



Getting ready for a career fair

SAM DIDION
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Worried or curious about finding a job after college? Or what about finding an internship to meet graduation requirements?

Ashland University's Career Services holds career fairs throughout the year in order to help students of all levels better prepare for their future by meeting with employers of potential internships and jobs.

Before considering attending a career fair, it is important first get ready for it. Preparation is key. Going in unprepared is unprofessional and improper.

Now relax, and here are some tips on how students can put their best foot forward.

Attire

First impressions mean everything.

A potential employer will see potential employees at a career fair before they see a resume, and if the first thing they see is sweats they might not even look at a resume.

Career Services recommends students dress and act professionally, yet be natural. Avoid anything distracting, like too much jewelry, heavy makeup or body spray, or a messy hairstyle.

A firm handshake and confident walk with good posture can also say a lot. Show genuine interest and enthusiasm by smiling and speaking clearly.

Introducing yourself and sharing a resume

Career Services is able to help students with their resume at any time.

Career Services advises having more than enough resumes in hand when attending a career fair, but a resume does not replace an introduction.

Students should talk to potential employers by stating their name, school, major and the type of position that student is seeking.

Students should also express why they are interested in the organization or field.

Be sure to mention any additional related or unrelated experiences, even if it is already in a resume.

Students should also be sure to practice an introduction.

They should do this until they feel comfortable with it, but not to the point where it sounds rehearsed or robotic.

The Ashland Career Services page states that the employers at the career fair are paying to be there, which means that they are hoping to find people to hire.

Prioritize, manage time and ask appropriate questions

Students should not simply walk up to the first open table they see. Take a few minutes when first walking in to look around and see what looks interesting.



SUBMITTED BY CAREER SERVICES

Students can take a professional step forward by introducing themselves to potential employers at a career fair.

It is an efficient use of their time and any employer's time.

Even if one particular employer is really interesting, be sure to make it to some other the other tables then leave time to circulate back around to them at the end.

When asking questions, it might

be best to try and avoid questions about salary until the employer has express very clear interest in you.

It is best to simply maximize knowledge of the employers by possibly asking them about training programs or other information that could be useful in the future.

The university's next career fair is Oct. 18 from 1-4 p.m. in Upper Convo.

For any questions regarding the career fair, please contact Career Services at 419-289-5064 or go to the office on the second floor in the student center.

Double Take: A deeper look

Double Take is a new multimedia feature about students across campus who have stories to tell.

Emily Wirtz's video feature – and future installments of Double Take – can be found online at ashlandcollegian.com.

RENÉE BORCAS
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Reminiscing about growing up, Emily Wirtz can see the seeds of the work she is sowing today on the Ashland University campus.

From the beginning of her formal education through eighth-grade, she attended a Catholic school. While her teachers there did not always say the outright values they were trying to instill in their students, Emily was able to pick up on them along the way.

"I wouldn't necessarily go right to social justice issues, but kind of like underlying themes of that stuff like in my literature classes," she said.

"Looking back I see where my teachers kind of planted seeds."

After graduating from junior high, she moved on to high school. However the process of acclimating to a public school was anything but what she had expected.

"After that I went into high school, obviously, but I went into a public high school, which was kind of like culture shock to me," she said.

One of the changes that Emily had to adjust to was quite literally the biggest; her class size grew from being made up of 17 people to around 400.

She described other changes that could be expected during teenage years, like drugs, but one of the things that unsettled her the most was the division that manifested itself across her school's cafeteria.

"So you had the football players sitting over here, and then you had everyone else, and then over here in this section was 'little Africa,' she said. "So that was kind of like one of the things that opened my eyes to [think] 'Wow, these are like real issues that people deal with.'"

As her high school career continued, Emily learned that she felt comfortable as a leader and wanted to make a change in the world.

Being the student organizer of her school's To Write Love on Her Arms chapter, a non-profit for depression and suicide awareness, she found that this was something that

she would like to continue to pursue — she just didn't know how to do that yet.

"And that was when I was like I want to be a leader. I want to do something to change people and change the world in a good way," she said. "So that was kind of the first real base of that, but I didn't really think of doing it in a college career, you can't really major in 'I want to change the world', so I just went with what I thought would kind of get me in that direction."

When she started at AU, Emily originally studied psychology and criminal justice.

"I wanted to go into forensic psychology, like Criminal Minds kind of stuff. And on the first day of class I was kind of like 'nope' and I decided against that, so I dropped the CJ and added creative writing out of interest," she said.

During her second semester, Emily took a religion class that she did really well in.

The course's professor approached her one day and recommended that she add religion as a major, so she did.

Altogether, she is studying psychology, creative writing and religion.

While they might seem as if they are all very distinct from one another, Emily found a way to make it them work so she could still pursue the values she is passionate about.

"They're all really interesting to me in their own kind of way, and I think that I'm still figuring out how they all piece together," she said. "But it's really cool to see the connections between classes and stuff."

During the same semester she added her religion major, Emily was offered an internship with the Ashland Center for Nonviolence, and she still works there to this day. "That internship has really allowed me to grow as a person outside of classes... I'm ready to explore and educate myself on my own, which is a really cool thing."

She also has another internship with Safe Haven, which is a local rape crisis and domestic violence

crisis center, where she works with an outreach coordinator.

While Emily has been able to pursue her passions during her time at AU, she has still had to overcome challenges.

By spreading herself too thin she has had to learn how to manage life in a way that works for her.

"I feel like I can't dedicate myself to one thing in particular, so it's like jack-of-all-trades, master of none," she said. "And it's hard to sometimes see other people in some of my majors and they are so knowledgeable about everything in that particular field, whereas I

just have that surface level of this is what I learned in my mandatory classes... But at the same time, you know, pros and cons, it has allowed me to make a lot of life balancing skills at the same time."

This work that she is so dedicated to carries an emotional weight as well.

"It is tough work, mentally and emotionally, and I've found that it's really important to have those debriefing, kind of destressing moments, which is also pretty hard to do with the amount of stuff that I'm doing," she said.

While working through the highs

and lows of her work, Emily plans to wrap up her studies at AU this coming spring with graduation. However, this is not the end of her formal education.

"I'm in the process right now of applying to a scholarship for an international humanitarian master's of law program — it's a mouthful — I know, in Ireland," she said.

She wants to continue her humanitarian work, but find a way to take it to an international level and make a living for herself.

"My dream job would be a peace corps style job, but with a paycheck," she said.

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