

# Tips for Participating in VIRTUAL CAREER FAIRS

## Preparing for The Virtual Career Fair

- ◆ **Register Ahead of Time:** Registering ahead of time will allow you to see the list of employers participating in the fair and receive reminders and/or updates on the fair.
- ◆ **Update Your Resume and Upload it to the Virtual Career Fair platform:** To make an optimal first impression ensure your resume had been proofed, is concise and current. Be sure that it is tailored to the positions you are interested in speaking to the employers about. Also, the same is true for your LinkedIn account. Upload a PDF version of your resume to your profile so that it is accessible to employers.
- ◆ **Research Participating Companies:** After you've registered, take time to research the companies participating the career fair. Most virtual career fairs run only a few hours and or have a queue for job candidates waiting to talk to employers. With time being precious, have a plan of which employer and what positions you would like to speak with them about.
- ◆ **Prepare Your Pitch:** Think about how you want to introduce yourself, and why you are interested in that particular company. Which of your skills, accomplishments and past work experiences do you want to highlight? How will that benefit the employer? Use the research you did to help you develop key messages about how you can be a valuable part of the team.
- ◆ **Test Your Technology:** Ensure that your device or computer is capable of supporting the platform being used to host the virtual career fair. Download any necessary software for the fair, if needed, and leave time for any troubleshooting you may need to do. Do a dry run the day before the event to avoid any last minute surprises. If the virtual career fair platform has a test for functionality, use it to make sure *your* technology is working.
- ◆ **Get Organized:** If you are attending the virtual career fair from your home office, open your computer camera and take a look at your space from the perspective of your camera. Remove anything that looks unprofessional. Make sure the room is clean, well lit and free of distractions.

## During the Virtual Job Fair

**Dress Professionally:** Most likely, you'll be interacting with employers through chat functions. However, there may be employers who want to speak with your face to face. Dress for the event in professional attire for your industry, just like you would if you were going on an in-person interview. Dressing professionally will help show employers that you are serious and help put you in the right frame of mind, showing confidence.

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- ◆ **Be on Time:** If you registered for a specific time slot with an employer, use common courtesy and be on time. Tardiness can be enough to cause an employer to not consider you as a viable candidate.
- ◆ **Keep Muted:** Keep the microphone on your computer or device muted at all times except when you are verbally conversing with the employer. This will eliminate any potentially distracting noise, echoing or reverberation.
- ◆ **Use Professional Communication:** Demonstrate clear, articulate written communication when using the chat function. Just like your resume and cover letters, grammar matters. Text lingo (i.e. LOL or OMG), emoticons and slang is unacceptable.
- ◆ **Exhibit Strong Body Language:** During a video chat, stay conscious of your body language. Present yourself in a confident, competent way through direct eye contact (looking into the camera not the screen image) and sitting up straight. Avoid distracting the employer by keeping hand gestures to a minimum.
- ◆ **Take Notes:** Have paper and pen at hand during the virtual career fair so that you can jot down interesting and important information you hear. Use your notes to help you formulate personalized thank you notes to each employer you talk with.
- ◆ **Ask for Next Steps and Contact Information:** Offer to send your resume to recruiters during the virtual career fair and ask about next steps in the process. Be sure to take down their contact information so that you can follow up after the event.

## After the Virtual Career Fair

- ◆ **Send a Thank You:** Send a thank you to each recruiter and/or employer you made contact with at the virtual career fair. Thank them for their time, and if there is anything in your notes that you want to mention, now's the time. Your personalized thank you note is a way for you to refresh the recruiter's memory of you and remind them why you are a great candidate, why you are interested in their company and the skills and experience that make you someone the company can benefit from. An email, phone call or even a hand-written thank you is appropriate. Hopefully, your thank you note will help keep your name and resume at the top of his/her mind.
- ◆ **Follow Through:** Follow through by sending any documents you may have discussed during the virtual career fair. If the recruiter asked you to send your resume, any work samples or your portfolio, be sure to do so within 24 – 48 hours after the event.
- ◆ **Stay in Touch:** Consider adding the recruiter and/or employer you spoke with to your LinkedIn contacts to stay in touch periodically.