VCU College of Engineering

Prepare for the Engineering Internship & Career Fair

Think about:

1. Set some reasonable goals, like these:
    a. to speak with a recruiter from a company you have targeted
    b. to learn about 2 new companies that hire your major
    c. to practice self-marketing and networking skills.
2. Define what you are looking for: an internship? A co-op? A job? Now? Next summer? What kind of work do you want to do? Where? Clarify what you are looking for so that you'll be able to communicate it to others.

Take action: THEM

1. Learn about the companies and organizations that are coming to the fair and what skill sets they are hiring for. See the list on Handshake, under Events, or on the Handshake mobile app
2. Research companies of particular interest to you: Google search the company, Explore the company website, Read about them on Glassdoor.com or LinkedIn or Handshake

Take action: YOU

1. **Required:** Update your resume (see career services for help). Bring extra copies to the fair.
2. **Recommended:** Update your LinkedIn and Handshake profiles.
3. Dress appropriately in business attire: a suit is best, but if you don't have one: dress slacks/skirt, dress shirt/blouse are acceptable. Be neat, wrinkle-free, modest, and odor-free (use breath mints and deodorant).
4. Prepare your 30-second self-introduction. See back of this hand-out for step-by-step directions. Practice it!!

Make a plan

1. Identify target companies (those of great interest to you). Prioritize those participating in Interview Day.
2. Apply to any appropriate openings they have posted **before** the fair.
3. Use the floor plan map on Handshake to identify the employer locations at the fair, and plan your route.
4. Focus on your targeted companies and visit each one. Give your pitch and offer your resume.
5. If they are participating in the on-campus interviews the day after the fair, and you are interested in them, ask if they have any openings in their interview schedule.
6. Ask the recruiter for the best way to follow-up with them.
7. Relax and enjoy the rest of the fair! Walk around and learn about more companies.

After the fair:

1. Send thank you emails to companies of great interest or to recruiters you had meaningful conversations with.
2. Include something you talked about together to help remind them of who you are. Attach your resume or LinkedIn URL.
3. Keep the contact information you collected in a safe place (record it on your phone or laptop or safely file it).
4. Put follow-up dates on your calendar to reach back out to the contacts you made at the fair. Your contacts are no good if you don't follow-up with them!

Elevator Pitch or 30-second self-introduction

1. Greet
    a. Introduce yourself: *Hello I'm* _____
    b. Acknowledge the employer: *I'm pleased to meet you, Mr./Ms._____(repeat employer's name)*
2. Share your Educational Background
    a. Your expected graduation date
    b. Your major
    I'll be graduating in May 2027 and I'm in Mechanical Engineering
3. State your experience and skills
    a. Paid or unpaid relevant experience
    b. Leadership positions, organizations
    c. Skills, strengths, personal traits, areas of focus/interest
    I've been in FIRST robotics throughout high school, I'm now an officer in ASME, and I'm really excited to learn more about manufacturing automation.
4. State what you are seeking
    a. Position desired: *I'm seeking a summer internship*
    b. Interest in company: *I was pleased to see that your company would be here because*_____
    c. Offer your resume: *May I give you a copy of my resume?*
5. Ask
    a. Ask a relevant question to engage the employer, such as one of these:
    What would the work entail? What are pressing projects the intern might work on? What qualifications are you looking for in candidates? What kind of training is provided for this positon?
6. Follow-up
    a. Ask about follow-up and the hiring process, with a question like one of these:
    What would you suggest as my next step? How do you prefer to be contacted? When might I hear about an interview? What is your timeline for selecting interns?
    b. Request their business card
7. Close – Thank them for answering your questions

Selling yourself in 30 seconds or less is harder than it appears. Practice with your friends!!

Career Fair Details: Information about the fair such as date, time, location, and which Employers are coming can be found on Handshake. Go to "Events," then "Career Fairs at your school" to find the **VCU Engineering Internship & Career Fair**.

Want to Volunteer at the Fair?

Go to the Engineering Career Services website and click the Volunteer link