

TOP 10 TIPS for CANDIDATES at the PERC EDUCATION JOB FAIR

www.percjobfair.org

*The PERC Job Fair is an effective way to meet employers: to build your network of contacts, to expand job prospects, to engage in interviews, and to—potentially—get a job! Each employer will have a booth with literature and other helpful materials. You will have a chance to meet recruiters, ask questions about their organizations, and tell them about your qualifications. Here is a list of the **Top 10 Tips** to help you make the most of the fair.*

- 1. BEFORE THE FAIR, IDENTIFY REGISTERED EMPLOYERS & RESEARCH THEM** - Registered employers are listed on the PERC website, www.percjobfair.org; click on the Info for Candidates tab, then scroll down to the related link “**School Districts/Agencies Attending and Certification Areas Sought.**” Research district websites to create a “Top Tier” list of prospective employers and a secondary list. Note important characteristics of each targeted district so that you can demonstrate to the employer that you’ve done your “homework” and are a conscientious, highly motivated candidate. Check the PERC website frequently for updates of newly registered employers. As we draw closer to the fair, the website will list certification areas employers are seeking—as you search certifications, note that some employers have checked “All Certifications” (realize that this is a dynamic list and may change).
- 2. BRING LOTS OF RESUMES** - Bring resumes for your targeted employers and allow for multiple representatives from each employer. Also, bring resumes for employers you didn’t target but that you discover as you circulate among the booths at the fair. (Upon arrival, you will receive an employer directory and map to help you navigate the job fair.)
- 3. PORTFOLIOS ARE OPTIONAL** - **You do not need to bring large binders.** However, if you have an electronic portfolio, this could be helpful to reference. Also, you can bring mini-portfolios or brochures to leave with employers, particularly those on your Top Tier list for whom you want to “pull out all the stops.”
- 4. INTRODUCE YOURSELF AND ASK QUESTIONS** - Employers are eager to meet and talk with you, so don’t hesitate to initiate conversation. For example: “Hello, I’m Shauna Jones, a teacher candidate in Spanish with certification in grades K-12. I will graduate in May from _____. After reviewing your website, I am particularly interested in your district because _____. Do you anticipate any opportunities for Spanish teachers next year?” (Also, don’t hesitate to introduce yourself to employers you didn’t research.)
- 5. MEET WITH A VARIETY OF EMPLOYERS** - Don’t just focus on a few popular districts. Keep an open mind. Employers may not list every certification area on the PERC website or in the directory. Talk with them about anticipated opportunities. If they are not the representative who hires for your certification area, ask for the name and e-mail address of the person that you should contact. If an employer is unsure about future vacancies in your certification area, ask for their business card so that you can follow up with them. This kind of networking can lead to a position later!
- 6. EMPHASIZE YOUR STRENGTHS** - Prepare to talk about experiences on your resume, highlighting skills that administrators are seeking: differentiated instruction, student-centered learning, classroom management, teaching strategies, state standards, collaborative teaching, integration of technology, etc. Don’t forget to convey enthusiasm!
- 7. INTERVIEW TIPS** – Your Career Services Office can assist you with interview advice. Also, consult the ***AEE Job Search Handbook for Educators***—available from most Career Services Offices.
- 8. DRESS PROFESSIONALLY** - Invest in a suit! If you’re not sure about the appropriateness of an outfit, contact your Career Services Office. Wear professional, yet comfortable, shoes. (You’ll be standing quite a bit!)
- 9. STAY ORGANIZED: Business Cards, Notes, Applications** – Most employers will place business cards on their table. Get a business card for each representative with whom you speak. Double-check contact information before you leave the table. After you step away, note any special points you discussed related to: a) the application process, b) special characteristics of the district, c) follow-up YOU offered to do, etc. It is very important to keep track of this information after each conversation because it will blur quickly if you don’t capture it right away.
- 10. FOLLOW UP** - Send follow-up letters or emails to those employers that you would like to pursue further, and attach another copy of your resume. Don’t forget to thank them for taking the time to introduce you to their organization.

For additional assistance, please contact your Career Services Office