

Career Fair

Each fall most universities hold a career fair. Companies send representatives from HR (Human Resources) and functional groups (Engineering) to have short discussions with students about potential full-time opportunities with the company. Most companies will also discuss internship opportunities. Many times the company representatives have a past relationship with the university, former student or long-time recruiter.

If you have been to one of these you know its absolute chaos. Lines of students waiting to talk to a small number of representatives from the best-known companies. As a former recruiter I can assure you, its generally a blur to the company representative. When I did this, we kept 3 piles of resumes, one for students we wanted to contact the next day, one for the students we would have HR enter into our employment system, and one for those that we determined would not be a fit.

What the recruiter sees is your resume and you. Make sure your resume is as good as it can be, you are professionally dressed, and YOU have intelligent questions to ask the recruiter (all of these topics are covered elsewhere). You want to stand out, in a good way, not a goofy way.

Be wary of some of the things on the internet about standing out in a crowd. The more creative approaches may work in some cases but generally speaking, engineering organizations are fairly conservative, especially in recruiting.

Be respectful of the recruiter's time and those around you, come prepared!

Special note: Most universities do not restrict who can come to their career fair. With other universities so nearby, consider attending another fair if you can. This opens a broader set of companies to interview with and makes you stand out from the crowd.