

# 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 a number of 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, smile, shake hands firmly, maintain eye contact and consider your professional image. Remember – you only get one chance to make a first impression!

## **Prepare a list of 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.

## **Update your resume**

Update your resume prior to the expo and bring it with you on the day. If an employer is interested, you may be able to leave them with a copy for future reference.

## **Bring business cards**

If you have a personal business card, you would be encouraged to bring this to the expo and provide them to 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 either.

## **Research the organisations**

Where possible, research the organisations attending the Careers Expo before the day of the event. Most organisations have comprehensive websites with lots of information. We encourage you to familiarise yourself with these – there's nothing worse for a recruiter than being bombarded with the same questions throughout the day – things you probably could have found out through basic research!

## **Consider what you are looking for in an employer**

Also consider the sort of opportunity you are looking for. Be prepared to articulate this to employers at the expo. Although the expo is a great opportunity to learn about them, they also may want to learn more about what you are looking for – the industry you would like to be in, the sort of organisation you would want to work for, your personal goals, career ambitions, etc. This is also an opportunity for you to think laterally about which industries and organisations your skills/education could be applied. Look outside the box, and don't be afraid to approach non-traditional employers and explore if they employ people with your skills.

## **Find out about other opportunities**

If you are early in your degree (ie, 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.

## **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 enthusiastic!**

Remember that many of the people that you will be talking to may be the key decision makers within their organisations. Don't be too informal or too relaxed in your communication and approach. Keep in mind that they aren't necessarily there to give you career advice either – they are often actively looking for their next employees!

## **Be proactive and positive**

Approach employers with confidence before they approach you. Don't just walk around aimlessly – identify 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 and take notes as appropriate. You may want to record important information from conversations you have had with employers.

## **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 also seek more information about their graduate programs and other opportunities as appropriate.

## Examples of questions you can ask employers

- When does your graduate recruitment process commence and finish?
- What projects are you currently working on that may potentially lead to an internship?
- 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?
- 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 at all?