

80/20

2006 Engineer's Week Career Fair Co-Chair Proposal

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The Iowa State University Engineer's Week Career Fair is the Largest Indoor Engineering Career Fair in the country. Nearly 5,000 students from Iowa State and beyond attend along with almost 850 recruiters¹. More than that however, it is said to be one of the most professional and well-run career fairs in the nation. It is also one of the largest advertising events for Iowa State. At no other time do as many companies from across the United States and the Globe get to see and interact with the high quality students that this university produces. The ultimate goal for the Career Fair should be to provide both the students and the recruiters with the best possible experience. The role of the Co-Chairs therefore is to provide the necessary guidance and leadership in order to maintain the Career Fair's stature while adding a little luster to its finish as well.

As Co-Chairs, we will provide an unparalleled level of enthusiasm, commitment and experience. We feel that this event is a very important part in the enrichment of Iowa State University. For that reason, delivering a successful Career Fair is very important to us. Our past experiences as members of the 2005 Career Fair Sub-Committee give us a unique insight into almost every area of the Career Fair's operation. We are familiar with the major aspects of this event and understand that it is the little things that can go a long way towards providing a comfortable atmosphere for the visiting recruiters and students. Through effective use of the Sub-Committee and by maintaining multiple lines of communication between the Central Committee, employers, students and Engineering Career Services, we plan to not only implement our own ideas, but to gather diverse perspectives so that we may accomplish more than we ever could imagine alone.

The following pages outline and briefly explain a number of our ideas and plans for the Career Fair. It is divided into four sections based upon the major responsibilities of the Career Fair Co-Chairs and Sub-Committee; Career Fair, Recruiter Barbeque, Publicity and Seminars.

Once again, as Co-Chairs we ultimately feel that we would provide both a platform for continuity and a step for improvement. We ask, "What if"? What if instead of spending 80% of the time figuring out what to do and the other 20% how to do it effectively, it was the other way around?

¹ "Looking for jobs in just the right place" <http://www.iastate.edu/~nscentral/news/2005/sep/fair.shtml>

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Career Fair

Set-up:

- Place more companies on the inner concourse
- Set-up 'interview suites' in the north end of Hilton
- Make sure Business Week has the correct layout for Hilton

The layout of Hilton Coliseum is very standardized from year to year. However, a few small improvements could still be made. Placing more companies on the inner concourse of Hilton allows more companies to be accommodated and allows for a more homogeneous mixture of companies in each building. However, it could be beneficial to not create closed loops at the corners and instead allow open access around the entire length of the inner concourse.

During the day, many companies like to conduct preliminary interviews with students. However, these generally have to take place in the seats, which does not provide a very conducive or professional atmosphere for discussion. Therefore, a nice service could be provided to the recruiters and students by setting up a couple of interview suites in the north end of Hilton beneath the stands.

Finally, as a number of large companies attend both the E-Week and B-Week Career Fairs, they are often put through the hassle of moving their booths at the end of the night of the Engineering Career Fair. Even with attempts last year to give B-Week the layout ahead of time a couple of companies were forced to move. Therefore, it is extremely important to do everything possible to be certain that the Engineering and Business Career Fairs have overlapping layouts.

Registration/Check-In:

- Ensure adequate staffing levels

Most aspects of the registration process have flowed smoothly for the recruiters as they have arrived at the Career Fair in previous years. However, two main areas could use improvement. Often when the recruiters arrive they are carrying a lot of items for their display. It is important then that there are ambassadors at the south entrance ramp greeting the recruiters as they arrive and helping to carry in whatever they may have. This is extremely important, as it is often the first contact that they have with Iowa State that year and thus, a pleasant smile and helpful hand could go a long way towards setting a positive tone for the day.

Scheman:

- Advertise the location
- Inform students of companies located on both floors
- Move nametag sign-up to the second floor main entrance
- Try to keep all companies on one floor

Locating companies in Scheman posed many problems for both the students and employers. Due the current students' unfamiliarity with the location, better advertisement needs to be done before and on the day of the Career Fair. Students need to also be informed that companies are located both on the second and third floor of the building. A possible solution to this problem would be to inform the advisers of the engineering departments about this change and request that they email their students directly. Another problem that needs addressing is the location of the nametag sign-up stickers. Last year they were located on the third floor while many of the students entered on the second floor. Those students who came directly to Scheman were not aware that they could pick up a nametag until they reached the third floor. By this time they had already talked with a number of companies on the second floor.

In addition to the nametag problem, a number of companies were placed in locations difficult for the students to find. Therefore, it is imperative that great attention is placed upon informing students of what is available to them throughout the building. Another solution, if possible, would be to locate all of the companies on the same floor of Scheman.

Informational Packets/Nametags:

- Improve recruiter nametag situation
- Introduce an easy to read 'cheat sheet' concisely presenting pertinent information
- Include improved information about the Majors at Iowa State

Although the best efforts can be made to have exactly the correct amount of nametags, with all of the correct information on them, inevitably there will be a number of nametags that need to be printed on the day of the career fair. Last year a considerable amount of time and effort was spent printing and reprinting nametags. In order to reduce this effort and to streamline the process, a couple blank nametags could be provided along with the preprinted ones. This should reduce the number of people asking for new nametags or reprinted ones. For those that do ask for nametags, a dedicated printing station staffed by a combination of Career Services and ambassadors/sub-committee members should be set up to help speed up the production of new nametags. Along with the nametags, each company receives an informational packet at their booth containing important information about the day. This packet, while very thorough, can be unappealing to read. Therefore, a 'cheat sheet' concisely presenting times, available services and locations could be included along with the packet providing the recruiters with simple answers to some of their basic questions. Finally, while a large number of the recruiters are Iowa

State Alumni, many are not and some are even visiting the campus for the first time. It would be helpful then for there to be information included in the detailed packet containing more in depth information about the majors and especially the classes offered at Iowa State.

Desired Majors List:

- Make signs for companies to display with desired majors

Usually a few companies will have extra majors listed on the informational map given out to students. This can cause students to speak with companies that unfortunately are not seeking their major. However, sometimes the reverse situation can happen where a company does not have a major listed that they are seeking. This can be very disappointing for the company and a missed opportunity for the students. A simple remedy for this would be to provide each company with a sign and the color-coded nametags given to the students. Each company would then be able to make a sign that quickly lets the students know exactly what majors they are looking for.

Ambassadors:

- Improve communication with the ambassadors and Ambassador Coordinator
- Ambassador check-in/check-out
- Better define ambassador needs
- Designate a sub-committee member as Career Fair Ambassador Liaison
- Have ambassadors in charge of 'sections'

Having the E-Week Ambassadors help with the Career Fair is vital to its success. Therefore it is of the utmost importance that a great line of communication is established between the Co-Chairs, Ambassador Coordinator and the ambassadors themselves. If the Co-Chairs do not define their needs well enough to the ambassadors and especially the Ambassador Coordinator, neither party can do their job effectively. Thus, it is important that the meetings take place with the Ambassador Coordinator in the weeks prior to the event to aid in their recruiting efforts. On the day of the career fair, it is critical that there is a way to keep track of which ambassadors are currently at the Career Fair, what they are doing and where they are. In order to solve this problem, two things could be implemented. First, having a central registration table where all of the ambassadors would be required to check in and out of would help to keep track of which ambassadors are currently volunteering. Second, at all times, a sub-committee member would be designated as the Ambassador Liaison. This person would be responsible for making sure that all areas where ambassadors are needed are staffed in conjunction with the Ambassador Coordinator, as required. Finally, in order to make sure that the recruiters are taken care of at all times, a couple of ambassadors could be assigned to different sections of the floor, concourse and Scheman with the responsibility of periodically checking on the recruiters and attending to whatever needs they may have.

Food:

- Improve lunch advertising

- Offer snack cart for the recruiters
- Have water on the upper concourse

Although the light and healthy lunch of salad and sandwiches that was offered to the recruiters was well received, many were unaware that it was even being offered. It is important that the recruiters don't have to question when or where lunch is being provided. To subdue this problem a better job of advertising the time and location of lunch needs to be done. This could be accomplished through a combination of announcements at the recruiter barbeque, the improved informational packet they will receive and day of advertising. Although many larger companies come to the Career Fair with a considerable number of recruiters, a lot of companies have only a couple of recruiters in attendance. For those companies, it can be hard to get away from the booth for an extended period of time for lunch, a snack in the recruiter lounge or a just a break. Therefore we propose offering a snack cart that would have healthy snacks, water and soda. This cart could be staffed by an ambassador or committee member and would provide an extra level of comfort and service for the recruiters. Along with the snack cart, for those recruiters who have been placed on the upper concourse of Hilton, water needs to be provided and kept in stock. This has been a complaint in previous years and is a problem that needs to be addressed.

Recruiter Gifts:

- Order gifts from a company in the area

The mugs that were given to all recruiters as gifts turned out to be a huge success. Ordering from A&R Marketing in Ames proved to be very beneficial in a number of ways. They already had a wide variety of Iowa State University logos to choose from, so the extra cost of importing a logo was avoided. This fee is often seen if using a company outside of the area. As the gifts tend to get quite expensive, it was very beneficial that they were also willing to work with the tight budget allocated for the gifts. Furthermore, the mugs arrived on time and they were willing to store them in their building until they were needed.

Tours:

- Set a time for the tour as early as possible in the planning process

Setting a time for the College of Engineering tour as soon as possible in the planning process should allow for increased awareness of the tour and greater attendance.

Lounge/Recruiter Business Center:

- Continue offering wireless Internet access

- Provide more seating
- Advertise better
- Offer 10 minute massages
- Offer additional refreshment options
- Place information about Iowa State in the lounge

The recruiter lounge provides a great place for the recruiters to relax and unwind during the long day speaking with students. Providing amenities such as wireless Internet access, snacks, and a nice place to sit, all help to set the E-Week Career Fair and Iowa State apart. However, last year more seating and additional refreshment options such as bottled water, coffee and soda could have been offered to make the experience even better. Along with the drinks and snacks, placing magazines published by the various departments could provide some interesting reading for the recruiters. Another amenity that would be appealing to the recruiters would be free 10-minute chair massages, which could be given by students from PCI Ames.

Social:

- Improve location
- Inform recruiters towards end of Career Fair

The social after the Career Fair last fall was quite a hit with the recruiters that stayed and took advantage of the open bar and appetizers. Being located on the main floor of Hilton, the social was very congested thus affecting the overall enjoyment. A better location could be arranged for the tables to allow for more space on the main floor. Announcements towards the end of the Career Fair would also be beneficial to remind the recruiters of the social because last year, many were not aware of the event.

Recruiter Barbeque

Recruiter Barbeque:

- Improve the arrangement of the registration table and club displays
- Inform recruiters of nearby parking options
- Continued success with Hickory Park, Iowa State's Jazz One and On-Campus location

Moving the Recruiter Barbeque to outside of Hoover Hall proved to be a very nice change of scenery. Unfortunately though, the area turned out to be quite congested during the rush of recruiters arriving for the barbeque. Locating the registration table away from the club displays and bar would prevent this from happening again. Inviting the various engineering clubs to display their projects and activities served as a very nice accent to the night and would be something to continue in the future. Many recruiters were not aware of the parking lot near the Design Building that had been reserved for them and parked in the Memorial Union Parking Ramp. Better communication about this will need to take place during the final confirmation emails between the committee and the companies so the recruiters know about this. Hiring Hickory Park to cater and Iowa State's Jazz Band to play during the event was a very popular change from previous years. Continuing the basic format for this event while making the small, but necessary improvements should make the Recruiter Barbeque even better than before.

Publicity

Publicity:

- Make greater use of WebCT

WebCT is a great tool that most students use multiple times a week. Therefore this would provide a great delivery method for information about events, seminars and to offer surveys about E-Week.

Seminars

Seminars:

- Use WebCT for information, advertising and registration
- Continue to ask professors to offer extra credit for attendance
- New seminar about Co-Op and Internship Experiences

Using WebCT would again allow for a unique method of advertising the great seminars that are offered during E-Week in addition to the traditional flyers, e-mails, sandwich boards and sidewalk chalk. It would give students another way to read more about what each seminar has to offer. Continuing to ask professors to offer extra credit for seminar attendance should once again help to boost overall seminar attendance. Finally, among the great seminars that are offered during E-Week, there is none that addresses what happens once you do get a Co-Op or Internship. This seminar, featuring a panel of students with work experience, could help to answer students' questions about what the Internship/Co-Op experience is like.

Class Schedules

Josh Haroldson:

Josh Haroldson's Schedule Spring 2006							
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesda	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
7							
8	Class		Class		Class		
9							
10	EIS				EIS		
11							
12		Class	Lab	Class			
1	Class		(every other		Class		
2			week)	HW			
3	Lab						
4							
5							
6							
7				TEAM			
8							

Matt Hempel:

Matt Hempel's Schedule Spring 2006							
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
7							
8	Class	Class	Class	Class	Class		
9							
10	Class		Class		Class		
11		Class		Class			
12			Class				
1							
2	Class						
3			HW				
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							