



Center for
Career Readiness

CAREER FAIR **BASICS**

LOOKBOOK

DRESS FOR SUCCESS.

It's important to dress professionally when making a first impression on an employer. "Dress for success" isn't just a common idiom. It's a part of shaping how employers view you.

While you do not always need to wear a formal suit or dress, you do want to make sure the details of your outfit are as tailored as the resume you've worked so hard on. Little details like clean, shined shoes and a watch can broadcast professionalism. If you wear jewelry or other accessories, make sure that they're appropriate for the culture of the employer you're aiming to meet.

One great way to make sure your look is ready to go is to devote some time to research before the fair. Look for a list of the employers attending and prioritize those you want to talk to most. Then check out their company culture, policies and dress codes to make sure your outfit works as broadly as possible.





Don't be scared of a little pop of color! Not all professional clothes need to be black, gray or navy. You want to make sure you don't stand out for the wrong reasons, but wearing clothes that make you feel true to yourself can give you that extra confidence boost. Also, you don't need to worry about breaking the bank **The outfit above was entirely thrifted!**

PACK YOUR *SMALL BAG.*



What should you bring to a career **fair**? Not much. Don't carry a bulky briefcase or handbag-you want to be able to easily make your way across the room, have your hands free for handshaking, and not look disheveled. No need to bring more than a small bag or a dark, plain folder to hold resumes and any information you pick up.

EXPRESSION IS IMPORTANT.

Regardless of your gender presentation, religion, or culture, comfort and confidence are key when meeting employers. So, don't force yourself to dress in a way that doesn't align with your identities. If you're worried about being discriminated against, check out the laws in your state (or the state you may move to) to see what legal protections would serve you best.

At the end of the day, your well-being is something an employer should value highly. It's likely that working for a company that doesn't respect your identities is not something that will work out in the long-run, so don't be afraid to express yourself as you see fit.

For US residents or workers,

www.eeoc.gov

is an excellent resource for locating information on equal opportunity employment.



CAN I BE CASUAL?

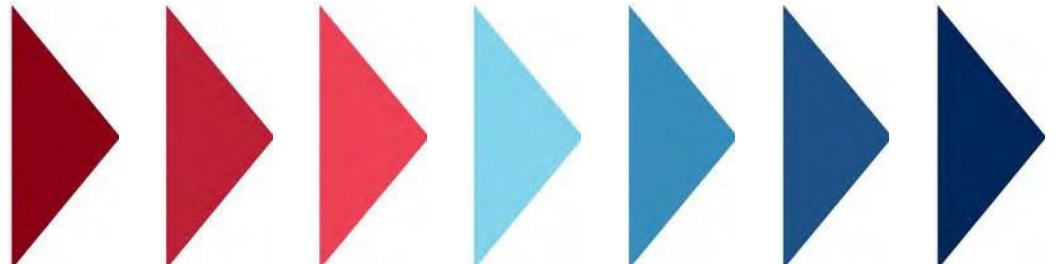
In short - sometimes.



It never hurts to present yourself professionally, but we get that wearing a suit and heels to meet a tech startup with a dress code of jeans and a t-shirt might feel a little over the top.

Business casual is completely appropriate for career fairs, provided that the employers you intend to talk to align to that style

If you do feel that a more casual approach is appropriate, make sure it's still professional. A plain polo or sweater and wrinkle-free slacks are good options. The details are just as important with business casual outfits, so make sure your shoes, accessories, and hair are neat and clean.



PREPARE FOR THE FAIR



Now that we've covered the basics of wardrobe, let's go over some resume basics. Your resume tells a concise story of who you are as a professional. A **tailored** resume helps an employer see how you are a fit for the position. On average, an employer spends 6-10 seconds reading, or rather, scanning your resume. In that time you have to convince them you have the skills and experience to continue the conversation, ideally in an interview. More importantly, employers don't have the time to interpret your skills and experiences. You have to help make that connection for them.

- Read the job description and determine keywords and phrases.
- Notice what's mentioned multiple times or seems to be emphasized
- Speak to those items and keywords with your skills and experiences.
- Be intentional about what you include (most relevant experiences and skills).
- Limit your resume to one page, unless you have 5-10 years of experience or your industry of interest requires a longer version.

Does this process seem daunting? Don't worry, you're not in this alone. Swing by **LifeLab** (Bear Down Gym 264) to meet with a team of guide and career educators devoted to making sure your resume and other materials are optimized for you. If you need more support, consider taking SBS 311: Design Your Life or SBS 411: Design Your Search (see descriptions below).

1-CREDIT 7 WEEK COURSES

SBS 311: Design Your Life—This one-credit course is open to ALL MAJORS and can help you prepare for your future career and land your first job. Register as you would for any course by logging into your course schedule in UAccess.

SBS 411: Design Your Search—This one-credit course focuses on creating a professional resume/cover letter, self-introductions, personal branding, career conversations, networking and preparing for an interview. This course is ideal for students who have completed 60 units and declared a major.