How to Work a Career Fair Like You're the Boss
It isn't often that several employers will gather for a few hours in a purposeful effort to meet you, so when a career fair is held on campus, it's smart for you to attend. In order to get something from the experience beyond a few free key chains and pens, you need to understand what you should do before, during and after the career fair -- and then follow through.

BEFORE

1) **Find 5-10 employers you definitely want to approach**
   - **Go to Handshake** to review the list of employers that will be there: https://weber.joinhandshake.com/career_fairs/2793
   - **Apply for jobs** for which you are qualified prior to job fair – this will give you something specific to discuss, show you are genuinely interested in the company, and that you are proactive

2) **Research each company**
   - **Learn who they are** (what do they make, do, sell, offer)
   - **What is their mission/philosophy?**
   - **How long they have been in business**
   - **Have they been mentioned in the news for something good** (Google the company name or look at the company website for “media”)
   - **How you see yourself fitting in** (how your skills, experience & values are in alignment with theirs)

3) **Develop a strong resume** which includes measurable accomplishments on resume-quality paper, in folder

4) **Create or order business cards** (www.vistaprint.com) to offer in place of resumes in case you run out or the recruiter will not accept one or are not interested in working for the company but may want to stay connected for referrals

5) **Prepare a portfolio** with work samples, copies of your resume, and a notebook and pen
   - Take notes; write down name of person you spoke with or should follow up with after the career fair in case they do not have business cards

DURING

1) **Dress professionally** as if attending an interview

2) **Keep cell phone put away** – listen to what recruiters are asking other people

3) **Firm handshake** – confident: enthusiastic, eye contact, honest

4) Don’t just go to each table to collect pens and gadgets; **know what you want to say**
   - **30 second commercial or elevator pitch** – “express gratitude not attitude”
   - **An elevator pitch has three parts:**
     - * Who are you? Introduce yourself by name. Tell them your major and your year in school
     - * What are your major accomplishments/strengths/unique skills? Make yourself memorable
     - * What do you want? What action do you want from them? What do you want to discuss with them? (e.g. request an interview; set up conference call to further discuss career opportunities at their company)

5) **Suggested questions to ask:**
   - What are the skills and attributes you value most in your employees?
   - What do you enjoy most about working for the company?
   - How did you get started working for this company?
   - May I contact you with further questions?
   - I would like the chance to talk to you further/ how could we set up a short meeting?

6) **Collect business cards** – jot down a few notes on each to help remind you of your conversation or a particular job in which you are interested, etc.

AFTER

1) **Follow up with a thank you** & continue to develop a relationship through additional contact: email, call, lunch, etc.

2) **If you did not yet apply for jobs/internships**, do so now and send an email thanking the recruiter, letting them know you applied for <name of job and req. #>, and attach your resume for their review.