



*ProFair was a great experience for me. I was able to expand my professional network with people in my respective field. It was great to get to know more about companies that I am interested in working in after graduation, and it was a good opportunity to get my name out there. I was lucky enough to have the opportunity to interview for many internships with my contacts from ProFair and I look forward to seeing where those leads take me.*  
—Matt Thole, St. Ambrose University  
*Business Sales, Finance and Marketing major*

## ProFair Basics

**Start attending ProFair in your first year to make contacts that can help you find a future internship!**

### Set appropriate expectations:

ProFair may be your initial contact with an employer. Take this opportunity to learn about all the companies.

**NOTE: Representatives may not know specific details about every opening or department at their company.**

### Why Employers Attend ProFair:

- Increase their company's visibility
- Inform students about their employment opportunities
- Increase their applicant pool

### Why Students Attend ProFair:

- Find out about internships and job openings
- Network with recruiters
- Obtain more information about companies and career paths

REMEMBER: Though you will probably not receive an offer at ProFair, this is a good starting point for networking and building relationships with recruiters. These relationships will benefit you during the application and interview process.

## Preparing for ProFair

### Polish your resume and appearance:

- Visit the Career Center to learn how to prepare your resume and have it critiqued
- Purchase a padfolio to keep your resume copies neat and easy to access (available at the Career Center for \$10)
- Check out the Davis Closet for free professional clothing - if you don't have a suit, discuss clothing alternatives with a career advisor

### Prioritize and do your research:

- Review the list of employers attending the fair
- Research the companies online to learn some basics about the companies that interest you
- Prepare a list of questions you'd like to ask each employer

### Practice your 30-second elevator speech:

Ease your nerves by practicing what you want to say:

- Start by introducing yourself
- Explain why you are interested in their organization
- Relate your academic background to their open positions
- Highlight relevant internships, majors, jobs, volunteer and/or leadership experiences



## Day of ProFair - Tips for Success

### Dress professionally:

- Appearance counts, make a positive first impression
- Suits are suggested for all attendees
- Be conservative in clothing and hair style, go light on jewelry, makeup or cologne
- Carry copies of your resume in a padfolio
- Wear nice but comfortable shoes

### Arrive early:

- Check in and obtain a list of employers and a ProFair map at the registration table
- Fill out a nametag, and wear nametag on your **right side**
- Make a plan of which employer tables you would like to visit and locate them on the map
- Take care of last-minute touch-ups on your appearance

### Talk to all of the employers:

- View the list of job openings on each table—this will be the most up-to-date information on open positions
- If an employer doesn't have an open position in your field of interest, ask for the name of the individual who works in that department - then call or send a resume to this new contact



*I have been going to ProFair since freshman year and it has been a beneficial experience every time. ProFair has given me the opportunity to network and make valuable connections with employers. Also this event gives students a way to practice speaking with people and marketing themselves which is a great skill to have. I don't know where I would be if I had not made all of the connections I have from each of these events. I would absolutely recommend every student, regardless of their major, to go and speak with employers.*

—James Manuel, Augustana College  
Accounting and Finance Major

## Day of ProFair - More Tips for Success

- Look for employers with bee stickers - these employers are SAU alumni so you already have a connection with them
- If lines are long, visit other tables until lines are shorter - most conversations with recruiters will only last 3-5 minutes

### Be confident:

- Listen while standing in line: you can learn about the organization and types of opening by hearing what is said to the person ahead of you
- As you approach the recruiter, establish eye contact, smile and present a firm handshake
- Introduce yourself using your 30-second elevator speech
- Conduct yourself professionally at all times
- Tell the recruiter why you are interested in their organization
- Employers may be interested more in your skills and interests than your major – sell your experience and passions
- Show your enthusiasm and portray a positive attitude

### Take the initiative:

- Ask recruiters for a business card so you can follow up
- If they don't have one, write down the correct spelling of their name, title, address and phone number
- Ask the recruiter how you should follow up to learn more about existing opportunities
- Thank the recruiter for their time
- Take any available literature and take notes



## Day of ProFair - What should I say?

### Common questions that employers ask:

- Tell me about yourself, your career interests and your work experience.
- Why did you decide to attend St. Ambrose?
- Why did you select your major?
- What interests you about this position and our organization?
- Why do you think you will be successful in this field?
- What are your short-term and long-term career goals?
- What three things are most important to you in a job?
- Where would you like to live after graduation?

### Questions to ask employers:

- Please describe the position(s) you have available.
- What is your timeline for filling this position?
- What steps should I take next to apply?
- Would you like a copy of my resume?
- What qualifications are important for this position?
- Does your organization offer a training program? What does it include?
- What is a typical career path after starting in this position?
- Is relocation/travel required for this position?
- How can I best reach you to follow up on this position?



*ProFair provided an environment that made it easy to connect with multiple employers. I got to practice professional communication skills while learning about businesses and the opportunities they offer. It allowed me to become more confident in marketing myself. After ProFair I got multiple interviews and created relationships with professionals in the accounting field. I highly recommend all students to attend ProFair!*

**–Madison Epperson, St. Ambrose University  
Accounting Major**

## Day of ProFair - What should I do?

### Do these things:

- If you're nervous, warm up by chatting with a recruiter from a company you are less interested in
- Present yourself with professionalism, enthusiasm and confidence at all times
- Explore every organization that sparks your interest and branch out to explore ones that don't – you never know which company could be a great fit!
- Take breaks when you need them
- Make notes about each visit and re-group before approaching the next recruiter; take available handouts
- Focus on what you can do for the employer, not what the organization can do for you
- Spend as much time as you can at ProFair to make the most of networking at this event

### Don't do these things:

- Smoke before ProFair - you should look and smell good
- Give a weak handshake – this gives a bad initial impression
- Introduce yourself by handing your resume to the employer. Do ask the employer if they'd like a copy before ending the conversation
- Chew gum
- Approach an employer and expect him or her to take control of the conversation
- Congregate with your friends where the employer can watch you



*ProFair serves as a great way to connect students with future employers and enticing career paths. Each year that I've attended this event my confidence has drastically increased. I'm now completely comfortable speaking to new people and know how to market myself, my experiences and my accomplishments!*

—Claire Herdegen, Augustana College  
Majors: Accounting, International Business and Spanish for Professional Use

## After ProFair - Continue the conversation

### Write a follow-up email

- Within three days, write a follow-up email to employers
- Your follow-up email should include the following:
  - A thank you for their time and for the information they provided
  - Restatement of your qualifications
  - Request for an interview
- This step is courteous and professional, and it sets you apart.
- Since a majority of students won't take the time, you absolutely should do it if you're serious about the job or internship opportunity

### Be persistent in following up with employers

- Your resume serves as a reminder and reinforces the impression you made with the recruiter, but you should not rely on the recruiter to contact you after the fair
- Identify positions you would like to learn more about, and call the employer within two weeks after ProFair

## After ProFair - Sample follow-up email

Date (September 22, 2018)

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name:

I enjoyed speaking with you at the Augustana/St. Ambrose ProFair about the (position title) position with (organization name). I am very interested in this position and believe my (experience, scholastic record, or whatever your strength) and my interest in working with (people or other interest area) can be an asset to your organization.

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss my qualifications with you in an interview. Please feel free to call me at 309-794-1234 or email me at lastfirst@sau.edu if I can provide you with any additional information. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to meeting with you again.

Sincerely,

Your Name (include your first and last name)