Whilst enjoying the freebies is all part of the fair experience, don’t make this the core aim of your day! Whilst you may end up with a bag full of pens and sweets, you probably won’t have learnt much about what opportunities you could apply for and what kind of workplace you would enjoy!

Whilst it is good to have a few copies of your CV to hand, don’t feel like you have to give this out to every employer you meet. Many will not accept CVs on the day, as you have to go through their online application process.

Try not to feel overwhelmed! Whilst there is a lot of choice and opportunity at the fair try to relax and have fun, using these questions as prompts to help you find out more if you are feeling nervous.

TOP TIPS

WHAT SHOULD I DO AT THE FAIR?

Who are you? – "Hi, my name is... I’m studying... at the University of Manchester..."

Why are you at the fair? – "I’m looking for a graduate job/work experience/placement/exploring career options...

What do they do? – they might be a HR manager/recruiter and can tell you what they look for in a candidate, and the benefits of working for the organisation OR they might be a graduate who can give tips and tell you about their experiences of being recruited.

Try not to feel overwhelmed! Whilst there is a lot of choice and opportunity at the fair try to relax and have fun, using these questions as prompts to help you find out more if you are feeling nervous.

TOP TIPS

WHAT SHOULD I DO AT THE FAIR?

What to say at the stand!

Who are you? – "Hi, my name is... I’m studying... at the University of Manchester..."

Why are you at the fair? – "I’m looking for a graduate job/work experience/placement/exploring career options..."

What do they do? – they might be a HR manager/recruiter and can tell you what they look for in a candidate, and the benefits of working for the organisation OR they might be a graduate who can give tips and tell you about their experiences of being recruited.

What relevant knowledge and skills can you offer from your degree?

What skills and experience have you developed outside your degree?

Consider part time work, volunteering, societies, sports, peer/PASS mentoring, work experience.

Why are you considering/researching this industry?

Answering employers’ questions

What do you know about this organisation?
Read around their website in advance, and also use social media such as Facebook and Twitter to find out recent news about the organisation.

To a recent graduate:
• What sort of jobs did you consider when you graduated? Was this a job you imagined yourself doing?
• What subject did you study? How helpful is your degree subject in your work?
• What do you most enjoy/not enjoy about the job?
• What are the skills you find yourself using most in this job?
• What is a typical day like for you – responsibilities/variety of work/working hours?
• What kind of environment do you work in (lab, office, out and about etc.)?
• What support and training have you been offered?
• Do you have any tips about the recruitment process, such as how to prepare for interview?
• Have you thought about what you want to do next?

If they’ve got opportunities you’re interested in, make sure you ask how and when to apply.

Keep a note of who you spoke to, as you can mention their name in your application.

Stay in touch – ask for business cards/LinkedIn connections

End the conversation politely – “Thanks for talking to me – that was really interesting/that’s given me a lot to think about/I’ll go and work on my application straight away.”

This will improve your applications and interview answers – and help you decide if you want their opportunities.

To a manager or recruiter:
• What roles would a student with my degree be considered for?
• What do people love most about working for your organisation?
• What are the biggest challenges faced by people working in your organisation?
• What support and training do you offer for graduates?
• What are the things you look for when you’re recruiting?
• What can I do to best prepare myself for the recruitment process?
• How common is it for people to join your organisation straight from an undergrad degree? What other experience might be useful as a stepping stone?

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