

Recruiting Tips and Best Practices

Use these best practices tips to make the most of your recruiting efforts!

Tips for Hosting Engaging Events/Sessions for Students

Plan Ahead

- Connect with the [career office](#) at least three weeks in advance to schedule your session/event so there is ample time to advertise to students.
- Post your event on Handshake and include as many details as possible to get students excited; most students overlook events that do not give a description.
- Enlist recent Illinois alums working at your organization to help publicize the event – do they still have connections to student groups, professors, or advisors that can spread the word?

Structuring Your Session

- We encourage you to make your session interactive, as students prefer a more engaging experience rather than a session that feels like a class or lecture.
- Most info sessions last an hour to an hour and a half.
 - The first part of your session should be an interactive presentation about your company and/or about current job openings.
 - The second part should be used for question and answer, one-on-one time with students, and/or networking.
- Drive attendance by re-marketing these events with names that better reflect the content of the event.
- Are you hosting the same general information over multiple dates and times? Share if students should pick the best date that works for them in the event description.
- Tip: Be transparent and set expectations.
 - Share how you will use your time with participants ahead of the event. If possible, include the agenda for the event in the description posted in Handshake.

Content for Your Session

Add value through your content rather than providing company data and information easily accessible on the website. Focus on career development, what work is like at your company, and the job application process. Here are some ideas of what topics to include in your session:

- The expected path of progression within your company and the industry.
- Internships and jobs for new graduates.
- Involve alumni or new hires to give students insight into what it is like to work at your organization
 - Have alumni present “a day in the life of working at your company” and discuss the path they took to get to where they are today.
- Include information about the types of projects new hires will be working on.
- Share opportunities for social engagement and work-life balance.
- Specify what your organization looks for in graduates.
- Describe the skills that are in demand at your organization.
- Discuss the recruitment timeline and process, including opening and closing dates for applications, and when offers are made.

- Explain what a student can do to stand out from the competition – such as tips on selection criteria or sample interview questions.

Make it Interactive

- Share printed or links of job descriptions (or an overview of the types of positions at your company if you do not have any immediate openings).
- Include quizzes and polls, hosted by free services like Kahoot and Poll Everywhere, which allow attendees to answer quick trivia questions using their phones.
- For in-person sessions:
 - Advertise and provide free food and refreshments.
 - Bring company swag and giveaways.
 - Raffle off a giveaway to keep students listening and ensure they stay for the entire event.

Inclusivity and Accessibility Regarding Technology

- Always share as much information as possible with students ahead of your event.
- Students have varying knowledge of virtual platforms, and some lack access to updated operating systems, or even a laptop. If your event uses a specific platform, share that information ahead of time.
- Consider recording live events and share event recordings for students who cannot attend live.
- Consider sharing your pronouns in your displayed name and sharing them when you introduce yourself.
- Provide live closed captions or add captions to event recordings.
- Share your organization's expectations or suggestions about students also using video.
 - Keep in mind, students may choose to attend virtual events with "audio only" for several reasons. Let students know ahead of time, and during the event, if video is preferred.
 - Use inclusive language when addressing turning on/off video. For example, "To the extent that your background, technology, and environment permits, we would love to "see your face" virtually!"
 - Check out [Handshake's article](#) on 70 phrases to make your recruitment more inclusive.

Coffee Chats

- Coffee chats/office hours can be a great way to form personal connections with students.
- Employer coffee chats allow for employers and students to connect informally for 1:1 or small group conversations. We recommend scheduling 2-3 hours total.
- During this time, students reserve a 15–20-minute timeslot to meet with your organization's representative(s).
- Conversations are informal and allow students to learn more about your organization, receive feedback on their resume, ask about your application process, or practice for interviews.
- Employers have reported success conducting coffee chats via virtual meeting platforms like Zoom, WebEx, Microsoft Teams, and BlueJeans.

Tabling

- Create an exciting and engaging table with informational handouts and swag.
- Be friendly and welcoming – engage with people who walk by. Make eye contact and ask questions. If you engage in dialogue, students will engage right back.
- Get out from behind the table!
 - If you have multiple representatives, have at least one person stand in front of the table. They can ask students a simple question to encourage them stop and engage with you and your materials on the table.



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- Make sure that each person that engages with you leaves the table with an informative flyer or pamphlet in hand with your contact information on it.
- Ask students to share their email with you to receive more information.

Employer Resume Reviews

- For resume reviews, students are interested in hearing an employer's perspective on how they have articulated their skills and how to be more competitive with their resume.
- You do not need to go over spelling, grammar, and format review necessarily, but rather focus on how the student's skills are articulated.
- During the review, we recommend you also share your approach to the resume review process, for example, "I only look at each resume for 30 seconds because we only have two openings."

Engagement in the Classroom

- Generally, employer classroom talks should be approximately 20 minutes in length, but the course instructor and speaker may agree to a shorter or longer presentation/discussion time.
- Speakers are welcome to provide a brief introduction to their company/organization (~5 minutes), but the focus of the talk should be a technical or career development topic.
- To meet equal employment opportunity laws, any specific job opportunity discussed must be posted on our electronic job board (Handshake @illinois). This ensures that all qualified candidates at Illinois have an opportunity to learn of the job opening and apply.