

CHECKLIST: HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL AT THE ENGINEERING CAREER FAIR

Pre-Fair Planning: Prepare to Sell the Product – YOU!

- ✓ **Look Professional:** This is your first impression, make it a good one! - Dress in professional business attire with shine-able shoes. Bring a professional looking folder or portfolio with pen and paper to take notes. Bring enough copies of your updated resume' to leave with employers you speak with.
- ✓ **Research, Research, Research!!!** Know as much as you can about the attending companies you intend to speak with. Use their website, the Speed School and the University's career development web sites, Symplicity, web searches and career fair materials to learn about them. *Recruiters expect you to know about the company and appreciate thoughtful questions regarding their company.* Conducting background research shows your interest in the organization and that you are *prepared!*
- ✓ **Know who you are and what you want!** Prepare and practice your "elevator-pitch" - a short introduction that tells the employer about you and your interests and how it relates to their company/position. Keep it focused and brief. Know what it is you are looking for. Approach them with confidence, smile, say hello, introduce yourself, and remember to use good eye contact and a firm handshake. Make a general statement about yourself, such as, "Good morning, I am Penny von Hoven and I'm a senior majoring in Electrical Engineering. I would like to know more about full-time career opportunities with the University of Louisville."

At the Fair: Execute the Plan!

- ✓ **Arrive early and prioritize the employers you're most interested in:** Allow yourself adequate time to stow your belongings, determine where employer booths are located and in which order to visit them. The hours are 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., but don't wait until 2:00 to arrive since some employers tend to pack up early. Focus on three to five companies that you are truly interested in. If time permits, make a few practice runs with employers in which you are the least interested so that you will feel more confident when you approach the employers you're especially interested in.
- ✓ **Don't walk around in a group:** This is about YOU! Your classmates are your friendly competition.
- ✓ **Be prepared to ask the recruiter *relevant* questions:** Information you can gain from the recruiter include: employment and/or hiring trends, current engineering openings, training offered or skills required, and whom to contact for follow-up information. Do not ask them what the company does or what types of jobs they have – you should already know that! Also, do not confuse one company for another competitor! Not all employer representatives may know everything about the company, maybe just their specific function, but they can still provide you information.
- ✓ **Have an exit strategy:** Do not dominate an employer's time. Ask your prepared questions and offer to follow up after the event. Always ask the employer for the next steps in the recruitment process and ask for the recruiter's business card. Remember, you are not there for the free items/gifts employers bring. However, feel free to take one small item, if offered. Thank them for their time and write salient notes down on their cards. Use this information in your follow-up correspondence.

After the Fair: Use Your Manners!

- ✓ **Be sure to send a thank you note soon after the event:** Remind each recruiter who you are and that you met him/her at the Speed School Career Fair (state the date). A professionally written, brief e-mail or hard copy card or letter should contain a statement about your interests/background, how they match up for the position and indicate that you appreciated having the opportunity to discuss career opportunities with him/her. Provide a resume, references or other promised documents.

Courtesy of the University of Louisville Speed School of Engineering's Co-op Career Development Center and the University Career Development Center