

First Impressions, Lasting Impact... Preparing for HACC's Spring Job Fair!

Soon we will be holding our *nineteenth annual spring job fair* at the HACC-Lancaster campus. On **Wednesday, March 20th 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in East 203** we will be hosting **more than 60 employers**. If you are planning to attend the event, here are a few things to consider.

Job fairs are a great way for you to explore potential employment opportunities and make connections face to face with recruiters who make the hiring decisions. Whether you plan to attend our upcoming spring job fair just to gather information about potential employers or are prepared for that on-the-spot interview, you need to prepare yourself to stand out in a favorable way. Keep in mind that employers may potentially be talking with hundreds of job seekers. In order to be kept in the employer pool and not be screened out, you'll want to keep a few things in mind before, during and after the event to make it successful for you.

Before the job fair, you should do a little research of your own.

- **Find out what businesses will be attending.** The more information you gather before hand, the more successful the job fair is going to be for you. Spend some time doing research on the companies' websites learning a bit about them, as well as, what types of positions may be available. For the upcoming Lancaster Campus spring job fair, you'll be able to locate this information online at www.hacc.edu/LancasterJobFair
- **Write down a list of questions** you'd like to ask the company representatives at the job fair. This will help you learn more about the company and the types of people and skills they are looking for.
- **Develop multiple versions of your resume**, especially if you are someone who can market yourself to more than one type of job title. It is also important to proofread your resume; perhaps have someone else look at it too to be certain it is free of errors. Keep your resume concise, one page maximum and easy to read. Make certain you have listed your most updated contact information. Consider using your HAWKMail email address.

At the job fair, you need to be prepared to make that great first impression.

- **Dress the part.** Just like any job interview, first impressions are key at a job fair too. You have to look the part. How you represent yourself sends an immediate message to employers about how serious you are in your job search. Your general appearance will be the first things noticed – make certain you look professional. Leave the jeans, t-shirts and sneakers at home and although it may not be necessary to dress in a suit, you want to make certain you lean on the conservative side by dressing in business casual.
- **Maintain eye contact and offer a firm handshake.** Showing interest and good manners is important regardless of what position you are interested in applying. Remember that every meeting is an opportunity.
- **Communicate with the employers.** Don't just drop off your resume and keep moving on to the next table. You will want to take the time to ask questions and make an impression. If you have done your research, you won't have to waste time by asking the recruiter what the company does. Instead, you can focus in on questions related to the open positions and your potential fit. Remember to speak clearly and do not interrupt. Bear in mind that employers want to hire individuals who are enthusiastic and genuinely

interested in their company. Be prepared to talk about your skills and qualifications as it relates to the position, and plan to include your educational goals while here at HACC. Once you have delivered your message, answered questions, and established your interest in the position, is it time to thank the recruiter, get a business card and state you will follow-up.

After the job fair, be certain to follow-up with a thank you letter.

- **Send a follow-up letter or email to the recruiters** for the position(s) where you have genuine interest and saw a fit with your skills and experience. This is not only polite, but following up in this way will ensure that the employer remembers you and makes another good impression. In the letter or email you will want to mention your interest in the company and the position and why this job is such a great fit. Be certain to express your appreciation to the recruiter for their time at the event too.
- **One more follow-up** may be needed after sending your letter or email if you have not heard from the employer. Ask about the status of the position and next steps.

Job searching can be a frustrating and tiresome process. Keeping the momentum going can be a challenge. However, until you have accepted a new job offer you should continue to pursue all leads. Each connection you made and each discussion you have had is an opportunity to move you forward. Always remember that your next career opportunity may be right around the corner!

Please consult the Career Services staff (RM 221; 717-358-2290) with your job fair questions or for your career development needs. We are looking forward to assisting you.