

Job Fair Tips

It's the time of the year for the biggest job fair for the San Antonio military community. Workforce Solutions Alamo, the local for the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), is holding the Red, White and You (RWY) Hiring Fair on Thursday, November 6 at the Freeman Expo Hall (3201 Houston St). For those outside of the San Antonio area, there will be coordinating fairs throughout Texas during the same period. Check out www.twc.texas.gov for the dates and locations near you. PLEASE NOTE THAT EACH OF THESE IS OPEN TO THOSE TRANSITIONING, VETERANS, RETIREES AND SPOUSES.

So now that you have a job fair to attend, you need to prepare. It can be intimidating as you'll see a large expo hall with lots of booths. Each booth will have an employer seeking to fill openings. It's up to you to navigate through the maze. You must be prepared to get the full value of the event. Here are some tips for this or any fair.

1. **Register Now!** Don't hesitate to register for these fairs. The RWY's registration is through the TWC website. Other fairs will provide you with the appropriate registration links. It eases the entry when hundreds are expected.
2. **Research the Companies.** You need to review the list of participating employers prior to the event. The job fair website will update the list of employers, and hopefully along with the open positions, as the event date gets closer. Identify those that interest you. Research the company and the positions. Prep questions to ask the recruiter when you are at the fair booth.
3. **Apply for interesting positions prior to the event.** This will be a great opening comment when talking to the recruiters.
4. **Leverage Your LinkedIn Profile.** As an HR, once I had identified a candidate of interest for a job opening, my next step was to google and search the LinkedIn profile. I consider this the resume on steroids. Lots of information to gain better insight into the applicant.
5. **Update Your Resume.** I have chatted multiple times about the value of targeted resumes. I continue to recommend a master resume that can be tailored to each specific job description. While you might not be able to zero in on a specific job description for a job fair, you can create one that covers the overall focus of your job search. Remember that a solid resume includes impact statements and key skills that describe your accomplishments.
6. **Have a Professional Biography Ready.** A biography provides you with the to "create a softer introduction" to a potential employer. This supplements the direct skills/accomplishments picture presented in a resume. It is extremely helpful if you are interested in the company but are unsure or open to any specific job.
7. **Select the Proper Attire.** There are videos, etc. posted on the MOAA website as well as other sources that help you understand how to best visually present yourself. A word to

the wise – presentation is everything. Also, remember that you will be on your feet constantly. Wear comfortable shoes. The fairs usually have opportunities for free “professional” photos. Your chance to get an update for your LinkedIn profile.

8. **Prep Your Elevator Pitch.** Make the most of the opportunity to introduce yourself with clarity in the first 30 seconds.
9. **Remember to Smile.** This is part of your attire. Your facial expressions, especially your smile, show your personality and your interest. Don’t blow it with a grumpy face.

It’s up to you to take advantage of every opportunity. Best of luck.

Kitty

Kathryn “Kitty” Meyers, LtCol USAF (Retired)
Retired HR Professional, past SPHR, SHRM-SCP
Transition Liaison Officer