



## Tips for your Preparation Before, During, and After a Career Fair

### **BEFORE THE FAIR:**

- Why attend the career fair as a junior, sophomore, or freshman?** Use it as an opportunity to become familiar with attending a career fair, to ask questions, and to learn about careers of interest to you. Find out what types of leadership experience an employer or a graduate program seek. Find out what elective courses you should take to make yourself a more successful candidate as you round out your Citadel Career. Learn about potential internship and summer/seasonal job opportunities.
- Mark your calendar** with the date, time and location of the Fair. Check it against your class schedule and other obligations to determine the best time for you to attend. **The Citadel Career Center cannot excuse you from class or other commitments.** Plan to spend as much time as possible at the fair; freshmen should attend for at least 20 minutes.
- Determine your Career Plan.** What do you want to do upon graduation (military contract, civilian employment, graduate school)? What type(s) of position(s) or graduate program(s) are of interest to you? What steps do you need to take now through your senior year to outline your path?
  - ~ Determine/Confirm your career interest(s) by taking/re-taking **FOCUS**, an online Career Interest & Education Planning Profile System, via [www.citadel.edu/career\\_services/FOCUS.htm](http://www.citadel.edu/career_services/FOCUS.htm) using the Access Code provided. Compare YOUR Personal Portfolio (a customized report of your work within FOCUS) with the employers and graduate schools attending the fair. Meet with the representatives of interest to you to learn more about their opportunities, as well as introduce yourself and share how your interests are a fit with their organization.
  - ~ Refer to **My Career**, the Career Planning & Preparation Process for Cadets via [www.citadel.edu/career\\_services/info-students.htm](http://www.citadel.edu/career_services/info-students.htm) to assist in your decision-making.
- Create an Account (or access an existing one) with The Gate**, the online job board, resume database, mentoring network, announcement portal, and more via [www.citadel.edu/career\\_services/TheGate.htm](http://www.citadel.edu/career_services/TheGate.htm).
- Review** the participating employers and graduate/professional school programs through your account on *The Gate*. (View the screenshot at [www.citadel.edu/career\\_services/CareerFairs/Fall2009/TheGate/ScreenshotFall09Participants.JPG](http://www.citadel.edu/career_services/CareerFairs/Fall2009/TheGate/ScreenshotFall09Participants.JPG) for details on where to look).
- Create and/or Update your Resume.** Use the **Brainstorm Activity** at [www.citadel.edu/career\\_services/Students/Brainstorm.pdf](http://www.citadel.edu/career_services/Students/Brainstorm.pdf) as needed to start. Visit [www.citadel.edu/career\\_services/ResumeSamples.htm](http://www.citadel.edu/career_services/ResumeSamples.htm) for Resume Construction Tips, Samples, Common Errors to Avoid, and more! Prepare 10-15 resumes to take with you to the Career Fair.
- Prepare questions** to ask recruiters. For example:
  1. How may I best prepare myself for a career in this field?
  2. What types of elective courses should I take?
  3. Do you offer internship opportunities?
  4. Are there summer/seasonal jobs available with your company?
- Be prepared to share information** about yourself with the recruiter. For example:
  - Your major
  - Career aspirations
  - Why you chose The Citadel
  - What interests you in his/her organization
- Seniors with blazer privileges** may wear the blazer uniform to the Career Fair. All other Cadets should wear the uniform designated for that day through Corps of Cadet policy.

**Attend the Career Fair between classes and other obligations for as long as you are able. The Citadel Career Center cannot excuse you from class or other commitments.**

**DURING THE FAIR:**

- Seek out** the companies/organizations on your list, but also take advantage of obtaining more information from the companies not on your list while you are at the fair. You may discover additional interests.
- Introduce yourself** to their representatives. For example:  
Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am a Junior/Sophomore/Freshman Cadet, majoring in \_\_\_\_\_ and I am interested in pursuing a career in \_\_\_\_\_. Would you please tell me about (company/organization name)?
- Give the recruiter a copy of your resume, ask for a business card** (or the preferred method of how you may contact him/her after the Fair if you have questions or for when you get closer to being ready for an internship, summer, or full-time position), and **thank the recruiter for his/her help**.
- Take** any brochures, pamphlets, etc. that the recruiter may offer you for further review.

**AFTER THE FAIR:**

- Make a list** of the companies/organizations with career opportunities of interest to you and note the names of the recruiters you met at the Fair. (From the homepage of your account on *The Gate*, you may select favorites of the Career Fair participants that will be stored in your 'Recruiting Organizations' tab. Access via [www.citadel.edu/career\\_services/TheGate.htm](http://www.citadel.edu/career_services/TheGate.htm)).
- Visit organization websites** for additional information and **Apply Online** with those indicating this as the next step.
- Promptly follow up** with recruiters representing companies of particular interest to you by sending a note or email thanking them for their assistance at the Career Fair and identifying any next steps they suggested you take. (For example, if they asked you to apply online, indicate when you did for their reference). Include another copy of your resume.
- Keep** all of this information in your **Career Planning Portfolio** for future reference as to your next steps. ([www.citadel.edu/career\\_services/info-students.htm](http://www.citadel.edu/career_services/info-students.htm), under *Career Exploration* section)
- Participate in On Campus Interviews (OCIs)**. Some employers will arrange an interview date through the Career Center to follow-up with candidates met at the Career Fair. Refer to the OCI Schedule and Student Guide at [www.citadel.edu/career\\_services/OCI.htm](http://www.citadel.edu/career_services/OCI.htm) for details. Some OCIs will be pre-arranged in connection to the Fall Career Fair and/or as a posting on **The Gate**. Others will be arranged *after* resumes are collected at the Career Fair.
- Stay informed**. Know what the next steps are to earn the position you seek. Keep on top of all communication with employers and follow up with them by provided deadlines. Avoid letting too much time lapse in between communications without confusing persistence and pushiness. For example, if the employer indicates that you will hear from them in 2 weeks and on the fourteenth day you haven't heard anything, give it one more day before following up on your own. Sometimes recruiters are on the road longer than anticipated and cannot follow up as they had intended. In the same light, do not wait until week 3 to follow up if you have not heard anything. An appropriate level of persistence is expected to demonstrate your continued interest.
- Review Resources** on **Interview Preparation, Follow-Up & Offer Evaluation** at [www.citadel.edu/career\\_services/Interviewing.htm](http://www.citadel.edu/career_services/Interviewing.htm).
- Questions?** Email [CareerCenter@Citadel.edu](mailto:CareerCenter@Citadel.edu).