

Career fair to build bridge between students and employees

By Jesse Stephenson
Entertainment Reporter

The sixth annual Career Center-sponsored Career and Internship Fair will take place Jan. 28 and 29 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the EMU, and the question many students may be asking themselves is, "Why should I care about this?"

The answer is simple. The career fair is a chance for students to meet with representatives from industries large and small in an informal environment and to learn about trends in job fields.

Coordinator Jeaneth Villegas calls the career fair a stepping stone.

"The fair is a chance for stu-

dents to meet with contacts from businesses and industries and to make contacts with possible employers. It's a good way to get the ball rolling for finding a job or internship," Villegas said.

Villegas said the goal of the career fair is to allow students a chance to meet with key contacts from organizations and to begin the process of networking with these contacts.

Approximately 100 organizations will have representatives at the career fair, including non-profit and environmental organizations. Representatives from government offices will also be present to answer questions for interested students.

"The career fair will have many companies, both large and small, and there will probably be some companies that students will have never heard of before," Villegas said. "Just because you haven't heard of them before doesn't mean that they won't have something to offer. Students should be willing to talk to anyone."

While the career fair will have an informal atmosphere, Villegas said she feels students should still take the fair seriously.

"I think that students should keep a professional demeanor. They don't necessarily need to wear a suit and tie, although it isn't discouraged. It's suggested

CAREER FAIR FACTS

■ **WHAT:** The Career and Internship Fair is an event at which students can meet representatives from businesses and find out about the trends, requirements and conditions of their future career goals

■ **WHO:** Sponsored by the University Career Center

■ **WHEN:** Jan. 28 and 29, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

■ **WHERE:** EMU

■ **FOR:** All students, even freshmen and sophomores, are encouraged to take part in this event

■ **WHO:** Sponsored by the University Career Center

that a student dress one level higher than they usually do, to show employers that they are serious about finding a job," Villegas said.

Underclassmen as well as seniors are encouraged to attend

the fair and to become familiar with companies and the trends of the industries they are interested in. Villegas said she expects about 3000-4000 students to visit the fair during the two-day run.

CAREER FAIR TIPS

The Career and Internship Fair is an opportunity to make contacts in the business world. Preparation and strategy are key in making the fair a success for you.

- Bring 20-30+ copies of your resume
- Dress professionally
- Maintain a positive attitude
- Ask for business cards
- Pick up brochures/applications
- Make good eye contact
- Greet each employer with a handshake and a smile
- "Work the fair": move around and meet different employers
- Keep an open mind
- Send follow-up/thank-you notes
- Attend both days of the fair

Workshop gives tips on how to succeed at career fair

Students learned how to use the career fair to explore possible jobs

Brooke Bryant
Freelance Reporter

Life after college doesn't come equipped with a how-to manual, much to the frustration of college students everywhere. But the Career Center attempted to fill that neglected niche Jan. 22 with a presentation designed to prepare students for the job search process.

Presenters Jeaneth Villegas and Stephanie Paramore lectured to a crowd of more than 100 for an hour in the EMU Fir Room. They discussed tips and

strategies to ensure a successful first contact with the professional world.

The workshop was a precursor to the 1997 Career and Internship Fair that will take place Jan. 28 and 29.

The aim of the workshop was to give students an edge at the fair, where recruiters may see thousands of students in a day.

Villegas and Paramore stressed the importance of preparation and making a positive first impression. Students were encouraged to research the companies they are interested in via Career Center resources or Internet web pages before attending the fair.

"It is important to set yourself off from others by dressing professionally, bringing your

resume, following up with a thank-you note," said Villegas, who is in charge of employer relations at the Career Center. She advised students to bring a minimum of 20-30 copies of their resumes for distribution to representatives as well as to cement any contacts made at the fair with a brief follow-up note.

Another tip given at the workshop was to attend both days of the career fair, because some businesses will only be there for one of the days.

Villegas also said it was important to note that the career fair "is just one tool in the career exploration and career search process. It complements the on-campus recruiting program and also complements students doing internships."

Recent graduate Mark Larsen attended the workshop hoping to get an idea of what employers are looking for.

"I want to get my name out there, get to know some of the companies, find out what kind of things they're hiring for," he said.

Villegas emphasized that the workshop was meant to build on what students already know.

"I would like them to remember that they can do it, and that they have the skills and the knowledge to make a good impression and to be prepared," she said.

"It's just a matter of persistence, maintaining a positive attitude, and keeping an open mind about the opportunities that are around them," she said.

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