Four Steps to Career Fair Networking
by Kathy Douglas

Career Fair Prep
• Perfect your resume.
• Get your professional dress ready (typically business casual or business dress).
• Practice introducing yourself.
• Find out which employers are attending.
• **Research the employers you want to meet with.**
• Prepare specific and general questions.

What to Bring
• Business cards
• Padfolio, notepaper, and pen
• 10-15 resumes (depending on fair size)

During the Fair
• Walk around to meet employers alone—you might have friends at the fair who you check in with, but don't travel as a posse.
• Limit your give-away item collecting.
• Introduce yourself with a smile, a handshake (if recruiter offers a hand), and a few relevant details about yourself, your education/experience, and/or interest in the employer.
• Speak slowly and confidently.
• Be strategic—talk to your top three employers first, others if you have time.
• Take quick breaks between rounds of visits to freshen up and take a breather.
• Don't dominate recruiters, be mindful of other students waiting in line.
• Ask about opportunities and next steps if there are specific openings.
• Wait for cues from recruiter regarding resumes—some will be collecting them, others might direct you to follow up by e-mail, or apply online.
• Get the appropriate contact information and/or ask for a business card.
• Thank recruiters after speaking with them.
• Take notes as soon as you walk away from a table.

After the Fair
• Take a few minutes immediately after fair to sort through your notes and make a list of follow-up items.
• Follow up and thank recruiters of particular interest. (You don't have to follow up with everyone.)
• Follow up with online applications, or by sending a resume and cover letter to the appropriate contact.
• Reach out via e-mail or by telephone to reps who were not at fair, but who work with your level of education/field.
• Set up informational interviews with individuals at companies/organizations of particular interest to you, and with alumni in these organizations.
• Check in with your career office with specific questions.

**Kathy Douglas** is the Associate Director Career Development Office, Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies.
*Courtesy of the [National Association of Colleges and Employers](http://www.naceweb.org).*