



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

**PLEASE NOTE:** All CGC Students are invited to attend The Citadel Fall Career Fair whether you are seeking new employment upon graduation or for while you continue your degree. It is recommended that those seeking new employment upon earning their degree (undergraduate or graduate) should attend the career fair every opportunity prior to their expected graduation to begin networking and learning how best to prepare for positions of interest.

**BEFORE THE FAIR:**

- Plan to attend** the Career Fair between classes and/or during your lunch break for as long as you are able.
- Determine your Career Plan.** What do you want to do upon graduation ((continue in current employment, seek new employment, seek an advanced degree)? What type(s) of position(s) or graduate program(s) are of interest to you?
  - ~ 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 the Two (2)-Year Career Planning & Preparation Timeline and associated resources at [www.citadel.edu/career\\_services/info-students.htm](http://www.citadel.edu/career_services/info-students.htm) to assist in your decision-making.
- Create and/or Update your Resume.** 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!
- 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). **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.
- Research** the organizations of interest to you via the information provided by the employers and graduate school programs at the appropriate fair link. Further research may be conducted on employers using the Vault Online Career Library through the Daniel Library. Visit <http://www.citadel.edu/library/databases/vault.htm> for details.
- Prepare 20 - 25 resumes** on resume-quality paper to take with you to the Career Fair. (Take one for each organization of interest and at least 5 more for those you become interested in after meeting with the representatives at the fair).
- If using the Fair to research** your career opportunities, prepare questions such as:
  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 part-time jobs available?
- If using the Fair to search** for full-time employment, prepare questions such as:
  1. What opportunities does your company have for graduates with a major in \_\_\_ or a Master's degree in \_\_\_?
  2. Would you please tell me about your company? In my research, I discovered \_\_\_ and would like to learn more.
  3. If the company is holding an On-Campus Interview, ask: May I schedule an interview with (company name)?
- Be prepared to share information** about yourself with the recruiter. For example:
  - Your undergraduate major
  - Your graduate program
  - Career aspirations
  - What interests you in his/her organization
- Be prepared to answer questions** such as:
  1. Are you willing to relocate?
  2. Why you chose your career field?
  3. What do you know about (company name)?

- Set aside professional attire** to be worn at the Career Fair. (Men should wear a blazer or suit with a tie. Women should wear a suit or a business dress).

**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 (freshman/sophomore/junior/senior/graduate student), majoring in \_\_\_\_\_ and I am interested in pursuing a career in \_\_\_\_\_. Would you please tell me about (company name)?
- Give the recruiter a copy of your resume.**
- Pay attention** to the information the recruiter shares with you. Take notes later.
- Ask the recruiter** for a business card and/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 to apply for a position.
- Take** any brochures, pamphlets, etc. that the recruiter may offer for further review and **thank him/her for his/her help.**

**AFTER THE FAIR:**

- Make a list** of the 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 letting them know when you applied online, if appropriate. Include another copy of your resume. Request a time when you may be able to meet. (If you graduate in May/August, ask to meet over Winter Break or some time in the early Spring).
- Keep** all of this information in your **Career Planning Portfolio** for future reference as to your next steps. (Described for Cadets, but CGC may adapt for their use). [www.citadel.edu/career\\_services/info-students.htm](http://www.citadel.edu/career_services/info-students.htm), under *Career Exploration*
- 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** and **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).