UPCOMING CAREER FAIRS

Winter Engineering Career Fair
January 30th & 31st, 2013 (different organizations each day)
1:00pm–6:00pm
North Campus
http://careercenter.umich.edu/article/winter-engineering-career-fair

UMSI Networking Fair
Monday, March 25, 2013
9:00am -11:00am
Michigan League, Ballroom
What exactly is a career fair?
WHY SHOULD I ATTEND?

• To search for a full-time, internship, or co-op position
• To gather information on companies of interest
• To develop a network of career contacts
WHAT CAN I LEARN?

- Company Information
- Company Culture
- New Companies
- Employer Contact Information
- Current and Projected Job Openings
- Skills Needed for Specific Positions
- Hiring Trends
- Networking Skills
HOW TO PREPARE

1. Research the companies attending
2. Set a schedule for visiting the companies you’ve deemed important
3. Prepare a 30-second “Elevator Pitch”
4. Plan what to wear
5. Gather the materials you will bring
1. RESEARCH THE COMPANIES ATTENDING

Company Website
- Annual Report
- Mission
- History
- Locations
- Current Projects
- Current Job Openings

Media Reports
- Current Challenges

General Internet Search

Other Resources
- iTrack
- UMSI Public Portfolios
- LinkedIn
- Hoovers.com
- Vault.com
- CollegeGrad.com
- WetFeet.com
- Crain’s Detroit Business
- Wall Street Journal
- Classmates or others who have worked for the company

Tip: Utilize the company handouts at the Career Fair
2. SET YOUR SCHEDULE

• Identify companies of interest based on your research
• Prioritize companies according to importance for you
  • Make an A list and a B list
• Visit companies starting with lesser important first
• After you’ve “warmed up” head to your A list
• Be aware that there will likely be long lines
• Arrive early
3. PREPARE AN “ELEVATOR PITCH”

What will you say when you get to the front of the line?

Pop Quiz: What’s wrong with this picture?
3. PREPARE AN “ELEVATOR PITCH”

- Include your name, specialization or area of focus, and graduation date or class level
- Highlight your skills, strengths, and experiences
- Describe what opportunities you are looking for – Why are you at their table?

Tailor your pitch to each company!
A SAMPLE ELEVATOR PITCH

My name is Susan Wolverine. I’m a second year student at the School of Information and I’m specializing in Human-Computer Interaction. I will be graduating in April, and I am looking for a full-time position.

While at UMSI, I have developed strong UX and analytical skills by taking a very rigorous course load, while at the same time strengthening my project management and leadership skills through my involvement in SOCHI. Last summer, I interned at Xerox and worked on several user research projects.

I’m interested in your company because of the innovative user experience methods that you employ. I would like to learn more about what you do and the positions you have available.
4. DRESS FOR SUCCESS

If you have a suit, wear it.

Dress pants, dress shirts, blouses, and conservative skirts/dresses are also acceptable. Men should wear a shirt and tie.

Professional Attire is NOT:

- Athletic shoes or flip-flops
- T-shirts or sweatshirts
- Jeans, sweatpants, or yoga pants
- Short or revealing attire
4. DRESS FOR SUCCESS

Clean & Neat Appearance
- Cleaned & Ironed Clothes
- Good Hygiene
- Light or No Perfume / Cologne
- Think POLISHED

Professional & Conservative
- Clean Shoes
- Professional Attire
- Minimal and Classic Jewelry

Consider using the coat check for your coat and backpack
5. GATHER THE MATERIALS YOU WILL NEED

• Notepad and pen
• Many copies of your resume
  ▪ Make sure your current contact information is there!
• Cover letters for select companies
• Copies of available positions
• Professional folder or portfolio to hold paperwork
DURING THE CAREER FAIR

• Approach companies according to your schedule
• Smile, introduce yourself, and shake hands
• Deliver your elevator pitch
• Give the recruiter your resume
• Practice Active Listening
BUSINESS CARDS

Ask for employers’ business cards when you meet with them at the Career Fair
Consider bringing your own!

Display your knowledge of the company
- Ask targeted questions
- Compliment the company’s strengths
- Explore fit
QUESTIONS EMPLOYERS MAY ASK YOU

Questions will center on:

- Knowledge of company
- Knowledge of industry
- Why you are interested in working for their company
- Your experience/skills
- Your resume - be prepared to answer questions about your coursework, projects, and your GPA
QUESTIONS TO ASK EMPLOYERS

• What skills they are seeking?
• What are the training opportunities?
• What does career growth and advancement look like?

• Describe the organizational culture
• Is the company and/or industry facing challenges?
• What are the next steps in the application process?
SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK EMPLOYERS

- What are the characteristics of your most successful employees?
- What skills and experience do you look for in the employees you hire?
- What made you choose this company and why do you stay?
- Can I have your business card?
QUESTIONS NOT TO ASK

• What does your company do?
• Does your company have any jobs?
• How much does this position pay?
• What are the company benefits?
• About information you could have easily learned on the employer's website
THINGS NOT TO DO

Don't be misled into thinking of the fair as a social event.
Be impolite or negative
Be closed minded

Be concerned if...some employers cannot accept hard copy resumes and will ask you to apply online. This is to comply with federal regulations about the way employers keep data on applicants, and to manage applicant data efficiently.
STAY POSITIVE

Be aware that many employers will refer you to their website and/or ENGenius.Jobs to apply.

Do not get discouraged!
IF AN EMPLOYER WANTS TO INTERVIEW YOU...

They may ask if you can add yourself to the interview schedule in ENGenius.Jobs... here’s what you tell them:

“I’m thrilled to be considered for an interview! Unfortunately, School of Information students do not have direct access to ENGenius.Jobs. If you talk with the Engineering Career Resource Center staff, they can leave a slot open on the interview schedule for me. Or, we can meet at another time while you are here in Ann Arbor to discuss my qualifications.”

If they have a room-only schedule, they can just add you to it there.
AFTER THE CAREER FAIR

Send a thank you to recruiters you spoke with

- Use e-mail
- State where you met them (i.e. the Career Fair) and express appreciation for their time
- Recap what you discussed and what conclusions you drew from your discussion with him/her
- Reiterate what you could bring to the company and/or position
SAMPLE FOLLOW-UP EMAIL:
GENERAL INTEREST IN COMPANY

Dear Ms. Recruiter,

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me at the University of Michigan’s Engineering Career Fair on September 24, 2012. I appreciated the opportunity to learn more about your company. I am very impressed by the recent quality improvements you described at Company X; the training programs you discussed reaffirm my belief Company X is a challenging yet rewarding place to work. I will follow-up with you at the beginning of my senior year to explore potential employment opportunities available at that time. Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Susan Wolverine
(734) 555-1234
Dear Mr. Recruiter,

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me at the University of Michigan’s Career Fair on September 25, 2012. I appreciate your time and the information you provided. After speaking with you about Company X’s Data Scientist Trainee Program, I am even more confident my background and interests are a perfect fit for this opportunity. My Information education and experience as President of SOIAR have enhanced my leadership and analytical skills, two qualities I believe would be an asset to Company X. As you advised, I have submitted my resume through your website. I will follow-up with you the week of October 10, 2012 regarding the status of my application. In the meantime, if you need additional information please contact me at (734)555-6543. Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Susan Wolverine
AFTER THE CAREER FAIR

Apply to positions on the company’s website or through iTrack
Do this as soon as possible
FOR THE OVER-ACHIEVER

Prepare tailored resumes for each company

Visit companies; revisit to remind them of your interest before you leave
FINAL TIPS

• Go solo; Attend WITHOUT your friends
• Maintain a positive attitude
• Use eye contact and a firm handshake
• Do not monopolize a specific company’s time
• Allow enough time to fulfill your schedule; Do not arrive towards the end of the fair
• Be patient and expect long lines
FINAL TIPS

- Be aware of your schedule for the days following the Career Fair in case you receive an interview invitation.
- Know the type of position (internship, full-time, co-op) and specific area(s) of your field that you are interested in.
- When asked what type of position you are seeking:
  - Do not respond with “anything.”
  - Do not respond by asking “What positions do you have available?”
FINAL TIPS

Please be respectful of the employers’ time. Do not approach an employer after the Career Fair is over or while the employer is taking down their display.
QUESTIONS?

UMSI Career Development Office
3360 North Quad
Monday through Friday
8:00 am – 5:00 pm
Umsi.careers@Umich.edu