Networking with industry professionals
UQ Careers Fair, Industry Presentations and Professional Networking Events

Industry creates several opportunities each year to engage with students and recent alumni in a variety of settings. These include UQ Careers Fair, industry presentations, student association career events and professional association networking events.

Preparation

1. Find out which employers will be attending the event and do some research on the organisation and their industry
2. Ensure you are eligible for the roles advertised, e.g. appropriate visa, qualifications, experience
3. Keep a list of questions you can ask employers to demonstrate your interest
4. Prepare appropriate attire including footwear and bags
5. Professional résumé and a confidently worded cover letter
   • Attend a Résumé Workshop and Résumé Review appointment prior to applying

At the Careers Event

DO

• present a great first impression! Introduce yourself and use positive body language. Stand tall, firm handshake, good eye contact, be yourself and SMILE! You may meet these people again in an interview!
• be confident in where you want to go, why you have chosen your degree and in exploring the opportunities available to you.
• show your genuine interest in the company and be attentive when they respond to your questions.
• prepare a couple of questions before speaking to the employer. Refer to the sample questions.
• collect any relevant brochures, handouts and business cards.
• Follow up with a thank you email within the next 48 hours. (Tip: after speaking to the employer write a little note about what you spoke about so you can jog their memory of who you were in the email.)

DON’T

• underestimate yourself. Your unique skills and attributes have been developed through your experiences, e.g. employment, volunteer, social clubs even group work at university.
• rule an employer out because of their industry. All organisations require staff from many disciplines. Surprise yourself, be open and speak to employers in industries you would not usually speak to!
• highlight something about yourself that you believe is a weakness! Only use POSITIVES!
• spend all your time talking with friends. If you do go with someone, feel confident to speak to an employer by yourself. Focus on the employers and opportunities, not the people you attend with.
• attend with the focus to take free merchandise! This comes across as unprofessional and may not reflect positively on you if you have an abundance of free merchandise when the purpose of the event is to network.
• arrive late. Many representatives are from interstate and may need to leave early.
Sample questions

1. About the Job/Position
   - What are the main responsibilities, actual tasks graduates might do in a typical week?
   - Is it possible to obtain voluntary/casual/vacation/work experience?
   - What sort of attributes would complement the existing team?
   - Is the role different from what you expected (if they are a graduate)?
   - Does your company have any preferences for the formatting or content of résumés or cover letters?

2. Career Development
   - How many years does the typical graduate employee stay with your organisation?
   - What are some of the typical career paths/what job might people move on to?
   - What additional responsibilities do staff take on?

3. Getting In
   - What are some useful stepping stones or voluntary experience I should look for?
   - What personal qualities & skills/knowledge are you seeking?
   - What types of graduates tend to be successful in your company’s recruitment process?
   - Do you have a mid-year commencement?
   - What is involved in your company’s recruitment process (assessment centre, psychological testing, and number of interviews)? How long does the process take from beginning to end?

4. The Organisation and Its Culture
   - Is the structure of the organisation changing?
   - What is the pace of work like? Are there peaks & troughs or is it fairly constant?
   - Is there much opportunity/encouragement for mobility, cross-training, lateral moves etc?

After the Careers Event

- **Follow up with employers.** Thank you/reconfirm your interest via email (use the notes you wrote on their business cards & information from the brochures or website).
- **Create a personalised job search plan!** Check UQ CareerHub for job search guides
- **Improve your professional image and application skills by attending UQ Careers Workshops:** Resume and cover letters; Online applications and Assessment centres; The Competitive Candidate; Interview Skills; Networking; Job Searching. For dates: [www.careerhub.uq.edu.au - Events](http://www.careerhub.uq.edu.au)
- **After attending UQ Careers workshops, review your application with a Career Advisor**
  Bookings: [www.careerhub.uq.edu.au – Appointments](http://www.careerhub.uq.edu.au)

Industry attends these events specifically to speak with you about their company and hear about your skills, so don’t be shy! Ask some questions and show your interest! There’s a better chance the employer will remember you if you had a conversation. As well as giving you the opportunity to get some insider tips about what sort of applicants the company is looking for, a conversation can assist you to narrow down who to apply to.