

MAKE the MOST out of an EMPLOYMENT OPEN HOUSE

The hosts are eager for you to learn about them, their organization and their industry. They are also eager to learn about you, evaluate your personal fit with their organization and see how savvy you are. When you attend these events, try to meet and talk to as many people within that organization as possible. How you participate in an Open House can determine just how interested a company may be in your candidacy. Many organizations have score cards and keep track of the visitors who make a favorable impression on them. This is your chance to make an important impression prior to participating in a formal interview.

Benefits from an Open House

Employers

- ✓ See how potential candidates assert themselves in social business settings.
- ✓ Observe interactions between potential candidates and company staff.
- ✓ Expose potential candidates to the culture and operations of their organization.
- ✓ Gain informal information about a candidate prior to a formal interview.
- ✓ Evaluate a candidate's ability to manage and maneuver social situations that have business focus.
- ✓ Review candidate's business etiquette, professional communication and protocol.
- ✓ Critically examine candidate's table manners and comfort level when faced with unfamiliar situations.

Students

- ✓ Practice critical networking behaviors: eye contact, handshakes, gathering business cards.
- ✓ Gather information about employers in your field; examine company culture.
- ✓ Practice meeting and discussing positions with potential employers.
- ✓ Explore career requirements and demands of their industry.
- ✓ Know who to contact for follow-up discussions and their hiring process.
- ✓ Learn about employment trends and current and future positions.
- ✓ Discover training, compensation, and other benefits (let the employer offer any information about salary, **do not ask**).

What Employers Want From You

- Demonstrate that you have done your homework and researched their company.
- Be prepared! Develop questions to ask; courteously and enthusiastically engage the representatives.
- Use a firm hand shake and good eye contact.
- Never ask about salary; let them bring up the subject.
- Be enthusiastic, be positive and smile
- Follow up and thank the company representative.
- Be prepared! Have your résumé critiqued by Career Services to apply for open positions.
- Take the initiative! Walk up to them and engage the employers; they are there to speak to you!
- Demonstrate strong communication skills and you may have to **flex** your style.

Be Prepared to Share with Employers

- Specific career and job objectives and expectations.
- Related classes you have enjoyed, meaningful projects you have completed and relevant work or other experience.
- Your concise and practiced 30 second oral résumé.

Wear Business Casual Attire

This is your chance to make a good first impression; follow these guidelines:

- The upper end of Business Casual dress is mandatory: ironed/pressed slacks, shirts/blouses with collars, belts, polished shoes, limited jewelry, limited cologne, and conservative colors.
- Hats and tennis shoes are unacceptable.
- Women should wear closed-toed shoes.
- Tattoos and body piercings should be minimized or covered if possible

Make the Most of Your Employer Open House Experience

- Have a pen or pencil and paper available for notes; bring a folder or portfolio to put materials in.
- Do not travel in groups with other students; this limits your ability to have quality interactions with their staff.
- Do not monopolize the employers' time. Ask specific questions and offer to follow up after the event, as appropriate.
- Be direct. Introduce yourself. If you are job seeking, state the type of position you are interested in. If you are gathering information, let them know that you are only interested in materials and information.
- Ask for employers' business cards. *Send a 'thank you' card within 48 hours of the open house.*
- Stay in contact and use this experience to expand your network.
- Follow-up and follow-through, contacts are up to the student; be persistent and polite.