

WHY EVENTS ARE ESSENTIAL

DISCOVER THE MANY WAYS EVENTS CAN HELP YOU GET YOUR NEXT JOB.

Attending careers events doesn't just allow you to find out about a range of different employers and work opportunities.

The other benefits of events

- Insights on working in a particular role, organisation or sector to help you make informed choices.
- Enhancing your sector and company awareness by getting the latest information about what is happening in the company and its working professionals.
- Networking. Talk directly with employers and working professionals to find out what they look for in candidates and how to boost your chances of getting into the sector. Making contacts is an incredibly useful way to find out about potential work opportunities.
- Mentioning that you attend relevant events on your CV or when networking. This shows your drive and that you have researched your career ideas.

Do your research beforehand

Prioritise who you want to talk to by finding out which organisations or individuals are attending. Think about what you would like to know and prepare some relevant questions. This will help to provide a focus and purpose to the conversation, so you don't end up asking bland or vague questions in a panic such as 'so what do you do?' Remember this is your opportunity to make a good impression and find out what you need to help you with your job hunt, so don't ask anything too obvious or basic, ie where the answers are clearly on their website! Keep an open mind, as opportunities can come from the least expected places. Even if you know which sector you want to enter, those working in other areas may still have insight or advice that could be useful to you.

First impressions count

Dress for the occasion – if it is a formal event like a careers fair then dressing smartly will make you feel more professional and confident. However, if the event is more informal – like an alumni event or workshop – then dressing more casually may make you feel more relaxed when talking to speakers. Remember to smile, be polite, switch your phone to silent, and introduce yourself (with your name and year of study) before asking your questions. If you find networking too daunting, try going around with a networking partner. Bring a notebook to write down people's names, organisations and any useful information they tell you. This will be valuable to use in your future application and interview should you decide to apply. If they inspired you to work for their organisation, mention this in your application!

Follow up

A day or two after the event, send a 'thank-you' email or LinkedIn message to any contacts you met. Thank them for taking the time to talk to you; include something that helps them to remember you ('I very much enjoyed our discussion on ...') and reiterate your interest in their organisation. Don't forget, your careers service can give you feedback on your email.

Remember, when you make an application or get invited to interview, you can refer to this contact as someone who has inspired you, further showing your dedication to the organisation.

Find out what is on

- Check your careers service's website.
- Check the main university event pages for relevant guest lectures.
- Browse event-listing websites such as eventbrite.co.uk for relevant local events.
- Browse company websites. They often run their own events and list the details online. Join their mailing list to keep up to date with their activities and follow their social media activity, including Twitter.
- Check the relevant sector professional association or sector skills council. They often have student memberships that allow you to use their member benefits, such as talks, training and networking events. See totalprofessions.com.
- Set up your own events or help with events run by student societies. Organising a programme and liaising with speakers can be a great way to learn more about a sector and build your network. 

