

Drive Through Job Fair Tips

Create Your Team

- Collaborate with partner agencies and/or agencies in your community to host a drive-through job fair. This was truly the key to our success!
- Plan to check in regularly by email and meet weekly until the event.
- Planning tasks include: securing a site, creating employer and client flyers, contacting employers, ordering/purchasing supplies and promotional items, advertising, scheduling staff, stuffing bags, making copies.
- Event tasks include: driving supplies to site, set-up, getting contact info from job seekers and delivering bags, directing traffic, sign-holding/waving at cars, keeping an inventory of supplies, making/delivering extra copies as needed, and clean-up.

Secure and Visit Your Site

Reserve site ASAP. We used a city park with a large parking lot, located on a well-traveled street. Our CareerForce location does not have a parking lot or an area on the street where we could have safely held this event.

- 3-4 weeks before the event, walk through and drive through your site to determine signage needs, set-up, and flow of traffic and walk-ups. If possible, print out a satellite view of your location to draw on or draw a simple map of the site. We set up an area for walk-ups and another for those driving in (make sure staff are stationed on the driver's side).
- Imagine at least six vehicles lined up at a time. We had 3-5 staff with clipboards getting contact info and delivering bags to cars as they pulled in, but we often had a line of cars waiting. Make sure there's room for those extra vehicles and that you're not causing traffic problems should cars back up.
- Find out if there's a bus stop nearby.
- We decided we needed orange cones and high visibility safety vests and worked with the city to provide some.
- Decide how many tables, chairs, tents, etc. that you'll need to gather.
- Keep social distancing in mind.
- Plan for staff parking spots and a bathroom to use. Think about alternate plans regarding bad weather.

Reaching out to Employers

- Our criteria was to work with employers that were hiring, and those we could reach quickly.
- We started with Minnesotaworks.net first to see who had local postings.
- Rhonda contacted about 80 employers and had 50 participated.
- Set a deadline for employers to drop off flyers.
- Employers were asked to drop off 100 flyers and promotional items if they'd like.
- A master list of employers was created and included in the bags and used online.

Scheduling Staff (Stuffing bags and day of job fair)

- Staff set up tables and flyers/promo items to stuff bags. A group of six staff needed two hours to fill 100 bags. Line up flyers, then promo items to put on top of papers. Use “pink stuff” on hands to pick up papers easily.
- Leave a master copy of all flyers in the office with staff who can print and deliver extras as needed.
- 6-8 staff were needed at the job fair at all times. Staff signed up for shifts. 1-2 staff are need for a walk-up station and 4-6 are needed for drive-ups.

Order/Make Signs

- **Pre-order job fair signs from a local printer 3-4 weeks before the event.** I ordered six double-sided, color signs that said “Job Fair Today” and added the CareerForce logo. I did not have time/date printed on signs because we hope to use them again. The printer made some arrows printed on vinyl to use/reuse on signs. I also printed on paper and laminated the time the event would be held and taped to a couple signs used near the entrance. I also purchased one that said “Job Fair Entrance, All are welcome!” and one “Exit, Thank you for coming!”. I should have printed at least one to designate the station for folks who walked or biked there. We also had a sandwich board sign and had “Job Fair Today” printed for each side. These signs cost around \$14 a piece.
- **Make signs.** Home Depot sells blank white lawn signs for around \$5 a piece. I purchased five of those and two yellow arrow-shaped signs. On yellow paper, I printed and laminated three signs to tape to each sign. “Please remain inside your vehicle.” “If you’re walking through the job fair, please stay 6 feet apart.” “Please wear a face mask or covering. Free masks available.” I should have printed something to say something folks could read while waiting in line such as, “Please pull ahead for the next available job counselor.” I also set aside a blank sign and a giant Sharpee in case we needed to create a sign. (We didn’t know what to expect and I’m glad I had an extra!)
- **Plan for at least one sign to be used by staff to hold on to by the street the day of the event.** A friendly person waving and smiling really makes a huge difference. Use balloons too! Staff picked up a few helium balloons at a dollar store and it really helped draw attention to our event.
- **Banners might be a good choice too.**

Advertising

- Press releases to local media
- CareerForce emails
- Social media (staff posts and paid advertising). Have all agencies involved do this.
- Nextdoor App
- Reach out to clients personally
- Print flyers to hang in the neighborhood. A lot of places have discontinued the use of bulletin boards. I had good luck at Kwik Trip gas stations and grocery stores. (Bring tacks.)

At the Drive Through Job Fair:

- We had no idea what to expect, so it was hard to give everyone clear instructions ahead of time. Staff also were coming and going at different times. A written statement beforehand about the importance of connecting with job seekers, safety, etc. would be helpful.
- Ask staff to use clear handwriting on the clipboards. It was hard sending out follow up emails, and we want to be sure to reach everyone.
- Plan for staff breaks.

After the Drive Through Job Fair:

- Follow up with attendees. Send email including resources they can connect with (Careerforce and Minnesota Works, classes, programs, etc. Friendly reminder to follow on social media.)
- Thank you note to employers
- Post info online
- Turn in receipts

Tips/Things we wish we would have done:

- Remind staff to pack for weather changes, bring sunscreen/hat, and bring food/drink (due to COVID, we asked them to keep food/drink inside vehicles).
- Designate someone to direct traffic. We didn't expect so much traffic all at once and it would have been really helpful to have someone available to help with that
- We asked a few places for gift cards to use as door prizes, but did not receive any. This would have been a really nice addition, but wasn't necessary. (We were thinking of large chain stores for work clothes and gas stations for gas cards.) Next time I would submit requests sooner and spend more time following up with store managers.
- I would consider using a print shop to print extra flyers if needed. It took about an hour to print 15 packets for job seekers.
- Make it clear that job seekers won't be talking to employers. Call it "job fair in a bag". Gives folks a better idea of what to expect.
- Consider a site close to office or facility to make copies.
- Ask job seekers how they found out about the event and record on clipboard.
- Asking for a phone number may not have been needed. Just email, unless they don't have one.

Shopping/Packing List

Bags for job seekers (flyers, promo items, brochures, etc.)

Extra promotional items and paper packets in case you run out. *We started with 100 bags packed with flyers and promo items, and 40 extra packets of flyers clipped together with CareerForce promotional chip clips. To our surprise, we had 65 people show up in the first half an hour and had staff photocopying extra packets and delivering them during the entire event.

Disposable masks and tongs to distribute

Plastic face shields for staff

Disposable gloves

Hand sanitizer

Kleenex

Garbage/recycling cans

Clear tape and duct tape

Clipboards-we brought at least six and could have used several more

Client contact info sheets (print extras). We asked for name, phone, and email.

Pens and Sharpees

Tally Counter/clicker (they are \$7 on Amazon, but the contact info sheets created an accurate count though)

Scissors

Safety vests

Orange cones

Signs

Sidewalk chalk (for drawing on street or for marking 6ft lines)

Balloons

Tables

Chairs

Tents and stakes

Tablecloths and picnic table clips

Bottles of water for staff (due to Covid, we asked that water bottles be placed in staff vehicles and we did not provide food/snacks)

First aid kit

Basic tool box