



# **Job Fair Toolkit for MCOA Members**

**2017**

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## Job Fair Tool Kit for MCOA Members 2017

### What is the Reason for Job Fairs? <sup>1</sup>

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*“A Job Fair is an event where a number of employers and job seekers come together for the purpose of applying and interviewing for jobs. Also, job seekers can gather company information, find out about various industries, and develop networks at Job Fairs. What can a job seeker realistically expect from a Job Fair? She/he can certainly obtain company and career information. They may even get an interview at the Job Fair. However, their main goal is to get ‘in-house’ interviews at companies shortly after the Job Fair (within 1-2 weeks). Be advised - it’s unlikely anyone will walk away from the Job Fair with a new job.”*

### 1. Project Management

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Ordinarily, Job Fairs are single day affairs held in highly populated areas once to several times a year. Job Fairs are typically held in large assembly halls with a booth for each employer. At the front of each booth is a table that displays company brochures and information. Usually, several company representatives staff each booth, standing behind tables as they talk to job seekers. Some companies decorate their booths with banners and signs. Job Fairs range in size from 10 – 100 employers with many hundreds of job seekers. Even small Job Fairs can be busy events with lines of job seekers waiting to see company representatives.

- a. Designate one person to be the Project Manager for the Job Fair. Pick someone who has experience organizing and managing events. Estimate it will take about 15 hours to connect with the Career Center, develop and implement advertising for the event, purchasing supplies for the day, set up and break down, etc.
- b. Contact the Business Services Representative of your regional Career Center for this project. They coordinate numerous job fairs every year and have direct links with employers. In addition, they provide informational sessions and work directly with businesses in the region to match job seekers with employment. Further, Career Centers offer numerous training opportunities, assistance with work applications and support in

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<sup>1</sup> JOB FAIR TOOLKIT: A Practical Guide and Best Practices for Organizing, Conducting, and Attending Job Fairs, USAID (2007)

learning how to interview and more. Many career centers have developed special workshops that focus on older adults. All are committed to providing a quality and supportive environment for seniors to explore employment.

c. Job Fair marketing is a serious business! Marketing and promotion are necessary for strong attendance. Good marketing tells employers and job seekers why they need to attend the Job Fair and what's in it for them. Employers and job seekers need to be convinced that your Job Fair is worth attending. Job Fair goals and objectives play an important role in marketing - if they're clear the promotional campaign will be clear-cut

Here are some common marketing methods:

- advertisements
- signs
- brochures
- flyers
- e-mail blast
- fax distribution list
- mailing list
- networking
- partnerships with other organizations
- past participation
- press / media release

## **2. Typical Roles for Hosting a Job Fair in Collaboration with a One Stop Career Center**

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The COA and Career Center staffs work together as a team to convene a successful Job Fair.

### **a. Tasks for COA Staff:**

- Provide space for the Job Fair, including tables, chairs, copier, and fax machine.
- Assist the One-Stop Career Center with promoting the Job Fair, via varied marketing materials, such as community flyers, posters, newsletter articles, cable shows, radios, town web site, Facebook, sidewalk signage, etc.
- Assist the One Stop if needed in recruiting local employers.
- Solicit local businesses to donate \$25 gift certificates for items useful to job seekers. Gift card suggestions include gas cards, food store cards, restaurant cards or cash cards for clothing; all will help greatly those in need of employment services.
- Help with set up the day of event.

- Host a table with many Raffle prizes (donated gift cards) to capture all job seeker names, addresses, phone numbers, and age for your COA data base record. *(See the MCOA Job Fair Toolkit for a sample gift card donations solicitation letter.)*
- Prepare a Job Fair Flyer to give to every attendee when they register. The brochure should contain the following: the Brochure / Fact Sheet set the image for the Job Fair. Plus, attendees like having something tangible from the Job Fair. Brochures need to have visual impact and strong content. Be sure your promotional materials include the following:
  - Job Fair title and theme
  - Date and time
  - Location address and directions
  - Description of Job Fair for Older Adults
  - **Participating Employers**
  - Workshop blurbs and schedule (if applicable)
  - Contact information (telephone numbers of Job Fair Team to answer questions)
  - Who should attend
  - Benefits of attending
  - Objectives (from the job seekers' perspective)
  - Testimonials from previous attendees (both employers and job seekers)
  - **Sponsors**
- Gather information from One Stop after the Job Fair, e.g. age stats, list of employers that hosted a table, number of job seekers that received an interview during or after the fair, and how many job seekers were hired as a result of the Job Fair.
- Send thank you notes, thanking the One-Stop Career for their partnership in arranging the Job Fair.

**b. Tasks for the Massachusetts One Stop Career Center Staff:**

- Work hand in hand with the COA staff planning with The Job Fair
- Recruit both employers and job seekers for the event.
- Market/ create flyer for distribution with both the One Stop and COAs logo.
- Help with set up the day of event
- Host the sign-in table for all job seekers attending. The registration is used for tracking key metrics and consumer outcomes, such as how many attendees came and of those, how many landed 'in house' interviews with employers after the job fair.
- Share data with the COA, including: number of Job Seekers, list of Employers and Agencies, age bracket stats, the number of job seekers who received interviews and/or a job as a result of the Job Fair.

### **3. How to Set Up a Resume Writing Workshop and Offer a “Job Fair 101” Training**

It's a great service to hold a resume review and “Job Fair 101” for interested persons a week or two before the event, so job seekers may get some help sprucing up their resume and learn “how to work a job fair”. Here is how it might be organized:

1. Set a date, time & location prior to Job Fair
2. Ask job seekers to wear their interview attire to the session
3. Contact 5-6 Human Resource Professionals for assistance with creating resumes
  - a. Seek assistance from your One-Stop Career Center, look into larger businesses, temp agencies, school systems, banks, and/or your own municipality
4. Heavily advertise with One-Stop Career Centers/ senior newsletters/public access television/all other media sites
5. Request an RSVP
6. Provide technology support, via use of computers and printing. Have “resume” paper available.
7. Depending on RSVPs try to have one HR rep per registered adult, additional support may have to be recruited
8. Allow 2 – 2.5 hours per resume
9. Provide break with light snack
10. Set up speed interviews (5 min interviews, changing each time. This allows for each job seeker to practice interviewing with each HR rep)
11. Have an open discussion about interview appropriate attire.
12. Have an HR rep or the Career Center rep provide tips on how to work the job fair – introducing oneself, having a 30-second elevator pitch introduction, and researching the companies who will be on site to know which ones to target, and preparing questions to show interested and to learn more about the jobs you might be interested in.
13. Have an HR rep have one-on-one discussions with each person to share tips on how the job seeker may improve their attire/or keep with the outfit they have planned for, again in a private conversation. Don't be afraid to recommend a shave and haircut. Be sensitive and be aware of individuality.
14. Have fun with your community members!

#### **4. Recruiting Employers**

If you decide to also recruit employers and businesses directly to participate in an older workers job fair (it will take a lot more work but it could render great long term relationships with local businesses) consider using this sample letter, below, as well as sending a letter of confirmation.

##### **a. Sample Employer Recruitment Letter<sup>2</sup>**

*Dear Community Partner:*

*The \_\_\_\_\_ Council on Aging would like to invite you and your organization/business to participate, as a community service, in our 50+ Job Fair on DATE2014 from TIME in our Senior Center /or other LOCATION with ADDRESS.*

*We are excited to offer you this unique opportunity to collaborate with us in an effort to assist mature older adults seeking employment. Whether you are looking to fill seasonal, part time or full time positions, our job fair can help connect you with individuals of relevant talent and work experience.*

*Our goal is to provide a job fair that is specifically designed to help older adults find employment opportunities. In return your participation will showcase your company's willingness to assist older adults in our community, through press releases, featured stories and social media. There is no cost to participate in our job fair. However, we are encouraging vendors contribute a \$25 value or more gift card, which will be raffled to job fair participants. Gift card suggestions include gas cards, food store cards, restaurant cards or cash cards for clothing; all will help greatly those in need of employment services.*

*On behalf of our Center, I thank you for considering our request. Once your participation is confirmed we will send you more information about our event. In the meanwhile, if you have any questions or need further clarification, please to not hesitate to contact NAME, at TELEPHONE or NAME at TELEPHONE. We look forward to partnering with you in an effort to serve older adults in our community.*

*Sincerely,*

*Your Name*

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<sup>2</sup> Created and shared by the West Springfield Council on Aging managers.

## **b. Sample Guidelines for Company Participation in Job Fairs**

As a condition of participating in the Job Fairs, companies should agree to:

- send 1-2 recruiters or hiring supervisors to staff Job Fair booths
- actively recruit for existing or future vacancies at the Job Fair
- interview Job Fair attendees for job openings
- take job applications at the Job Fair
- reasonably decorate booths and provide company materials
- complete and submit the following Job Fair forms and reports:
  - Job Fair Registration Form (including company particulars and vacancy information for inclusion in the Job Fair packet)
  - Job Fair Activity Report (information and statistics regarding job seeker contacts, applications received, interviews, and job offers made at the Job Fair)
  - Job Fair Evaluation Form
  - follow-up reports (subsequent hiring from Job Fair, etc.)

## **5. Typical Budget for Developing and Hosting a Job Fair**

MCOA funded several COAs to organize job fairs during 2015. From their efforts, we have learned that local job fairs will cost about \$500 to prepare for and host. Here is a sample budget:

### **a. Budget for Job Fair**

Program Organizer 15 hours x \$15.00 / hr.	\$ 225.00
Newspaper ads	\$ 100.00
Signs / banner	\$ 75.00
Raffle door prize	\$ 25.00
Supplies: resume paper, drinks for employers etc.	\$ 25.00
Flyer printing	<u>\$ 50.00</u>
Total.....	<u>\$ 500.00</u>

### **b. Sponsorships**

Having sponsors is one way to augment your Job Fair budget, if necessary. Sponsorships are a win-win opportunity – sponsors get exposure to targeted audiences, and the COA gets additional resources to produce high-quality Job Fairs.

Sponsors should understand the Job Fair's goals and should be approached from the standpoint of creating a long-term partnership. Don't approach them just because they have something you want. Understand what they need from the relationship and then

build a sponsorship package. Personally contact sponsors and explain the tangible benefits of sponsorship.

Sponsorship exposure may include:

- recognition with Job Fair participants
- pre Job Fair mailings
- logo on items
- promotional materials
- ads, announcements
- Job Fair registration kit
- signs
- media coverage

## **6. A Sample Full Outline of Job Fair Planning Considerations, from A to Z**

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### **a. Objectives**

What are *Your* objectives for hosting a job fair?

- A. Highlight something specific?
  - a. 50+ demographic group?
  - b. To facilitate the hiring/employment needs of local job seekers?
  - c. To highlight a specific venue (senior center)?
- B. To stimulate your local economy?
- C. To improve relations with local employers?
- D. To promote your region?

### **b. Conduct an Analysis of Your Area**

- A. Who are your local employers?
  - a. Marketing
  - b. Manufacturing
  - c. Retail
  - d. Healthcare
  - e. Automotive
  - f. Finance
  - g. Entertainment
  - h. Food Industry
  - i. Other?
- B. Will a job fair produce beneficial exposure for your Center, local employers and prospective attendees?



- C. Limit industries in order to have a blend of companies/businesses.
- D. What are financial resources available to you to put into a job fair?

### **c. Plan & Review Logistics**

- A. How much time and personnel will you need on the day of the fair – (to welcome and register attendees, set up/breakdown, serve as traffic guides, etc.) to put existing or potential resources into coordinating a fair?
- B. How will you market your fair?
  - a. Website, Press Articles or Ads, Flyers, Social media, Local media
- C. Develop a reasonable and detailed timeline for your event.
  - a. How many employers can your host site accommodate?
  - b. How many tables will you require for your job fair?
  - c. Do you have sufficient parking?
  - d. Will you need/require assistance from local police for traffic control?
- D. Will you use raffle cards to draw attendees?
  - a. Raffle prize or Gift Card
  - b. Other
- E. Does your community require permits or insurance?
- F. Consider accessibility.
  - a. Are doorways/entrances wide enough for wheelchairs, walkers, etc.?
  - b. Do you need interpreters?
  - c. What is your emergency plan for fire, medical emergencies or severe weather?
- G. Who will be in charge of marketing the event?
- H. How many staff will you need to coordinate your event?
  - a. Will volunteers assist?

### **D. During the Fair**

- A. Welcome employers
  - a. Will employers have 'perks?' (Coffee, snacks, private meeting room for interviews, etc.)
- B. Make sure staff/volunteers are at all entrances to greet participants
- C. Be available to explain/coach
  - a. There are many who do not know how to work a job fair
  - b. Offer suggestions
  - c. Introduce people to employers if necessary
  - d. If needed escort attendee if they need assistance
  - e. Offer access to copy machine, if someone needs to make a few more copies of their resume.
- D. Keep an eye on parking and registration lines!

- a. Assist with parking if needed
- b. Assist with registration if needed
- E. Be prepared to make copies for both employers and attendees
- F. Have one person designated to problem solve
- G. Make sure you have a work area setup for attendees to fill out job applications

**e. Evaluate the Fair**

- A. After the fair, ask your staff and volunteers to help you evaluate the event:
  - a. How many employers actually came to the fair?
  - b. How many participants came to the fair?
  - c. Were there any 'issues' during the fair that you were unprepared for?
  - d. What was the 'tone' of the day?
  - e. Did you hear anyone complain about the event?
  - f. Did anyone compliment the event?
  - g. Did employers express gratitude/disappointment?
  - h. Did you have enough staff/volunteers?
  - i. Did you have sufficient parking?
  - j. Other concerns?
  - k. Consider hosting another job fair?
  
- B. Keep a file of job fair documents
  - a. Flyers, Templates, Posters, Press Releases, Ads, Notes, Reports and Work plan
  
- C. Express your thanks
  - a. Call or send employers a thank you for their participation
  - b. Recognize the staff/volunteers who assisted with the job fair

*Example of Employer Registration Letter and Form*

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**EMPLOYER REGISTRATION FOR JOB FAIR (page 1 of 2)**

Our company would like to participate in the spring 2007 Job Fair to be held on Friday 1 April 2007, from 10:00 – 15:00, at the City Community Center

Yes

No

Our company would like to:

Recruit for current available vacancies (*please complete the 'Job Vacancies Form provided'*)

Recruit for future vacancies

Disseminate information about the company (please note that priority will be given to companies recruiting for vacancies at the Job Fair)

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_

General Manager (name / title): \_\_\_\_\_

HR Director (name / title): \_\_\_\_\_

Job Fair Contact Person (name / title / telephone / email) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Company Profile (100 words maximum): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## EMPLOYER REGISTRATION FOR JOB FAIR ( page 2 of 2)

Industry Classification (please mark the category that your company should be listed):

- Management Consultancy
- Agents/Retail/Distribution
- Banking/Finance/Insurance
- Business Services
- Computer/IT
- Construction/Engineering Services
- Consumer Goods
- Development Agencies
- Education
- Manufacturing
- Media/Communications
- Transport
- Travel/Tourism
- Other

List of Company Representatives (Please list the names and titles of company representatives attending the Fair. **A maximum of 3 representatives are allowed per company.** Names will be included in the Job Fair packet.

Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_ -

Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_ -

Agreements:

- Companies participating in the Job Fair will actively recruit for existing or future vacancies at the Fair
- Companies will make reasonable efforts to interview Job Fair attendees for job openings
- Companies will take applications and/or CVs at the Fair
- Any company acting as a third-party recruiter will not be allowed to participate in the Fair
- Companies who receive resumes for their own use during the Fair are prohibited from forwarding these resumes to any other company.
- Companies will make reasonable efforts to decorate their booths and provide company materials at their booth
- Companies will complete and submit the following Job Fair forms and reports:
  - Job Fair Activity Report (information and statistics regarding job seeker contacts, applications received, interviews, and job offers made at the Job Fair)
  - Job Fair Evaluation Form
  - follow-up reports (subsequent hiring from Job Fair, etc.)

"I have read the above agreements and ensure that the company will adhere to these conditions."

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_