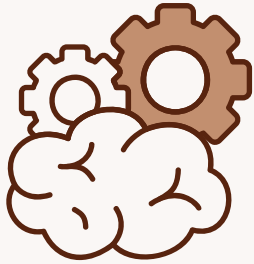


Building Rapport in a Virtual Career Fair Session



Reframe your mindset about the virtual format.

Focus on the advantages and specific features of a virtual career fair instead of comparing it to an in-person event. In a virtual setting, you can enjoy more privacy, review your notes before speaking with an employer, and remain in a familiar environment. You also don't have to wait in line, as you know the exact time of your scheduled conversation.

The first step in building rapport is to understand and embrace the virtual format, rather than expecting it to mimic an in-person experience. Minimize preconceived notions and acknowledge any biases you may have.



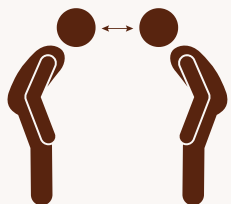
Smile and look at the camera.

Smiling creates instant rapport and puts people at ease. Make an effort to smile occasionally during the conversation. Look at the camera to show that you are engaged. Consider placing a sticky note near your camera as a reminder.



Pay attention to non-verbal communication.

Learn to read gestures and cues to connect with the employer. Try to determine whether the employer prefers visual, auditory, or kinesthetic language. Visual communicators use phrases like "I see" or "Picture this." Auditory communicators say things like "I hear you" or "How does that sound?" Kinesthetic communicators may say "I feel that." Once you identify their preference, adjust your communication style accordingly.



Mirror the employer's gestures and words.

Mirroring is a powerful technique to build rapport when used appropriately. If the employer smiles, smile back. If they use hand gestures, do the same naturally. You can also mirror their words by repeating key phrases or the last few words they say. The key is to be subtle and not overdo it.



Ask questions and show interest.

Questions enhance communication by helping you get clarification, express curiosity, and foster dialogue. Avoid questions that can be answered with a simple "Yes" or "No." Instead, ask open-ended questions that begin with What, Why, or How.