPLORATION

- If I want to build a long-term career at your company, what types of role would be a good starting point for someone in my degree?

QUESTIONS ABOUT ROLE OR INTERNSHIP

- What kinds of projects would an intern or new graduate get to work on?

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE COMPANY CULTURE

- What kind of person tends to thrive in your company's culture?
- How does your team define success in this role?

QUESTIONS ABOUT CAREER PATH AND GROWTH

- How do you support professional development or continuing education?
- Could you share an example of someone who started an entry-level role and advanced within the company?

QUESTIONS ABOUT NEXT STEPS/FOLLOW UP

- Is there a particular time of year where you do most of your hiring?
- Who would be the best person to contact if I had more questions about opportunities within your organization?

Tip #1: Do your research before attending the Career Fair. Look up the list of attending employers on Handshake and read a quick overview of the companies you are interested in. Knowing what the company does and the roles they typically hire for will help you ask better questions and feel more confident when speaking with recruiters.

Tip #2: Keep your conversations brief and be aware of students waiting in line behind you. Recruiters often speak with dozens of students so staying focused, prepared, and concise shows respect for their time and helps you make a stronger impression.