Tips to Get the Most Out of Career Fairs

- **Bring many copies of your resume** to submit to employers.
- **Come prepared.** Before the fair, you can review the list of employers and their job opportunities by logging into HireIvy. If you spend a little time getting some background on an organization, then you can ask very focused and specific questions. This impresses representatives because it shows a genuine interest in them.
- **Dress appropriately.** First impressions are important. Do dress professionally and conservatively. Visit Career Development for more information or if you need career clothing.
- **Allow yourself adequate time.** Come as early as possible. You may need to return between classes.
- **Get your bearings.** When you arrive, take a few minutes to review the map for the fair. You may feel more comfortable if you quickly locate and walk by the employers in whom you’re most interested. This will confirm their location and alert you to any crowds or lines of other students waiting.
- **Prioritize the employers you’re most interested in.** If your schedule allows, you may find it easiest to start with the employers in which you’re less interested. This will allow you to hone your approach and to be most confident when you approach the employers you’re especially excited about. Be sure to balance this tip with the reality that you may have little time and that many other students may be interested in the same employers. Assume that you will need to wait to speak with some employers.
- **Introduce yourself and be prepared to give your "professional pitch."** Extend your hand, say "hello" and state your name. Greet employers with direct eye contact, a smile, and a firm handshake. Keep your “professional pitch” short, specific, and strength-focused. Talk about your career interests as well as academic and extracurricular experiences to show your skills and strengths. Have your resume ready to give to the employer.
- **Take notes of your conversation.** The representative at the fair may not be able to answer all of your questions or know specifics about your job interests. Write down the names, telephone numbers, etc. of other staff in the organization whom you can contact later.
- **Ask the representative for his/her card,** and then promptly send a thank-you note. Having the business card of the representative you have just spoken with serves three purposes. First, you have a direct contact with the organization, including the proper spelling of the representative’s name, direct telephone line, etc. Second, a brief thank-you note acknowledges the help they gave you and the time they took to visit campus. Third, sending thank-you notes is a good professional habit.
- **Be courteous!** All of the organizations at the fair are there because of their interest in hiring Ivy Tech students and graduates. Some representatives are Ivy Tech alumni. Demonstrate sensitivity to other students waiting to speak with employers by keeping your questions brief and offering to continue your conversation at a later time. Enjoy the fair and your interaction with the employers. Let your positive attitude show!