

# Getting the most out of the **UNISA CAREERS EXPO**



University of  
South Australia

Expos are a great opportunity for you to network with leading employers, talk with some of the decision makers and hopefully take some valuable steps towards your future career. Here we have provided you with tips and suggestions that will help you maximise your experience and set a great impression.

## **First impressions count and can be long lasting!**

It's so important to impress employers with your personal presentation. We recommend dressing professionally, as if you are attending a job interview. Ensure that you introduce yourself, maintain eye contact and consider your professional image. Consider wearing a nametag with your name, discipline area and university to help employers remember you. You only get one chance to make a first impression!

## **Be enthusiastic!**

Remember that many of the people that you will be talking to could be key decision makers within their organisations. Don't be too informal or too relaxed in your communication and approach. Show your interest and passion, and keep in mind that they are often actively looking for their next employees!

## **Research the organisations**

Employers will be impressed if you already know something about their organisation! You will have information before the Expo about which organisations are attending, so take time to review the list and identify which ones are of most interest. Most organisations have comprehensive websites with lots of information, and there is also an Expo App (**Career Fair Plus**) with details about each exhibitor. We encourage you to familiarise yourself with these. Demonstrate your initiative by preparing questions that you could not find the answer to online - they'll be much more likely to remember you!

## **Prepare questions for employers in advance**

Ask employers about their organisation, graduate recruitment programs, vacation and internship opportunities, and what they look for in students and graduates. This is an opportunity for you to find out information on what you should be doing – not only in your final year of university – but also throughout your entire time at university to maximise your chance of securing a job in your chosen career. Asking constructive questions will demonstrate that you have a genuine interest in their organisation and that you have in fact done your research! Also consider asking for advice on how to approach their specific recruitment process – they may have key strategies that can assist you. Below you will find a list of questions you can ask.

## **Find out what employers value**

If you are early in your degree (first or second year) and attending the Careers Expo, this is a great opportunity for you to ask employers what activities you should participate in whilst undertaking your studies to maximise your job opportunities at graduation. Ask for advice on developing desired skill sets, what they look for in a candidate beyond the academic qualification, and what would make you a valued potential employee.

## **Consider your own self-marketing career pitch**

Think about what you can bring to their company as a potential employee. Employers at the Expo want to know what you can offer their organisation too (e.g. your skills, life experience etc.). Treat this like a personal “commercial”, but be sure to balance this with appropriate levels of respect for a potential employer. Be confident in sharing your strengths, aptitudes, and experience.

## **Business cards and resume**

If you have a personal business card, it's a good idea to bring this to the Expo and share it with the employers you meet. You never know – they might be impressed with you and keep your details on hand for future reference. Similarly, don't be afraid to ask for their business card, and ask if you can follow up afterwards.

Whilst it is not recommended that you hand out your resume on the day, have an updated copy prepared just in case an employer is interested. You may be able to email organisations after the expo or even leave a copy with them if they request it.

## **Be proactive and positive**

Approach employers with confidence before they approach you. Don't just walk around aimlessly – introduce yourself to employers, chat about the program you are studying and how that might link with their organisation.

## **Take notes**

Remember to bring a pen or use your phone to take notes as appropriate. It is a good idea to note down important information from conversations you have had with employers so that you can follow up afterwards.

## **Contact employers after the event**

We recommend that you build on the networks you created during the expo. Thank them for their time and the opportunity to meet them and seek more information about their graduate programs and other opportunities as appropriate.

## **Remember COVID Etiquette**

Handshakes are off-limits for now (and everybody is more comfortable not shaking hands). A mask will be required and you will need to maintain physical distancing. Everyone is familiar with the challenges COVID has presented so make sure your conversations are focussing on the positives of the opportunity to meet, rather than any negatives or inconveniences. Please do not attend if you are showing any cold and flu symptoms.

## **Finally..**

Make sure you enjoy the day! Keep a smile on your face and you'll help others enjoy the day too.

## Examples of questions you can ask employers

- Do you host students for placements or have a structured vacation/internship program?
- As a small-to-medium sized business, what is your organisation's vision for the future?
- Are there other businesses that you work collaboratively with?
- What was your own journey to achieving your career goals?
- Are there opportunities within your organisation to work elsewhere in Australia or overseas?
- What are the key attributes your organisation looks for in graduates?
  - Do you have a certain GPA requirement?
  - What employment history would you like to see (if any)?
  - What work experience would be beneficial?
  - What other community involvement, volunteering or leadership experience would enhance my application?
  - Do you have any legal requirements?
- What is a typical career path for a graduate within your company?
- What are the steps in the selection process?
- What advice would you give me to be more successful in the selection process?
- If successful in gaining a graduate position with your organisation, what objectives/outcomes are you seeking for the graduate to achieve in the first 6-12 months and then longer term?
- What is your induction process and what training and development opportunities are envisaged within your graduate program?
- What do you feel makes your organisation different from others?
- Once someone has completed your graduate program, what are some of the likely career opportunities that may open up?
- What are common career paths within your organisation for those that have completed a degree in \_\_\_\_\_?
- In doing my research I noted that your organisation \_\_\_\_\_. Are you able to provide me with more information on this?