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Welcome to our Annual Job Fair!

The Career Center staff is pleased to have you join us! This is the 22nd annual Job Fair (Wednesday, May 6) held at Olympic College, since the establishment of this major event in 1990.

This event is designed for students, graduates and community members to connect with Puget Sound region employers to learn about employment opportunities, as well as, cultivate networks to carry them throughout their professional and personal life. Collectively, the job fair is one of more than 50 career development and job search activities, workshops and presentations coordinated by the Career Center that takes place during the academic year.

The staff is also responsible for coordinating successful industry specific employer panels for many of our professional-technical programs. These panels can bring over 60 business professionals to campus each year to share industry trends, recruitment practices and workplace survival skills with our students and graduates.

To our students and community members: We wish you the best in your job search. Remember, the Career Center is ready to help you create an employment plan and strengthen your job search skills for the 21st century.

To our employers and organizations: We extend our sincere appreciation for your partnership in these efforts, which is aligned with the mission of the Career Center “bringing employers and students together for a well-trained workforce.”

Olympic College Career Center Team

Teresa McDermott, Director
Roberta Gillis, Program Coordinator

Denise Bernard, Career Program Specialist & Adjunct Faculty
Lori Fagan, Program Assistant & Event Coordinator

Olympic College 2015 Job Fair

The contents of this publication were developed in part with funds from the Carl D. Perkins Act.
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How to Prepare for A Job Fair

- Check and research the list of employers planning to attend.

- Update and improve your resume. (The OC Career Center offers resume critiques by appointment or online for students and graduates.)

- Dress for success! (First impressions are important! Be neat and well-groomed. Business casual attire is suggested. Avoid shorts, flip flops, athletic gear, t-shirts and hats.)

- Prepare an “opening statement”. (About 15 seconds that includes your name and top accomplishments for the employer.)

- Practice a proper handshake: firm not crushing.

- Expect questions from the recruiters.

- Decide what you would like to ask the recruiters.

- Arrive at the Job Fair early with a “strategy.” (Check the participant map in the event booklet and select key employers you want to visit.)

- Be confident in your approach but professional, make eye contact, smile.

- Ask for the recruiter’s business card and how you may follow up.

Excerpts taken from: “Turn a Job Fair Into a Job Offer” by Harry Dahlstrom 2014

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By Michelle Watson

When you hear the word “networking” don’t imagine a bunch of suits jammed in a room, handing out business cards, saying things like “let’s do lunch.” Networking is perhaps the least understood, though most successful, job searching strategy. And although it’s not easy to learn, if you work on developing your networking skills now, while you’re still in college, your ability will strengthen over the years.

Think of networking as planting a garden:
• Start with a fertile base. (Develop a strong resume and cover letter.)
• Choose the seeds to plant. (Identify and choose people to connect with.)
• Tend to the first outgrowths. (Develop relationships via email, phone, and in person.)
• Reap the bounty of your hard work. (Collect new contacts, apply for positions.)
• Replant! (Follow up on new contacts.)

The rules

Through networking, you create an ever-expanding web of contacts in a particular career field or industry. By developing a network of contacts who provide you with other contacts, you can become known to people in the industry and develop channels that funnel information, advice, and potential opportunities through the network. Here are some rules to keep in mind:

• Networking is the sharing of information and building trust. Your contact won’t share job leads or new contacts if they don’t trust you or your intentions.
• Networking is a formal, rather than informal activity. It is planned, structured, and has a specific purpose. You don’t want to meet someone “over drinks.”
• Networking is not going from person to person. It’s an interconnected web of individuals to whom you return over and over. Contacts are developed and maintained, not used and discarded.

Groundwork

Networking begins with you having a career direction and a resume that communicates your qualifications and skills. Visit your Career Center for help if your path is unclear and get your resume critiqued, too!

Networking starts in one of two ways: “warm” contacts (people you know directly) and “cold” contacts (people you don’t know, but want to know). At this stage, simply collect names, addresses, and phone numbers. Talk to friends, parents, professors, your friends’ parents, and supervisors to get their recommendations. Also, you’re better off starting with lower priority contacts (Aunt Terry in customer service) than with a powerful contact (Aunt Terry’s division manager, the vice president of sales and customer development).

One of the most basic networking activities -and one of the best for college students-is the informational interview, which allows you to ask questions about a career field, company, or industry.

Your contact will want to know what has brought you here. Develop a two-to-five-minute “commercial” giving a picture of your experiences, skills, interests, and future goals. This will help your contact understand how to best help you.

Plant and tend

Once you reach your contact remind that person of your letter and your reason for calling. Emphasize that you are not asking for a job, but would like to schedule a phone appointment or a face-to-face meeting to discuss your intended career field, the industry, or their organization. Be sensible and don’t ask your contact for too much, like a large block of time or an introduction to the company president.

Reap what you’ve sown

Treat your informational interview like any job interview. Wear business attire, bring questions and resumes, and know (and be prepared to talk about) yourself and your skills.

Don’t cut and run!

Maintain relationships with people who’ve taken the time to meet with you. Follow up on the contacts they supply, and provide feedback on what you’ve accomplished. Don’t let old contacts linger too long without a follow up.

Networking can help your career “blossom”; it can help you gain valuable colleagues and mentors, as well as, learn about job opportunities. Cultivate this valuable skill now; it’s one that can carry you through your work life.

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A significant part of a hiring decision is based on nonverbal elements in an interview; handshake, eye contact, body language, posture, listening skills, clothing, grooming and accessories. Don’t overlook the power of a good first impression. People make amazing assumptions about your professional credibility and potential performance based upon your appearance during a first meeting. It’s very difficult to overcome a poor first impression, regardless of your knowledge or expertise.

To be successful, research and practice for the interview and carefully plan the professional image you want to project. If you come to an interview dressed professionally, you will feel a sense of confidence and others will sense your self-assurance. Many employers interpret your appearance in terms of what you know about the world around you and what attention you give to detail.
Questions to Ask Interviewers

Asking intelligent questions during an interview shows that you have done your research and are motivated to do well if you get the job. Below are some questions recruiters like to hear from students:

1. **What do you do in a typical work day? In a typical week?**
   Ask this question in your interview with a hiring manager. It shows you’re enthusiastic about the company and want to know about life on the job.

2. **Why did you choose to work for this company?**
   This question gives the recruiter or hiring manager the chance to “sell” the company and gives you an idea of why someone else chose to work there.

3. **If I’m hired, in which area of your organization might I work?**
   If you’ve learned about the company’s various divisions on its web site, be sure to incorporate that knowledge into the question. It shows you’ve done your research and are interested in the company.

4. **What is the natural career progression for employees with my skill set?**
   This question shows you’re thinking about the future and hope to stay with the company.

5. **What kind of internal and external training do you provide?**
   This is another question that shows you want to do the best job possible.

6. **How would you describe your company culture?**
   This question provides both you and the recruiter an opportunity to determine if you and the company are suited for each other.

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