

PT WORK ForceSM
D.I.Y. Guide:
Career Fair Participation



Helping your PT/MC company by providing the next generation of resources to support workforce recruitment and retention plans.



You may ask yourself, “Why participate in career fairs? What will my company gain from it, and what will I gain?”

With every career fair you attend you’ll be demonstrating your pride in your chosen profession, you’ll raise your company’s profile in your community and among job seekers and build your talent pipeline.

What Will I Do at a Career Fair?

Attending a career fair gives you the chance to talk face-to-face with future employees of power transmission/motion control (PT/MC) distributors. You will be talking to young people and answering their questions about the field of industrial distribution, your company and any openings your company may have. You can almost certainly expect variations of questions like:

- What does your work day look like?
- How much money do you make?
- What kind of cars do your employees drive?
- How did you get into the field?
- What does your company make/do?

Depending on how many students are attending and how many companies are exhibiting, you may find there are times when you have lots of students at your booth and other times when there is no one around. Make sure you are open and professional. Don’t ignore the students by talking on your cell or answering email on your laptop. You are providing a host of first impressions of both your company and the field of PT/MC.

➤ Attending a career fair provides an opportunity to develop relationships with students and teachers to build your own talent pipeline.

How Can I Convince My Manager that my Company Should Participate in a Career Fair?

Participating in a career fair provides your company with a way to meet prospective employees. This is your company’s chance to start developing a talent pool of young people you can contact when there is an opening at your company. In some cases, attendees will have

their resume with them and you can gather these and refer to them when you have a need. Developing a pool of potential candidates is a great way to speed up the hiring process when you do have an opening.

Attending a career fair will also help get your company’s name in front of your community. You’ll be surprised how many people will tell you something along the lines of, “Oh, so that’s what they do over in that building I pass on my way to school every day.”

Do I Need to Prepare Differently for a Career Fair, Career Day or a Job Fair?

Career Fairs tend to be events that involve a large number of organizations (employers, schools, colleges, unions, associations). Exhibitors are assembled in rows where attendees walk around and visit with the participating organizations in an effort to learn more about the organization. For these, have your “elevator pitch” down pat and be ready to keep it fresh every time you repeat it.

Career Days are usually events sponsored by the school where teachers or administrators invite people to speak to a group of students about their profession. At a Career Day, you can give a more detailed presentation.

Job Fairs present employers with an opportunity to talk with potential employees. The potential candidates usually bring their resumes, and recruiters are there to talk about open positions. Job fairs can sometimes be combined with career fairs. Some job fairs will only allow companies with current job openings to attend. This audience will likely be the most engaged, so be prepared for more in-depth questions. It’s a good idea to have a job description and applications along too.

Are There Fees to Participate?

There is usually no cost to participate in a career fair. If you are attending a combination job fair and career fair, there could be a charge. Job fairs usually do charge a

fee to participate. We have seen fees range from \$50 up to \$250 if you want to advertise or cosponsor the event. There are also for-profit groups that sponsor job fairs. Fees to attend these can be as high as \$2,000.

How Do I Find a Career Fair to Attend?

If you have children or grandchildren who are in high school or community/vocational college, then you already have a source for information on career fairs. Just have your kids ask their teachers when the next one is being held and who is in charge. This also applies to coworker's or neighbor's kids; have them ask and provide you the contact information. Then give the person in charge a call to find out what you need to do to participate.

If you don't have someone "on the inside," you can still get information. Check out the websites of high schools and community/technical colleges in your area. There is not one location for information on career fairs. We've found this info on school websites under Administration, Student Services, Events, Calendar of Events, Career Services, Counseling, etc. For high schools, contact the principal or assistant principal. For community colleges, the dean of student services is a good place to start.

PT WORK Force will work with you to find an event in your area. If you want to participate, contact us by email or phone at foundation@ptda.org or +1.312.516.2100.

What do I Need to Bring?

- **Information on your company** and giveaways. Students love these and it will put your company name in the hands of potential job candidates
- **Examples of the products you stock.** They are great conversation starters and these, along with your explanations, will help students better understand the field of industrial distribution.
- **Business cards** to hand out to interested students.

What About after the Career Fair is Over?

Make sure you thank the people you have been dealing with. If you had a positive experience, inquire about their next career fair. If you are interested in making a presentation to a class about PT/MC, let your contact

know. PT WORK Force can work with you to develop a personalized presentation customized for the group. Ask for the name of the person you need to be in touch with to make this happen. Download PT WORK Force *D.I.Y. Guide: Giving a Classroom Presentation.*

Or, you might want to bring a group of students to your company and show them around. PT WORK Force can work with you on this, too. Download PT WORK Force *D.I.Y. Guide: Giving a Company Tour.*

If you have contact information or a resume from students, make sure you follow up with them. Drop them a note, and tell them you enjoyed meeting them and will give their information to your human resource department. Tell them more about your company. The student will be very impressed with you and your company; this will get you some great word-of-mouth advertising.

Do a brief evaluation of the event. Write down what worked well or something you would do differently at the next event. Send a copy to PT WORK Force at foundation@ptda.org so we can share your story with others.

Tips from Those Who Have Attended Career Fairs

- Bring candy—this will get people to stop and give you an opportunity to start a conversation.
- Tweet that you will be participating—this may get more traffic to your table.
- Bring business cards—you can provide them to students you feel are good candidates for future employment.
- Bring giveaways—everyone loves these. It will get people to stop and talk.

If you have any questions about finding or participating in a career fair, making a presentation to students or other groups, holding an open house, or spreading the word about PT/MC careers, contact PT WORK Force at foundation@ptda.org or call 1+312.516.2100.

➤ To find information on the PT/MC Industry for students visit www.industrialscareerspathway.org

Where Can I Learn More?

PT WORK Force also has the following D.I.Y. Guides:

- *Establish Your Company's Internship Program*
- *Giving a Company Tour*
- *Giving a Classroom Presentation*

and will be writing others to help you build your talent pipeline.

PT WORK Force is designed to support you in finding, hiring and retaining good qualified employees. Our three committees are working to develop even more resources for you to use in your recruitment and retention efforts.

Check out our current Recruitment and Retention Resources at www.ptworkforce.org

If you have an idea you think would help you and others in the PT/MC sector with your workforce issues, let us know by emailing foundation@ptda.org. And, if we send you a questionnaire or survey or call you on the phone, take the time to respond. We can only build programs for you with your input.

PTDA Foundation Program Committees

PT WORK Force Education, Research & Knowledge

PT/MC employers will be better educated and more knowledgeable about hiring trends and practices because of the research and communications developed, curated or distributed by the PTDA Foundation.

PT WORK Force Outreach

PT/MC employers will be empowered and supported in building a pipeline of candidates for future openings.

PT WORK Force Recruitment and Retention Tools

PT/MC employers will be empowered and supported in recruiting for current open positions and retaining new hires.



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