

CAREER FAIR PREP

Do Your Research

- Find out which employers will attend the career fair
- Consider which companies you are most interested in after researching the organization to learn more about their opportunities, mission, and culture
- Make a prioritized list of who you want to meet at the fair. Start the fair by meeting with the companies you are interested in, but maybe aren't your top choice. This way, you are less nervous and have a bit more practice talking to employers before you meet your top choice

Wear Professional Attire

- Industry appropriate attire will determine your first impression at a career fair, whether it is in-person or virtual. Be sure your outfit is clean, pressed, professional, and fits properly
- Leave your backpack at home or in the bag check (if available) area as they are cumbersome and not part of a professional outfit.
- See pages 16 and 17 to learn more about the differences between business casual and business professional attire

Prepare Your Pitch

- Highlight your current involvement, skills, previous relevant experiences, and your goals
- Tailor your elevator pitch to each employer by asking them a specific question about their organization at the end of your pitch
- See page 56 for more on crafting your elevator pitch

Attend a Workshop

Career and Professional Development offers workshops and events leading up to career fairs to help you prepare and succeed at the fair. See Handshake for a schedule of workshops

Prepare Questions

- Avoid asking “What does your company do?” at a career fair. It is expected you already have done research to learn something about the company
- Asking customized questions to each employer will not only help you stand out from the crowd, but will also help you gather more information about the organization culture and opportunities
- Bring your questions for each employer you plan to talk to with you to the fair in a padfolio. If attending a virtual fair, you can have these typed in a document ready to be copied and pasted into the chat.

Perfect Your Resume

- Update your resume to reflect your current experiences and education. Consider adding an objective so employers know what type of opportunities you are seeking
- Get your resume reviewed by Career and Professional Development
- If in-person, print plenty of copies of your resume. If virtual, upload it to your Brazen profile before the fair

Virtual Career Fair Prep

- Most of the preparation is similar to an in-person fair: do your research, prepare questions, wear professional attire, attend a career fair prep workshop offered by Career and Professional Development, and perfect your resume
- Check your lighting, background, and camera height all look professional for potential video chats
- Register in advance and complete your profile with your resume, professional photo, and LinkedIn

Get Started Networking!

CRAFT THE PERFECT ELEVATOR PITCH



First, let's review the purpose of an elevator pitch

Your 30-second introduction should be considered to be one component of the whole conversation with an employer. Below are some topics you could include when you introduce yourself. Remember that networking is a two-way conversation, so be sure to allow for responses or questions from the person you are speaking with.

30-Second Introduction

Greeting: Hello, my name is _____.
first and last name

Year in School: I am currently a _____,
freshman / sophomore / junior / senior / graduate student

Major/Field of Study: majoring in _____.
current major or job-related interest

Type of Experience: I am looking for _____,
internship, co-op, full/part-time position

When You're Available: for _____ of _____.
summer / fall / spring year

Strengths/Abilities: My strengths are _____, _____, and _____.
strength 1 strength 2 strength 3

Accomplishments: I have _____ and _____.
or accomplishment 1 accomplishment 2

Relevant Activities: I am involved in _____ and _____.
or activity 1 activity 2

End with a Question: Would you tell me more about _____?
opportunities, company, etc.

Networking is key to locating those unpublished jobs and internships that are in the "hidden" job market, which some estimate constitutes 80% of jobs.

Conversation Starters

- How was your trip to campus?
- Did you attend Virginia Tech?
- I know that your organization does [be specific]. Can you tell me more about that?
- What do you like most about your organization?
- What advice would you give to someone interested in your field and/or working for your organization?

Networking Checklist

- Keep copies of your resume and business cards available. New connections can be made anywhere, anytime.
- Create a list of your connections - everyone counts. Keep business cards and contact info for your connections accessible.
- Research your connections! Utilize LinkedIn, company websites, etc.
- Contact your connections via email, phone, etc. Be persistent, but not pushy. Clearly state the purpose of your call. (i.e., informational interview, career exploration, etc.)
- Follow up within a week if you do not receive a response from contacts. Send a thank-you email or note by mail.
- Be yourself and remember to smile!

■ Resume Checklist

Use this listing of frequent suggestions before having your resume reviewed by a career advisor.

General

- ❑ Resume fills the page but is no longer than one page (more than one page is acceptable in some cases for Master's students, etc.)
- ❑ Easy to read font between 10-12 point
- ❑ Punctuation and formatting is consistent (dates written the same way, headers formatted the same)
- ❑ Equal margins all around (.5"- 1")
- ❑ Categories are arranged in logical order, with the most relevant first

Header

- ❑ Full name at the top in a larger/bold font (14-18 point) so it stands out
- ❑ If address is listed, make sure it is current
- ❑ List Virginia Tech email
- ❑ List appropriate pronouns if comfortable
- ❑ List phone number
- ❑ Obvious facts such as "phone" or "email" are not labeled

Objective - optional, but is preferred by some employers)

- ❑ Include objective to tell employer what kind of position you are seeking
- ❑ Objective is targeted toward a specific position or career

Education

- ❑ List the school name as Virginia Tech
- ❑ List city, state
- ❑ List major, minors and date of graduation
- ❑ Include GPA: may include in-major GPA if higher
- ❑ Avoid listing high school unless you are a first year student

Experience

- ❑ Format each experience section in the same way
- ❑ Include title, company name and location (city & state) and dates employed (start and end date)
- ❑ List all experiences in reverse chronological order (most recent to furthest in the past)
- ❑ Use bullet points to describe responsibilities
- ❑ Use active verbs to begin each bullet point
- ❑ Use a variety of action verbs, watch that some are not repeated throughout the resume
- ❑ Each phrase either has punctuation, or not
- ❑ Avoid personal pronouns (I, me, my)
- ❑ Quantify when possible (How many employees did you train? How many people did you tutor?)
- ❑ Use present tense verbs for current positions (teach)
- ❑ Use past tense verbs for prior positions (taught)

Note: Experience can come from class projects, volunteer work, internships, externships, part time jobs, etc.

Activities

- ❑ List relevant campus involvement, professional associations or community involvement
- ❑ Fully list names, and not just abbreviations
- ❑ Include leadership positions and describe the specific activities that reveal those leadership skills

References

- ❑ References are only listed on a resume if requested by the employer in the application instructions
- ❑ "References available upon request" is not listed on resume

Resume Planning Page

Use this sheet to list as many items as you can think of for each topic to assist you in the resume writing process.

Resumes, Cover Letters, etc.

Objective What kind of position are you seeking? Is there an area of focus?	
Education What will you include under your education heading?	
Skills Examples might include computer skills, language skills, specialized skills, certifications, etc.	
Related Experience Include relevant work, volunteer, leadership and internship experiences - include title, name of organization, city, date, dates of participation	
Honors and Activities Share academic or other honors you have received including scholarships or other awards - list leadership positions, organization memberships, athletic involvements, etc.	
Other Experience Do you have other experiences that are not related to your area of focus but demonstrate skills or strengths you have developed?	
Course Projects What class projects highlight career-related skills?	

■ Action Verbs to Highlight Skills

Working With PEOPLE

Administration

monitor
track
assess
coordinate
organize
requisition
access
process
serve
furnish

Management/ Supervision

coordinate
facilitate
plan
schedule
delegate
evaluate
strategize
develop
consult

Teaching

educate
tutor
stimulate
inform
instruct
facilitate
awaken
explore
advise
entertain

Performing

create
present
play
interpret
act
sing
dance
perform
model
inspire

Counseling/Healing

listen
sense
assess
analyze
assist
align
coordinate
understand
inform
facilitate

Leadership

create
lead
encourage
manage
organize
inspire
represent
govern
direct
advise

Persuading

present
articulate
clarify
challenge
negotiate
inquire
reason
influence
convince
mediate
reconcile

Public Relations

assess
prepare
coordinate
present
negotiate
publicize
strengthen
promote
handle
facilitate
troubleshoot

Selling

inform
educate
persuade
provide
assist
serve
trade
handle
present
sell
convince

Human Resources

assess
analyze
recruit
survey
screen
interview
select
train
mediate
coordinate
align

Consulting

troubleshoot
problem solve
assess
assist
arrange
guide
counsel
survey
serve
contribute
train

Working With DATA

Research & Development

identify
evaluate
review
assess
analyze
critique
explain
prepare
recommend
conclude
determine

Accounting

record
assess
audit
prepare
maintain
forecast
calculate
estimate
figure
appraise
examine
verify

Finance

analyze
invest
budget
inventory
evaluate
appraise
construct
acquire
manage
project

Analysis

assess
observe
review
dissect
interpret
discern
discover
infer
illuminate
clarify
quantify
qualify
conclude

Information

appraise
analyze
inventory
structure
design
categorize
document
process
manage
coordinate
organize

Editing

review
analyze
check
compare
correct
rewrite
revise
rework
improve
initiate
investigate
advise

Organizing/ Logistics

organize
assist
maintain
liaison
arrange
systematize
schedule
coordinate
streamline
simplify

Working With THINGS

Craft/Artisan

design
create
build
perform
draw
render
illustrate
compose
construct
choreograph

Design

organize
formulate
sketch
draft
layout
create
plan
style
pattern
build
display

Mechanical

analyze
design
construct
craft
troubleshoot
create
engineer
repair
manipulate
align
coordinate

Innovating

create
modify
change
upgrade
improve
design
activate
restructure
stimulate
transform

Technical

conceptualize
design
troubleshoot
locate
analyze
implement
construct
modify
operate

Working With IDEAS

Language

translate
interpret
lecture
converse
negotiate
understand
comprehend
proficiency
fluency
teach

Selling

inform
educate
persuade
provide
serve
trade
handle
present
sell
convince

Program Development

design
construct
develop
prepare
strategize
coordinate
formulate
persuade
implement
monitor

Marketing

review
assess
survey
analyze
identify
promote
advertise
advance
boost
improve

Writing

construct
craft
integrate
interpret
capture
express
inform
summarize
conclude

Investigating

interrogate
question
analyze
seek
probe
examine
explore

Resumes, Cover Letters, etc.

■ Resume Bullet Formula

PAR/SAR statements are a detailed and succinct way of expressing skills and experiences on a resume. It is a quick, summarized story in one statement and demonstrates specific skills or experiences related to the position.

P/S: What is the **Problem, Purpose, Project** or **Situation** that you need to be described?

Ex: Initiated a team of five students to work after hours **to implement marketing demos.**

A: What **Actions** did you take to solve the problem?

Ex. **Created** engaging interactive lesson plans by **using Prezi and Powerpoint.**

R: What were the **Results** and outcomes from your actions?

Ex: Organized extensive aircraft article databases **creating easy research and file access.**

For more technical projects, showcase the following four things about the project:

- The Why or Motivation behind the project (The bigger picture)
- What was done on the project (The technical detail)
- How was it done (Highlight the tools used—language, computer programs, etc.)
- What was the impact of your work

This doesn't mean you need four bullets to do so, but make sure your information gives the employer the answers to these four areas.

Example using this formula

P (Problem/Project/Situation) (2)	A (Action) (1)	R (Results) (3)	Quantify Results (4)
Needed a brochure for event	Designed, created	To attract students to the event and increase attendance	Attendance increased by 20%

1) Designed (2) a brochure (3) to attract students to attend the event which (4) increased attendance by 20%

Transferable Skills

Sometimes, it may not seem that what you do is “related” to the job or internship that you are creating your resume for. In this case think about the transferable skills you developed.

Example: Answered Phones

1. **Skill:** Communication skills
2. **Structure:** I learned communication skills while answering phones.
3. **Verb:** Developed communication skills while answering phones.
4. **Clarify:** Developed communication skills addressing up to 50 customer concerns per shift by phone.

Additional Transferable Skills

- Critical Thinking
- Problem Solving
- Decision Making
- Active Listening
- Technical Skills
- Communication Skills (Oral & Written)
- Interpersonal Skills
- Detail and Follow-Through
- Taking Initiative
- Leadership/Teamwork
- Instructing/Guiding/Mentoring
- Planning and Management
- Organizational Skills
- Analytical/Evaluative Skills
- Creativity
- Supervision
- Motivating/Persuading Others
- Teamwork/Collaboration
- Strategic Thinking
- Ethical Behavior
- Synthesize Information
- Time Management
- Coordinating Tasks

We're back!

Career Outfitters



Smith Career Center



Professional attire

New and gently used



Free-of-charge

For Virginia Tech students



By appointment

Schedule using Handshake



One on One assistance

For fit, color, size, & style advice



Email knic94@vt.edu if you need an accommodation to attend this event.



CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
VIRGINIA TECH