Why Attend A Company Information Session

You can learn a lot about the company on their website, so how will attending a company info session help?

**Attending an employer's info session will help you:**
- Get a feel for the company and its culture.
- Have the opportunity to see if you would be a good fit there.
- Learn about the positions available at the company.
- Learn how your position fits into the overall scheme.
- Network: Opportunity to build some contacts that could be helpful in the future

All of this adds to the information available on the website and will help you explain in an interview the congruence between your goals and values and their culture -- in essence the nature of the critical "fit" employers are looking for.

In addition, info sessions constitute a rare opportunity to make a personal connection within the organization while at the same time demonstrating your sincere interest in it as a potential employer. It's always helpful to say you went to the information session during your interview or to mention in your cover letter that you met some representatives and can therefore describe in specific terms why you are so interested in the job and company. All these actions make you seem informed, well-prepared, and thoughtful.

If you do not attend, you may miss important information regarding the employer’s requirements, application procedures and company information that might be pertinent to you.

**Who can attend?**

Companies usually indicate their target audience to Career & Professional Development Center. This will be advertised on Career & Professional Development Center bulletin boards and website. All targeted students are welcome to attend.

**What should you expect from attending a company information session?**

Many companies hold information sessions on campus during the recruiting season in order to explain the job opportunities they have available and offer more information about the company and its organizational culture.

Most info sessions range from one to two hours long and consist of a company presentation where current employees explain the values and mission of the company followed by an opportunity for students to talk to company representatives about the company and ask any
pertinent questions. Employer reps are often recent grads able to describe what you might expect during your first couple of years should you join the organization.

**How should you prepare?**

Preparation should include:

- Doing a little background research on what the company does, specializes in, and job opportunities they have, etc.
- Being aware of competitors in the industry and how this company views itself in comparison to them.
- Learning about the industry a bit so you understand exactly what the companies do.
- If you have a geographic preference, knowing a bit about the city you want and why you want it (sometimes differences between firms in particular locations focus on specific industries and sectors).

Think about what's important to you and what you want to get out of the information session. This is your chance to interact with company employees and hear about work experiences. If you don't have a clear idea about the company or the job description, it would really help to do your research beforehand so you can ask questions you really want answers to.

Oftentimes, people don't find information sessions helpful because they go there unprepared and don't feel like they can ask questions or talk to the representatives because they don't know anything about the company.

It's a good idea to always bring a resume in case they accept resume drops. With your resume, they can possibly remember your attendance at the information session when you apply to or interview with the company.

**How to make the most of it**

To maximize the value of an information session, pay attention to what is said during the company presentation. Typically you learn a tremendous amount about the organization, its mission, its services or products, and what type of culture and environment exists at the organization. Also, the information you can draw from these sessions can be used to craft more effective cover letters or can be used to come up with additional questions about the company to be asked during the interview.

In order to optimize the experience at an information session:

- Prepare well thought out questions (based on your research) to ask during the presentation.
- Talk to a few representatives from the company to get a better feel for the company.
- Try to be assertive without being overbearing.
- Think on your feet and ask relevant questions based on the flow of conversation.
- Show interest and pay attention to what they have to say.
The answers to your questions help build your sense of the job and company and determine if it is something of interest to you. If conversation comes to a stop, you should be able to bring something up yourself. Also, wait to formally say good-bye to a representative before you leave the information session or walk away.

It is valuable to ask for a business card or contact information in case you have any further questions, and also so you can remember names if you interview with the company in the future. These conversations with company representatives help build your network of people. Networking with numerous companies and representatives gives tremendous insight in multiple careers, industries, job opportunities, etc.

**What if I don’t plan to apply?**
If you are interested in the company, but not the positions they are currently advertising, attend the information session anyway. Recruiters appreciate meeting any students with an interest in their organization and may be able to tell you about openings in other areas of the company. Ask the recruiter about opportunities related to your career interests and find out how to apply.

It is important to visualize an information session as a way of interviewing the firm and finding out more about them and if they are a good candidate to consider working for. You are able to learn about the company and see if you are genuinely interested in it. It always makes you more knowledgeable about the company, job, and industry and provides you with greater confidence about the job description for interviews. Also, during information sessions you get a chance to meet and talk to other peers who may be interested in similar jobs, companies, or industries. They may be able to give you some pointers.