

## **HOW TO PREPARE FOR A CAREER FAIR (Virtual and In-Person)**

The job search landscape has changed, and we want to help you prepare. Use this brief guide to get familiar with what you can expect for the next virtual career fair, taking place May 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, from 12 pm to 5 pm.

In this guide, you will find:

1. How to register for a virtual career fair and login during the event,
2. How to handle the world of virtual interviewing and meetings,
3. How to navigate the career fair platform, and résumé tutorial,
4. What to do before, during and after you attend any career fair.

### **HOW TO REGISTER FOR A VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR AND LOGIN DURING THE EVENT**

During our next virtual career fair, we are using Handshake's virtual career fair platform. To participate in this career fair, you will need to have accessed your Handshake account. If you have not done that yet, you can do so by going to <https://wcsu.joinhandshake.com/login>. This video will help you create your account: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l17YzvacC74>. Do not forget to remember your username and password for when you sign in for the day of the event. The link you used to create your account will be the same link you will use to log into the event during the day/s you choose to participate.

Once you have created your account and confirmed the WCSU email address you used, you can login and view a list of upcoming events and career fairs the Career Success Center is hosting. To view a list of employers who will be attending the career fair, go to your "Events" page and scroll down until you see the event or fair in which you are searching. Click that fair and you will see a list of employers who are registered.



### **HOW TO HANDLE THE WORLD OF VIRTUAL INTERVIEWING AND MEETINGS**

The way people find employment and meet employers has changed and these tips can make it easier if you are new to virtual meetings. For those initial connections, whether they be a virtual career fair, interview, webinar, etc., *you don't get a second chance to make a good first impression, so prepare well and know how to do it right the first time!* Keep this information handy and remember, all these

recommendations apply to in-person events as well. Watch this video for optimal interview/virtual career fair tips, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQwanxQmFnc>

1. **Make sure your technology is operational:** position camera at eye level, practice making eye contact with the camera. *DO NOT USE YOUR CELL PHONE OR IPAD. THESE WILL NOT GIVE YOU THE ACCESS YOU NEED.*
2. **Attend from a distraction-free environment:** minimize noise and have a clean background (light in front, not back, not above).
3. **Use clear, concise professional business communication, verbally and in written chats** be authentic and professional.
4. **Be aware of your facial expressions, body language and posture:** minimize fidgeting.
5. **Do not chew gum or eat.**
6. **Do not multi-task while engaging.** Give your full attention but take notes as needed.
7. **Keep the mute button handy:** eliminate background noise so employers hear no feedback or noise.

## VIRTUAL CAREER FAIRS (VCF)

VCFs work like a traditional job fair, but the whole thing is held online. Through VCFs, employers and job seekers can meet and interact with potential candidates from the comfort of their home or office.

Preparation should include all the above, plus:

- **Register ahead of time.** Learn the basics of the software as each fair can be unique.
- **Research the attending employers** and group them by preference. Visit top companies last.
- **Get ready to upload your tailored resume** if you are applying for any jobs.
- **Do not be afraid to make connections and exchange information online.** Employers came for you so do not be shy!
- **Be patient.** Sometimes employer responses can be slowed by audio delays/student visits.

## VIRTUAL OR VIDEO INTERVIEWS

Held online, virtual interviews are today often your first interaction with an employer, and can be the first of several interviews, depending on the position.

Preparation should include all the above, plus:

- **Dress professionally, at least above the waist!**
- **Research the employers** to build rapport and talk about common interests or other neutral topics.
- **Have helpful reference information handy.**  
Virtual interviews are a great opportunity for post-it notes. Have your questions handy for employers.
- **Pause before answering** to ensure the interviewer finishes speaking and you understand the question.
- **Follow up promptly with a thank-you note within 24 hours.**



## TO RSVP AND REGISTER FOR GROUP AND/OR ONE-ON-ONE SESSIONS USING HANDSHAKE

For a full guide with instructions with each virtual career fair step, please use this link,  
<https://support.joinhandshake.com/hc/en-us/articles/360049934274>.

## THE VIRTUAL FAIR ON HANDSHAKE

Schools are able to host virtual fairs in Handshake, and employers can register similarly to in-person fairs. Once the employer's registration is approved by the school, employers are able to generate session schedules for representatives that will be present.

Employers are able to host two types of sessions to interact with students:

- Group Sessions:
  - 30 minutes each
  - multiple students can attend
- 1:1 Sessions:
  - 10 minutes each
  - one student and one employer representative can attend

In these sessions, employers will be identified as the Host, and they will be able to share their screen with participants.

## IDENTIFYING A VIRTUAL FAIR

Navigate to the **Events** page (via the top menu bar), then use the **Virtual** filter to identify virtual fairs. A fair may be created by your school, or your school may be invited to participate in a virtual fair from another school.

The screenshot shows the Handshake interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Jobs', 'Events', 'Q&A', and 'Students'. Below it, a search bar and filters for 'This week', 'This month', 'Career fair', 'Virtual', 'Saved', and 'All filters'. The 'Virtual' filter is selected. The main content area is divided into 'Find events' and 'Your schedule'. Under 'Find events', there are two listings: '2020 Summer Career Fair' (a career fair from July 22 to July 24, 2020, in The River Edge, New Jersey) and 'Team Meet and Greet' (a virtual recruiting event on July 24, 2020). Under 'Your schedule', there is a listing for 'Virtual 2020 Autumn Virtual Fair' on September 14, from 11:00am to 2:00pm EDT, with a 'Schedule sessions' link.

- You can click on **All Filters**, then click on **Only posted by my school** to narrow down the displayed list of fairs.

If you see a fair or event you'd like to save to review later, click the bookmark icon to the far right of the fair name to save it. You can use the **Saved** filter on this page to locate saved events and fairs.

## REGISTERING AND SIGNING UP FOR SESSIONS

- In order to sign up for sessions with employers, you must be registered for the fair.
  - For details on this process, please see [Signing up For Virtual Fair Sessions](#).
- To sign up for Group or 1:1 sessions, you may be prompted to update your profile privacy setting. We recommend using **Community** to make the most of your Handshake experience, as this will allow you to participate in all fair sessions and engage with other students/alumni!
  - For more information on profile privacy, please see [Profile Privacy Options in Handshake](#).
- Review which employers are attending the fair (follow employers you want to check back in with)!
- You'll be able to sign up for sessions up to one(1) minute before the start time; once the session has started, you'll be unable to sign up for the session.

## PREPARING FOR THE FAIR

Here are some best practices to help you prepare for a successful fair:

- Ensure you have the right setup to support your audio (required) and video (optional).
  - [Handshake Video Requirements & Troubleshooting \(Students\)](#)
- Complete your profile
  - [How to Drive Profile Completion](#)
- Upload a resume to your profile, if you haven't already!
  - **Tip:** After uploading, click the blue button **Feature on Profile** to make the document public - when you sign up for sessions, this will allow the employer to view your resume!
  - [Video: How to Upload a Document](#)

[Check out our blog post for more tips on how to stand out in a virtual fair!](#)

## PARTICIPATING IN THE FAIR

All sessions will have the option for Handshake video, audio and text based chat. There is no customization for types of interaction; it is up to the employer and student joining the session to determine how they would like to connect.

See details on day-of participation in [Participating in a Virtual Fair](#).

# University - Day 1

Monday, September 21, 2020 11:00am - 5:00pm EDT

[Available sessions](#) [Your sessions](#) [Career fair details](#)

## No results

Try adjusting filters and search terms to find more companies.

## Your sessions

**GE**  
**One on One**  
11:00am - 11:10am EDT

**General Mills**  
**One on One**  
11:10am - 11:20am EDT

**Abbott**  
**One on One**  
11:20am - 11:30am EDT

**General Mills**  
**Manufacturing & Engineering Group Session**  
11:30am - 12:00pm EDT

As long as you're signed up for the session successfully, you'll be able to launch video at any point after the session has started.

We want you to feel as safe as possible while attending virtual fairs and interacting with employers, so we've taken several steps to ensure your safety. Read more about these steps in [Reporting an Issue at a Virtual Fair](#).

The screenshot displays a virtual session interface. On the left, a video call is in progress with Anna Bocolan (Johnson Vaughn University) and Justin Nlida. The chat window on the right shows a welcome message and a Q&A session. The settings bar at the bottom includes a 'Settings' link, icons for video, audio, and chat, a 'Leave session' button, and a text input field for sending messages.

**Chat**

Welcome to the webinar everyone! Feel free to ask questions. Just getting set up.

Alice H., Johnson Vaughn University

How many positions are open for the fall?

You can apply on our company website. Please include your resume and cover letter and we'll review it as soon as we can.

We have 6 positions open!

Alice H., Johnson Vaughn University

When are applications due?

Anna B., Johnson Vaughn University

What do you look for when hiring for your internship positions?

**Settings**

**Send**

**Leave session**

## **FOLLOWING UP AFTER THE FAIR**

Once the fair has wrapped up, you can follow up with employers in Handshake via following their company profile, messaging, applying for an active job, participating in an interview schedule, or attending an event.

To quickly see who you attended sessions with, navigate back to the fair in Handshake with the direct link to the fair or browse using the filter "past fairs". Click on the Available Sessions tab to see your list of sessions populate on the right side of the page. Click on any session from that list to see group session descriptions or 1:1 host name/title.

## **FULL CAREER FAIR ONE-PAGER**

Whether you are attending an in-person career fair, or a virtual career fair, the next page will offer tips on how to prepare, questions to ask, and how to stand out.

**SEE NEXT PAGE FOR CAREER FAIR PREP TIPS.**



# CAREER FAIR



LEARN HOW TO PREPARE FOR CAREER FAIRS AND  
MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR EXPERIENCE

Use the follow checklist to prepare for WCSU career fairs as well as other career related events on, and, off-campus. Stop by the Career Success Center in the Campus Center building, Suite 300, anytime during Drop-In Hours, Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and meet with a Career Peer Leader if you have questions on how to make the most of your experience. The Career Success Center can help you prepare a résumé/cover letter, learn about professional attire, and how to begin a conversation with employers and other networking connections.

## 1 BEFORE THE FAIR

- **Decide what it is you want to gain out of attending**

Whether you are looking for a job or an internship, want to practice your elevator pitch, or just listen to the kinds of conversations that take place, the career fair is the perfect place to begin learning about opportunities and making connections with the companies and employers who could be of a benefit to you somewhere down the line.

- ☐ **Learn what people are expected to wear and plan your attire.** Clean and press the outfit you choose. Practice sitting and moving in it so you are confident.
- ☐ **Learn which companies will attend.** Look at the WCSU Career Success Center - Career Fair web page for a list of companies attending and research them before you arrive. Be prepared with good questions to ask.
- ☐ **Perfect** and bring several copies of your résumé, printed on professional résumé paper.
- ☐ **Know what skills you have to offer.** Be ready to discuss your background, qualifications and career goals.
- ☐ **Practice your elevator pitch.** Be ready to alter it depending on the different companies and people you meet.

## 2 DURING THE FAIR

- ☐ **Map your route.** Locate which companies you want to meet and know your reasons why. Don't go to your #1 interest first.
- ☐ **Make a good first impression.** Approach with a smile, good eye-contact and extend a firm handshake. Be confident and exude enthusiasm.
- ☐ **Stay organized.** Take notes of who you spoke with and in which companies you want to learn more.

## 3 AFTER THE FAIR

- ☐ **Make a list.** Keep a list of contacts and companies in an excel sheet, along with dates, and follow-up instructions.
- ☐ **Always say Thank You.** Remember to email those who took the time to talk with you. Thank them for something you learned about their company. Tailor each message and reiterate your interest in their company and what you can do for them if they hire you.
- ☐ **Follow Directions.** Know what each company expects from you and follow-up when you say you will.



# WONDERING WHAT TO WEAR?

Going to a career fair, handing in a résumé at a company, interviewing for that perfect position...you may never get a second chance to make a good "first impression." Don't take a chance. Know how to do it right the first time.



## WOMEN: WHEN LOOKING FOR A JOB

- Natural makeup & nails, no perfume, no bulky jewelry
- Pressed suit or dress
- Light button-up shirt (nothing see-through)
- Hair pulled back, off face
- Appropriate skirt (no shorter than past the knee) or suit pants
- Polished, closed toe shoes (no more than two inches high)
- Portfolio or clean folder



## WOMEN: NETWORKING

- Natural makeup & nails, no perfume
- Nice blouse, no tank top straps
- Appropriate skirt (no shorter than past the knee) or suit pants
- Polished, closed toe shoes (no more than two inches high)
- No cleavage, jeans or gym clothes



## MEN: WHEN LOOKING FOR A JOB

- Clean shaven, showered, fresh haircut
- Muted, solid color tie
- Pressed suit
- Polished shoes that match belt
- Cover tattoos, no jewelry
- Remove piercings
- No cologne
- Portfolio or clean folder



## MEN: NETWORKING

Clean shaven, showered  
Button up shirt (don't have to wear a tie)  
Match belt to shoes  
Pressed khakis or nice slacks  
Polished shoes  
No cologne

	FRESHMEN	SOPHOMORES	JUNIORS	SENIORS
<b>GOAL</b>	Speak with employers about what they do and common careers within their companies. Ask if your major is one that their company would value and hire.	Start seeking internships and building your professional network. Discover what makes people in your major stand out and seem attractive to employers.	Try to find an internship.	Try to find an internship.
<b>PREP</b>	Review attendee list, find 3-5 companies you would like to speak with. Bring a résumé if you are trying to find a position.	Find 6-7 companies you are interested in. Select 1-2 that you have not heard from. Find out when they hire or plan to post positions.	Revisit 5-7 companies, add 5+ more, network for more experience in talking with employers and meeting contacts.	Speak with companies you interned with. Reconnect with 10+ you met in the past. Add another 3-5 companies.
<b>DRESS</b>	Dress a little nicer than you would for class. Typically, a polo and khaki combo or equivalent is best.	Men: dress shirt/slacks Women: blouse/dress shirt with skirt/slacks	Men: tie/long sleeve dress shirt/with slacks Women: blouse/long sleeve dress shirt/with skirt/slacks	Men/Women: suit
<b>BRING</b>	Notepad, pen/pencil, copies of your résumé printed on professional résumé paper	résumés (min 10 copies), padfolio, pen	résumés (min 10 copies), padfolio, pen, business cards	résumés (min 10 copies), padfolio, pen, business cards
<b>?s</b>	1.) I am majoring in ____, what part of your organization would value my major? 2.) Do you offer internships? 3.) Do you have any tips or advice that might help me in my search?	1.) Can you tell me about the projects your interns have worked on? 2.) Does your internship program match the student with a mentor? 3.) I am willing to locate. Which of your office has the greatest hiring needs?	1.) Last year you and I spoke about your internship program. I'm interested in learning more. 2.) Out of your interns from last year, how many were offered jobs and what makes them successful? 3.) How can I apply?	1.) I did an internship in ____ and would like to do more. Would your company value someone like me with the skills I bring? 2.) I applied online already. Can you tell me who I should contact to set up an interview?