

## PREPARE FOR GRADUATE EMPLOYER FAIRS

Careers Fairs offer a great opportunity to meet graduate recruiters face to face. You can: gather information, ask questions, gain insight into a company's culture, find out about opportunities, meet valuable contacts to add to your network and make an impression as a proactive, polite and professional future applicant, colleague and employee. So, how do you make the most of this opportunity?

**BEFORE.....**Have a plan, find out in advance which the companies will be attending and identify three or four that really interest you for a "wish list" to contact. However, don't be too rigid about who you approach on the day, be open minded and receptive, you might be impressed by a firm you have never thought of.

Do some research in advance, look at company websites so you know something about them and have an awareness of their opportunities and application process, employers get very fed up of being asked "So what do you do?". Prepare some questions but don't ask things that are clearly answered on their website. Try "What was your first year like? "How would you describe your company culture?" ( See Matrix for ideas).

**DURING.....**Dress smartly, take a pen and notebook and copies of your CV (just in case- though employers may direct you to their online application process. Get there early, before the crowds and approach employers alone not with a group of friends. Make contact, don't just grab leaflets and key rings! Be positive, polite and professional, have a "pitch" prepared to briefly outline who you are, what you can offer and what you are hoping for and be prepared to answer questions about your goals and career motivation.

**AFTER.....** Reflect and consider your impressions while they are fresh in your mind, decide how you will manage and utilise contact and information. Don't throw everything in a carrier bag in the bottom of your wardrobe, sort and file it. Follow the company on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, if you obtained email or LinkedIn contact details, follow up quickly. Thank your contact for their time and advice and ask politely if you may stay in touch around future developments, show your enthusiasm but don't be pushy.

**Further resources:** Careers Network:  
[www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/careers/coss](http://www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/careers/coss)

Preparing for Graduate Recruitment exhibitions: <http://www.milkround.com/news-careers-advice/540/graduate-recruitment-exhibitions/careers-advice>

Industry profiles: [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk)

Employer insights:  
<http://targetjobs.co.uk/employer-insights>

Follow us on Twitter: @coss\_careers

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/cosscareers](http://www.facebook.com/cosscareers)

### Autumn Term Careers Fairs 2014

Autumn Fair	15 <sup>th</sup> and 16 <sup>th</sup> October	Great Hall
Business, Finance and Consultancy Fair	5 <sup>th</sup> November	Great Hall
Science, Engineering and Technology Fair	29 <sup>th</sup> October	Great Hall
Graduate Recruitment Exhibition	7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> November	NEC
Law Fair	12 <sup>th</sup> November	Great Hall

## Employer Research Matrix

<u>Employer Name:</u>	1. (i.e. PwC)	2.	3.	4.	5.
Graduate Recruitment Process & Entry requirements					
Opportunities for progression/cross departmental experience/ secondment.					
Training opportunities and professional qualifications					
Skills/competencies required (what do you look for in candidates?)					
Current issues in the news/business world that affect company of interest.					
Contact Details (Telephone, e-mail address, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc)					