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The Ultimate Guide to Job Fairs:
A Handbook for HR Managers in Africa

**ORGANISING, HOSTING
& EVALUATING SUCCESSFUL
ON-SITE JOB FAIRS**

INSPIRING PARTNERSHIPS FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH



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Acronyms

COVID-19	Corona Virus and Disease 2019
CV	Curriculum Vitae
EPK	Electronic Press Kit
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
MS	Microsoft (Teams)
PA	Public Address
SIFA	Skills Initiative For Africa
SMS	Short Message Service
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
WBLE	Work-based Learning Experiences



SECTION 1:
About Job Fairs

What is a TVET Job Fair?

WHAT IS AN ON-SITE JOB FAIR?

Filling vacancies with competent staff is a key concern for organisations of all shapes and sizes. As a human resource or recruitment manager of a large corporation or industry, and even of a small or medium enterprise, you have to come up with creative and unique ways to attract top talent and fill open positions for full time employment. In addition, you may be one of the many private sector enterprises, parastatals or public sector employers that contribute to the growth of their sectors by supporting skills development partnerships, often through internships, apprenticeships and Work-Based Learning Experiences (WBLE) for students. These positions also need to be filled. These needs

can all be met through a Job Fair hosted at your business premises.

Connections, empowerment, growth and partnerships - these are the themes that run through Job Fairs, for the benefit of attendees, hosts and sponsors alike. A Job Fair is an event where demand meets supply: information on labour market opportunities and information about the available workforce is exchanged. While using technology such as LinkedIn is a great way to promote your company brand and connect with active and passive job seekers, on-site Job Fairs are one way to bring talent straight to your doorstep.

For employers, Job Fairs are recruitment opportunities. TVET Colleges or skills training providers get to share information about their own programmes, and find out about developments in their fields. Job seekers and TVET students seeking Work-Based Learning Experiences (WBLE) will attend to find out about relevant openings and career pathways.

VIRTUAL JOB FAIRS

Virtual Job Fairs have the same goals as on-site events- to provide job seekers, students, training providers and employers opportunities to interact. Online interaction typically uses digital conferencing platforms like Zoom, Google Meets or MS Teams. A Virtual Job Fair includes many communication channels such as video, live chats and downloadable material to make it more helpful for both the recruiter and the job seeker.



For more information about how to plan, organise and implement a successful Virtual Job Fair, take a look at the "Taking Your Job Fair Virtual" handbook.



A note on the target audience for this handbook

Job Fairs or Career Expos come in many shapes and sizes, and vary greatly in scope. A Job Fair may happen at a local level, serving a targeted group of students and the local business community; at a regional level, where more than one training provider and a broader range of business or industry might be involved; or at a national level. A regional or national level the Job Fair or Career Expo will typically be convened by a government department dealing with Trade and Industry, or hosted by a large public sector employer such as a parastatal organisation in a sector. These fairs may also cover many different industry sector opportunities. At these levels it is likely that a service provider will be appointed and paid to manage the event on behalf of the main sponsor.

While some of the content and resources provided may be usefully adapted for any level of application or type of organiser, this

Handbook is written mainly for the private sector company-based manager working at the local level, in a specific commercial or industrial enterprise.



Why you should host a Job Fair

Hosting a Job Fair is a large undertaking. It requires event planning, stakeholder invitations, and interactions with TVET Colleges, other training providers and their students. The entire planning process can feel overwhelming at times. While you may sometimes wonder if all the work is worth it, the benefits of hosting an on-site fair far outweigh all the stress.



Hosting an on-site Job Fair gives you direct access to high-quality job candidates.

The main reason for organising an on-site Job Fair is to meet highly qualified students who can fill the positions you have open. In doing so you can lessen the costs of lengthy recruitment processes, and avoid competing with similar companies.



Your Job Fair can include speed networking and short interview sessions with potential job seekers.

This can help connect your HR recruiters with job seekers, and quickly share initial information about the position.



Pro-Tip:

To help narrow down the candidates, it may be best to post information on the type of jobs you are interviewing for at your on-site Job Fair. Do this with any promotional material: you don't want someone with a background in sales, for example, interviewing for a production position.



Hosting a Job Fair allows those within your professional network to come and learn more about your company and business.

It also introduces your company to those who may not know a lot about what your company does. You are either nurturing existing relationships or developing new ones.



This is an onsite networking and promotional event

where you can open your business to job seekers and let them mingle and meet with company leaders, HR professionals and staff. They can get a tour of the company and talk one-on-one in a more relaxed environment about what it's like to work there. They can see what the facilities, workshops, plant machinery or office spaces looks like, and get a sense of what showing up every day to work there would be like. This is also a chance for HR and recruiting staff to see how potential candidates fit in with other staff members and the company culture. It's a way to get to know prospective job seekers outside a formal and sometimes tense interview setting.



You can demonstrate how your products or business operates.

This varies greatly depending on the business or the industry, but if there is a way to provide live demonstrations of "a day-in-the-life-of your company employee", or of a specific technical process, do so.



Pro-Tip:

Find creative and fun ways to give job seekers a short hands-on experience or demonstration of your production processes, products or services. Employees want to know what it would be like to work for you. These activities will also give employers a chance to evaluate job seekers' attitudes, communication styles and possibly their work skills.



Hosting a Job Fair helps you to contribute to upskilling students on how to conduct their job search.

Besides giving you a chance to meet TVET students, a Job Fair offers them a chance to learn about many aspects of seeking employment. Knowing about prospective Job Fairs helps students (and other job seekers) prepare, so that they come armed with the right information, and present themselves as their

best version of their professional selves. You can partner with TVET Colleges and other skills training providers, and host panel discussions on topics related to particular industries or job types, and on mentorship, internship and WBLE opportunities. (See **Level Up and Crush It: A Job Seeker's Guide to Job Fairs.**)



Hosting a Job Fair lays the foundation for creating sustainable partnerships with TVET Colleges.

It gives you the opportunity to contribute to skills development in your local area or region, and to the skills development ecosystem as a whole. It contributes to making sure that future candidate

skills are more aligned with your company needs, and with the needs of your sector as a whole. (*See the partnership discussion below.*)

An efficient, well-planned on-site Job Fair will definitely benefit your business. It increases your brand visibility, credibility and goodwill. This may lead to attracting top talent, creating beneficial and strategic partnerships with other businesses, institutions and government bodies, as well as

shaping the curricula of local TVET Colleges and other training providers. All you need to do is follow the steps outlined in the Handbook, adapt these to your context as needed, and successfully plan, execute and evaluate your on-site Job Fair.

Who you should invite to your on-site Job Fair



JOB SEEKERS

The Job Fair should be open to any job seekers in the area with the relevant experience, skills or qualifications.

PAST AND CURRENT TVET STUDENTS SEEKING PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT, INTERNSHIPS & WBLES

This group attends Job Fairs to:

- Explore WBLE, internships and career opportunities.
- Network through meeting prospective employers.
- Practise professional decorum, while showcasing their personality.
- Experience their first venture into the professional world.

- Be introduced to the future World of Work that aligns to their career aspirations and understand what particular occupations might involve.
- Enjoy a space where they can safely make mistakes and recover. Writing a CV, small talk with employers, and preparing for interviews are new skills for most students.

For TVET students, the short-term outcome of preparing a CV, selling themselves to you, negotiating salaries and benefits for a solid entry-level position is undoubtedly positive. Once students are in “the real world,” they will not have easy access to career services as they do at TVET Colleges. The skills graduates and students in WBLE learn now are skills they will use for the rest of their professional lives. The successful navigation of an on-site Job Fair is a valuable life skill.



TVET COLLEGES AND OTHER SKILLS TRAINING PROVIDERS

TVET Colleges (public institutions) and skills training providers (NGO skills programmes, private providers) will attend your Job Fairs to:

- Support their past and current students who are attending the Job Fair
- Update themselves on trends and innovations in the sector
- Familiarise themselves with local company or industry operations and work environments in order to improve their own learning programmes
- Lay the foundations for engaging with the private sector, and establishing partnerships for specific interventions (*See partnership discussion below*)

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Potential invitees will attend for the following reasons:

- Media Publications: To produce news content about the Job Fair
- Municipalities: To network, create strategic partnerships and uncover investment opportunities
- Social enterprises: To create strategic partnerships
- High Schools: To send learners in their last school year to company open days or Job Fairs as part of their career guidance function
- Community organisations: To become better informed about potential CSI initiatives, and to share information on community needs which your company might address





GOVERNMENT

Government participation in the context of a Job Fair will probably depend on the nature of your business or industry, and whether or not your company takes part in high level engagement on skills development policies and frameworks through business associations or other councils and chambers. You may be in a position to invite keynote speakers from government if they can contribute to the knowledge-sharing aspect of your Job Fair. Engagement at local government level is noted above in the community element.

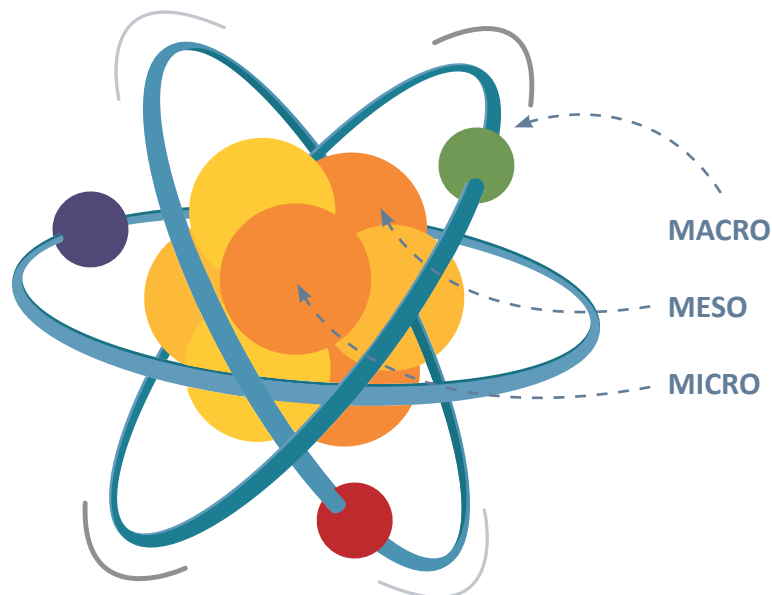
Creating sustainable partnerships for Job Fairs with impact



Private sector engagement in skills

development: It is well known that there is a mismatch between supply and demand in many economic sectors; There are gaps between the skills delivered by education and training sectors and the skills required by the world of work. Skilled labour shortages constrain economic growth. The private sector has an important role to play in strengthening the skills

development ecosystem, by integrating labour market requirements into training provision and strengthening delivery systems. It can only do this through partnering with other stakeholders in different ways throughout the system. One model for understanding private sector partnerships is to focus on three levels of partnerships as follows:



- **MACRO:** Public policy engagement (government departments, business, labour and civil society structures),
- **MESO:** Stakeholder engagement (industry and trade associations, professional bodies, public and private TVET training providers, informal sector and youth associations, NPOs),
- **MICRO:** Local sector and workforce planning (individual TVET providers, local associations, individual businesses, community organisations, NPOs).

This is the model adopted by the Private Sector Engagement (PSE) component of the Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA) funded by GIZ. You will find more information on Private Sector engagement in the PSE Guide: **“Growing Skills through Partnerships: Guidelines for the Private Sector using the SIFA PSE Approach”**

It is well understood that the private sector

needs to work at the macro level with the formal TVET system, policy and qualification structures. However, individual colleges and skills providers at the micro level also shape the quality of pipelines for vocational skills. Training institutions should grow their understanding of the needs of business through communication and collaboration. The following extract makes these key points:

Demonstrating the importance of two-way dialogue, a McKinsey centre for government report¹ found that employers who successfully recruited the talent they require are those that are in regular contact with education providers.

Additionally, the Global Competitiveness Report 2015-2016² highlights that strong vocational skills remain an important source of comparative

advantage for companies. Training matched to the skill needs of enterprises not only benefits companies, but linkages with employers are the most significant influence in the success of training, with students more likely to gain employment. [Cited in ‘engaging the private sector in skills development’, United Nations development programme (undp) and Istanbul International Centre for Private Sector in Development, 2017, page 6]



Establishing partnerships through Job Fairs:

Your on-site Job Fair is a golden opportunity to open up this dialogue with your local TVET College (or any other relevant skills training providers), and then build on this for further collaboration or specific projects in certain areas.

The overall benefit you are looking for is to infuse the human resource skills and knowledge needs of your industry or business into the TVET curricula, and to make sure that students are being trained in current practices by competent lecturers.

¹Education to Employment: Designing a system that works. McKinsey Centre for Government, 2012. Available at http://www.mckinsey.com/client_service/public_sector/mckinsey_center_for_government/education_to_employment.

²Schwab, K., ed. The global competitiveness report 2015-2016. World Economic Forum. 2015. Available at http://www3.weforum.org/docs/gcr/2015-2016/Global_Competitiveness_Report_2015-2016.pdf.

Close relationships with TVETs include the following advantages:



Joint structuring of WBLE, apprenticeship and internship programmes means that you can make sure that students and workers are trained according to acceptable standards.



You can expose these groups to innovative practices and new technologies.



You can improve the quality of TVET lecturers and workplace trainers by offering short term 'return to industry' programmes and mentorship. This will help keep those delivering training up to date.



From these relationships, and from Job Fair involvement in particular, you can build up a database of potential employees that you can access when needed.



The performance of any candidates appointed as a result of the Job Fair should be monitored and tracked, and this data shared with the relevant TVET College. Your company can contribute to research on performance in relation to the achievement of certain qualifications- data needed for qualifications review processes.



Features of successful partnerships:

Whether you are setting up a formal Job Fair partnership for the event, or building projects based on relationships established thanks to the Job Fair; here are some conditions for successful partnerships.

A lead partner: The lead partner is usually the host and overall project manager for the Job Fair. Other entities are invited by the lead partners.

A clear set of objectives for the partnership itself as well as for the Job Fair event. A vital condition for successful partnerships is a shared understanding of the benefits and purpose of collaboration. Without common aims and expectations, the partnership may fail. It is therefore important to jointly formulate the overall project aim and collaboration goals. Here are a few questions to help you start thinking about your partnership objectives, in order to discuss and refine them with your partners.

- Why do I want to partner with this college or training provider? How does their core business relate to the overall goals of my Job Fair? What will they bring to the partnership that we need, and why do we need this?
- Why will this college or training provider want to partner with us? What can we offer them as an inducement to collaborative effort for the Job Fair and beyond?
- How short term or long term should these objectives be? Should we build in a reflection process to review and adapt these objectives during and after the Job Fair?

- How can we build in principles of collaboration such as trust, openness, accountability and regular reflection and feedback?

Clearly stated agreements on roles and responsibilities within the partnership, including any financial arrangements. These should be captured in a Memorandum of Understanding. These agreements may be divided according to specific tasks for the Job Fair event itself, and later decisions on further areas for collaboration.

A clearly defined set of communication protocols which all agree to follow. Partnerships often break down because of lack of communication, and frustrations around this. Communication protocols also include process arrangements for planning and review meetings (e.g. meeting schedules, online platforms or in-person venues) and ways of managing information relating to the Job Fair and any follow up activities.

Effective collaboration doesn't just happen by itself simply because a partnership is set up. A collaborative mindset needs to be nurtured, and everyone in the partnership needs to recognise that it requires a lot of time and effort. However, partnerships can certainly result in major benefits for your company, improving your relationships with the training providers that feed your enterprise's human resource needs- and improving the quality of your job applicants.



Section 3 of this Guide deals with some of the other practical activities relating to formal partnerships in the context of the **Ten Steps** for organising your Job Fair.

When partnering with TVET Colleges or other training providers, keep in mind that TVET Colleges across Africa operate in many different contexts, both social and geographic. Colleges and other training providers may be under-resourced or well resourced, and serve rural, peri-urban or urban communities and contexts. You may need to adapt some of the suggestions made in this Handbook to fit your own context.







SECTION 2:
About this Handbook

Who is this handbook for?

This Handbook has been developed for HR Managers and recruiting personnel who want to organise, host and evaluate a successful Job Fair on-site.

HANDBOOK OBJECTIVES

This Handbook is aligned with the core ethos and objectives of SIFA, in relation to **Strengthening the occupational prospects of young people in Africa**. In addition, it is aimed at facilitating private sector engagement in skills development, another key objective for SIFA. A successful Job Fair opens many doors for young people to access employment opportunities, and can generate further interventions in support of skills development.

Organising a successful on-site Job Fair requires attention to detail, creativity and strategic planning. The 'Ten Steps' in Section 3 set out guidelines for all the activities you need to undertake. The Templates and Resources which come with this Handbook are aimed at making life easier by optimising planning processes, and illustrating good practice. There is also a supporting guide that Project Managers can share with job seekers to help them prepare for the Job Fair.



Pro-Tip:

As the Project Manager or Job Fair Team Leader you should start thinking about your Job Fair and its many moving parts at least six months in advance. First, study this guide. Begin your active planning four months in advance. Avoid by all means working under pressure, as this may result in the hosting of a disorganised, chaotic event and a professionally and emotionally stressful experience for you and your team.

The key objectives of the Handbook are:

1. To summarise what Project Managers need to know to host a successful Job Fair
2. To detail the activities needed at each step of planning, hosting and evaluating your Job Fair
3. To offer guidance on creating and retaining sustainable partnerships



As we said in Section 1, the Handbook content and supporting resources can also be adapted and used by third party organisers of multi-stakeholder Job Fairs.







SECTION 3:
Planning and Organising
a successful Job Fair

Introduction

Your on-site Job Fair is a relatively big event with many moving parts, requiring a strong and dedicated planning team to assist with setup, sign-in for students, job seekers and other invited guests on the day.

There are many steps that go into organising a successful on-site Job Fair, with most of the effort going into planning the event. Different Job Fairs may take a different focus, depending on the needs and the core business of your

company. You may decide to have a Job Fair focusing on a single department run by a particular staff member (e.g production or sales); or if you are at a larger company you may decide to address more than one department or vocational area within your enterprise sector. Job Fairs for different types of companies and industries will look very different. This should be your first consideration taken directly after your Needs Assessment.

The 10 Steps: Key Activities

The following steps give guidelines on organising and hosting your on-site Job Fair:





STEP 1 *Conducting research*

Creating a stakeholder map

Stakeholder mapping is a way of visually organising all of the people and organisations and institutions who have an interest in your Job Fair. This allows you to easily see who can influence your Job Fair and how each institution or person is related to the other.

Doing stakeholder mapping early on will help you identify the right people to involve, prevent miscommunication, ensure all groups are aligned on the objectives and set expectations about the outcomes and results of your Job Fair. The mapping process will also help illustrate the profile, needs and goals of your main target audience: the students and job seekers attending the fair. Your stakeholder map will also help you decide if you want to run your Job Fair in a formal partnership with another entity. But you also need to remember that even if you are running the Job Fair on your own, you can begin developing relationships and informal partnerships with your stakeholders. You can build on these for a number of partnership activities after your Job Fair.

Your project has internal and external stakeholders, and drawing a clear line between the two will help you set the right priorities and find an approach for your specific situation.

Internal Stakeholders

These are people on your team who are participating in organising your Job Fair. Their level of engagement may vary, but they all have an influence because they're part of your company. Depending on how your company is structured, your internal stakeholders might include the Chief Executive Officer or Managing Director, Heads of Department/s or Technical sections, Head of Finance, Head of Communications and your lead administrator etc. If you are in a partnership with a TVET

College to plan the Job Fair, the appointed Job Fair Team members from the college are also internal stakeholders.

External Stakeholders

These are the people who may attend the event, such as TVET Colleges and other relevant training providers, past and current TVET students, other job seekers, your professional network, community members and the media.

Why you should have a stakeholder map

1. Find out who has the most influence
2. Focus on those who benefit most
3. See where resources are most plentiful
4. Have a game plan

Use your Stakeholder Mapping Template to:

1. Brainstorm
2. Categorise
3. Prioritise
4. Set communication goals

Creating your Hit List for TVET Colleges and Training Providers and sponsors

Depending on the size of your event, you may need to keep track of different TVET training providers (public, private and NPO skills programmes) and any potential sponsors you want to contact. A Hit List can help you manage your searches. You can create this hit list in the ***Hit List of TVET Training Providers Template*** to help you keep track of who you have approached, where you are in the invitation process and what follow-up is needed and when. It can be managed either by an individual or a group. It is a good idea to reach out to the decision-makers directly. Instead of emailing the organisation in general, try to contact the Career Centre or anyone who deals directly with students. The Hit List provides you with space to fill out their direct contact information.

Sending out your surveys

Once you have your Hit List it means you know “who” you want to participate in your Job Fair. This survey will help you clarify the “why”.

Survey for Employers

Use the **Survey Guide for TVET Training providers** to help you create a survey to collect information from TVET providers about their student demographic and needs. Which students need WBLE? Which students are graduating and with which qualifications?

The survey will allow you to ascertain:

1. How labour market information flows - will the Job Fair improve the flow of information between your company, TVET Colleges and other training providers, and their students?
2. Are TVET Colleges having difficulty accessing WBLE opportunities for their students? Why? What are their specific WBLE needs for their students? How do these relate to your company WBLE opportunities?
3. Which vocational areas are most in demand by students? Which faculties or skills programmes are over or undersubscribed? Which sectors or industries have a pool of graduates to choose from and which have very few graduates?
4. What is the most appropriate and relevant theme for your Job Fair?

Survey for Students

Use the **Survey Guide for Students** to help you create a survey to collect information from them regarding their desired or preferred jobs and WBLE placements.

The survey will allow you to ascertain:

1. Which career options students are most attracted to in your company
2. Which vocational areas or departments students would prefer to work in and why
3. Which format the students would prefer for the fair - virtual or on-site
4. Student level of interest and knowledge of Job Fairs
5. Student preparedness for attending a Job Fair

Document the information you have gathered to create your own Needs Assessment Report.



Pro-Tip:

Google forms are a free online tool that are widely used to create surveys easily and quickly since they allow you to plan events, ask questions and collect diverse types of information in a simple and efficient way. Google forms allow you to include different types of questions, such as short answers, paragraphs, multiple selection, verification boxes, pull-down, linear scale, grid of several options and more.



Useful Tools:

1. Template: Stakeholder Mapping
2. Template: Hit-List of TVET Training Providers
3. Resource: Survey Guide for TVET Training Providers
4. Resource: Survey Guide for students



STEP 2 *Conducting a needs assessment*

Document and analyse your findings from Step 1 before taking any action. The information you have gathered and captured in your Needs Assessment Report will help you finalise your full Needs Assessment, which will allow you to:

Assess and evaluate the needs, expectations and core areas of interest for your most influential stakeholders, i.e. TVET Colleges, skills training providers and TVET Students

For example, if the survey responses from final year students indicate that they're interested in working as electricians in the maintenance department of your company you identify which providers to invite, and to start thinking about your programme and keynote speakers.

Determine the logistical needs of the event

Start assessing the event's needs by asking and answering the 'W' questions:

What:

What type of Job Fair are you going to plan?
Is it specific to a department, production function or to your company value chain?
Is it an indoor or an outdoor event?
What's the size of your event?

Why:

Why are you holding the Job Fair, i.e. what are your objectives?

Where: Where is your Job Fair going to be held, i.e. the actual location in relation to your company premises or any other venue?

When:

What is the timeframe for the Job Fair? Do you need a specific date or time of the year in relation to the TVET College calendar or to your seasonal business flow, or is it more flexible?

Who:

Who are your potential attendees, and what are their needs?

All of these questions will help you shape the format of your event. For example, if your company produces specific material and you want to conduct a demonstration, you will need to book the appropriate space in the facility and make sure that the expert staff member or technician you need is available. Your goal is to extract all the needs by identifying the specifics of the event.

Analyse your capabilities

You need to understand your scope of options, from the size of your budget to the availability of your human resources. For instance, if you do not have enough space for your event at your company premises, you may want to reduce the number of attendees. Be very clear about the resources required by the Job Fair. Then you will know to what extent you can cover everything you need, where you may have to do a little compromising or cutting back, or where you can look for sponsorships or partnerships.

Decide on formal partnerships

It is at this point that you can make a clear decision on whether you want to run the event on your own and then follow up partnership opportunities, or whether you want to run the Job Fair event as a partnership, as discussed in Section 1. If you do go this route, make sure you have a clear understanding of the profile of your proposed partner/s. Your first

and most important action will be to have a founding partnership meeting, where you jointly formulate your collaboration principles, the partnership goals and share your mutual expectations for the Job Fair event. After this

you will draw your partners into your planning and brainstorming sessions as required (*See the Pro-Tips below*), and in line with the partnership roles and responsibilities you have decided on.



Pro-Tip:

Review your goals and desired outcomes to identify your event's needs. For example, if your intention is to foster deeper partnerships with TVET Colleges and training providers to influence curriculum development, you may need to plan a high level stakeholder meeting before and after the event. Eventually, your list of needs will increase and you'll need to handle a broader range of actions. If your goal is to deliver unique experiences, you'll have to introduce a series of event needs related to the social programme for the attendees. Although the "W" questions are important for the initial step, by setting up the goals, you'll end up refining the needs assessment procedure.



Useful Tools:

1. Hit-list of TVET Training Providers
2. Template: Budget Planner

Pro-Tip:

Conduct a feasibility analysis. The feasibility of an event might not have been considered at all, because it seemed 'such a good idea'. It is important to ascertain if your Job Fair is worth all the effort. Have a brainstorming

session where you throw various ideas in and toss them around to 'see which is best'. It's also always advisable to sit down and double check all the needs you've already listed.



STEP 3 *Creating a theme*

Theming is vital for the concept design and delivery of a successful Job Fair. The theme sets the tone for the entire experience and drives all planning decisions. For example, if you are in the hospitality industry and your theme is “Africa to the World”, this will be the first impression people will have of your event.

A meaningful concept behind your event helps to direct your planning, keeps your messaging on track, drives audience engagement and delivers on your objectives. Choosing an on-site Job Fair theme that is fresh, appealing and on brand is a creative and research driven process.

Try formulating your theme in the form of a question, a statement, a challenge or an idea. Select a theme that can be interpreted loosely, is relatively abstract and open to interpretation. A good Job Fair theme can be carried throughout every touch point of the event, including visual design elements, topics, and merchandise, and it can give direction to your speakers. It should be aligned with your company’s core business and be consistent with your brand image.

Here are some simple steps to help you choose a theme that will bring your next Job Fair to life and create a lasting impression.

Define the Job Fair goals and purpose

Establish the intent of your Job Fair and the overall message. Determine what the “takeaway” from the Job Fair should be – what do you want your attendees to remember after they leave? A clear message and intent is key to developing an effective theme for your Job Fair.

Ensure your theme is relevant to your target audience

By now you will have a clear sense of who is attending and why. What do you know about

your target audience – How old are they? What is their cultural background and customs? For example, a Job Fair organised by a hotel chain in the hospitality sector will have a very different theme to an event hosted by a car manufacturing plant in the engineering and automotive industry sector. Your theme relates to who you want to attract to your event and what message you are communicating. Then the challenge is finding a creative way to tell that message in a way that will resonate with them. Your theme should be intelligent, inclusive and appealing to attract a high audience attendance rate.

Consider your budget and the event parameters

Where is the Job Fair being held? What is the duration of the event? How many attendees are you expecting? The theme for a local one-day Job Fair can be slightly more specific and targeted as opposed to a longer, three-day Fair.

Review the theme’s requirements in line with your budget

An elaborate theme that requires lots of touch points to be effectively communicated may not be in your budget scope.

Review your theme in relation to your company values, branding and purpose

- **Values**
Understand what your company stands for and choose a Job Fair theme that reflects those values. Some examples are Learning, Customer Experience, Creativity, Community, Honesty and Accountability, Integrity, and Technological Advancement.
- **Branding**
Can you draw any concepts or associations from your brand’s logo, colours or general branding creative and shapes?

- **Your Vision or Purpose**

A Job Fair theme that incorporates your overarching mission is a great way to reinforce your positioning and help build brand advocacy.

- **Look to industry trends, topical news or popular culture**

Take inspiration from external sources to facilitate brainstorming and to gather ideas. A theme like “Africa to the World” should complement your business and keep your theme consistent with your image.

- **Keep it simple**

Remember less is more! Keeping the theme simple and to-the-point also prevents miscommunication of the overall message of the event.

- **Integrate the theme into every touch point before, during and after your event**

A good Job Fair theme should be inherent in every aspect of your event – from the speakers and their topics, to the event design and audio visual, the food, breakout sessions and activities. A simple theme, clearly communicated, aligned with your brand and with the purpose of your Job Fair will inform prospective attendees and reinforce your message. A theme unifies objectives and provides focus for the event,

as well as setting the tone for presentations, speaker content, activations, etc.

- **Incorporate the theme onto your invitations, programmes, brochures and electronic marketing, name tags, signs and event-related gifts or memorabilia**

Your theme should identify the Job Fair and its attendees clearly and specifically. Order giveaway items with the theme and logo on them, such as t-shirts or other memorabilia to really impress and add value for guests.

- **Get ideas from the experts**

Deciding on a Job Fair theme can be one of the hardest decisions the Job Fair Team may face. That’s where communications experts can help (budget permitting). Collaborate with experts to uncover a brilliant theme that perfectly ties your brand and message into an engaging experience.



Pro-Tip:

Always put your guest first. Think about how your theme will enhance the guest experience throughout the event, including (for example) programme scheduling, eating, and entertainment.



Useful Tools:

1. Template: Budget Planner



STEP 4 *Creating and using a budget*

One of the first steps for every Job Fair planner is preparing a budget and predicting your expected expenses as accurately as possible. Drawing up a budget is crucial during the planning phase of your Job Fair and should happen before your cost benefit analysis. Your budget will give you a detailed forecast of what will be happening financially at your Job Fair. It helps control your expenses and is an indicator for measuring the success of your Job Fair. Although a well-planned budget takes time to create and manage, it can mean the difference between success or failure. Once you've developed your budget, you'll have to track and review it regularly to ensure you stay within the allocated resources. Ongoing updating of your Job Fair **Budget Planner** will help you know exactly where you are in the process.

If you are in a formal partnership for the Job Fair, some of your expenses may be shared between partners. If you manage to secure sponsorship, this is considered revenue that can be used to cover some of your costs.

Determine what financial success means to you and how it relates to your Job Fair Budget

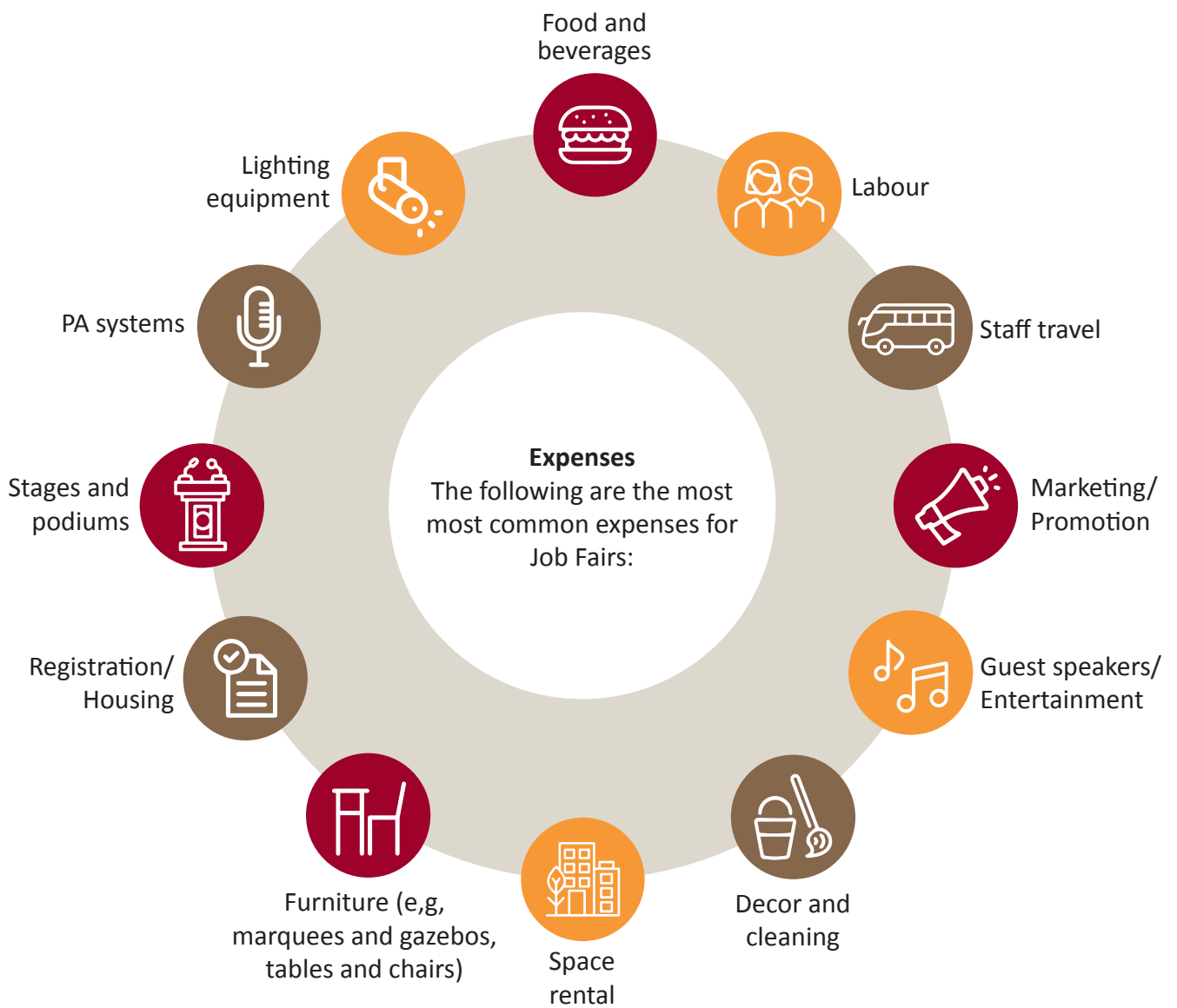
For instance, you may have an available budget and want to keep to it or even underspend. To achieve this, you need to list all the possible expense and revenue possibilities related to the fair. Always keep your cash flow in mind.

Before planning your budget any further, you need to understand your needs. Your Job Fair budget is really a forecast, or projection, of all expenses and revenues that your Job Fair will generate. While you won't be able to forecast all of these from the beginning, and some might even change over time, you still need to plan for the most common expenses and revenues.

Job Fair Budget: Quick Steps to planning yours!

When event budgeting, it's paramount to identify which items represent expenses, and which are revenue sources that can cover costs. In addition, you need to distinguish between fixed and variable costs to forecast a budget for your next Job Fair effectively.

One of the key challenges for planners is to ensure that you carefully manage expenses and revenues to achieve the goals agreed on by the company, and accurately measure your Job Fair success.



Pro-Tip:

Note that event technology can be incorporated into all of these common expenses. For example, an event tech app can help with marketing and promotion by allowing event planners to push notifications about keynote speakers and registration.





Spend money on the right things: Your Job Fair is about the attendee experience, so you have to ensure that where you spend your money adds value to your target audience. Attendees don't care if you pay a fortune for coffee. They do, however, care about an overall great experience, and food and beverage is a large component

of attendee satisfaction. It is recommended that you spend 55% of your budget on food and beverage, audiovisual, and speaker/entertainment in total, because these items have a direct impact on the overall attendee experience.



Fixed and variable costs: It's crucial to differentiate between fixed and variable expenses or costs. Fixed costs are costs that do not change based on the number of attendees. These costs are calculated as a total amount. Variable costs are costs that change based on the number of attendees. These costs are calculated on a per-person basis.



Sources of revenue: To cover expenses, different revenue avenues can be leveraged. For example, advertising revenues and sponsorship would be considered sources of revenue.

Use the **Budget Planner** to draft your Job Fair Budget.



Pro-Tip:

- Always save ALL invoices and receipts to back up your Job Fair Budget.
- An essential line item in your budget should be a contingency fund; it's always better to plan for additional unforeseen expenses so you're prepared for the unexpected during your Job Fair. Think about what could trigger additional costs and develop a plan to address these.
- Arrange a meeting with your accounting or financial officer to review the format of your budget.
- As demands for your Job Fair might change, it's also a good idea to confirm in advance who has the authority to spend beyond the approved budget.
- It's important to track your budget throughout both the planning and implementation stages of your Job Fair.
- Transferring all of your financial systems to a cloud-based system will enable you to manage your financial operations anywhere and anytime.



Useful Tools:

1. Template: Budget Planner



STEP 5 *Conducting a cost benefit analysis*

Subsequently, a cost-benefit analysis needs to be done to evaluate if the Job Fair achieved its goals. The cost benefit analysis will offer unique and valuable insight when:

1. Developing benchmarks for comparing with past and future Job Fairs
2. Deciding whether or not to host an on-site Job Fair in future
3. Measuring social and company benefits of the Job Fair
4. Quantifying effects on stakeholders and participants

There is no “standard” format for performing a cost benefit analysis, but there are certain core elements:

1. Establish a framework to outline the parameters of the analysis
2. Identify costs and benefits so they can be categorised by type and intent
3. Calculate costs and benefits
4. Analyse results and make an informed, final recommendation

Establish a framework

Once your event is clearly outlined, you’ll need to build out a situational overview to examine the existing state of affairs. This will include background, performance of past Job Fairs, any opportunities they have brought to the table, and their projected performance in the future. Also make sure to factor in an objective look at any risks involved in maintaining the status quo moving forward.

Now decide how you will approach cost benefits. Which cost benefits should be included in your analysis? Include the basics, but also do a bit of thinking outside the box to come up with any unforeseen costs that could impact you in both the short and long term.

Identify and categorise costs and benefits

Now that your framework is in place, it's time to sort your costs and benefits into buckets by type. The primary categories that costs and benefits fall into are direct/indirect, tangible/intangible, and real:

- Direct costs are often associated with production of a cost object (product, service, customer, project, or activity)
- Indirect costs are usually fixed in nature, and may come from overhead of a department or cost center
- Tangible costs are easy to measure and quantify, and are usually related to an identifiable source or asset, like payroll, rent, and purchasing tools
- Intangible costs are difficult to identify and measure, like shifts in satisfaction
- Real costs are expenses associated with producing the Job Fair, such as labor costs and raw materials

Now that you've developed the categories into which you'll sort your costs and benefits, it's time to start crunching numbers. Use the **Cost Benefit Analysis Tool** to calculate costs and benefits and present recommendations.

Pro-Tip:

As the Team Leader do not try and complete this step on your own. You need to consult your Head of Finance/Accounts and the relevant faculty department heads.



Useful Tools:

1. Template: Cost Benefit Analysis Tool
2. Template: Event Planner
3. Template: Event Checklist
4. Template: Budget Planner





STEP 6 *Setting up the Job Fair Team*



The structure of the team should reflect the basic functions required for organising, implementing and evaluating the Job Fair. Use your human resources to the best of their abilities with the lowest cost possible. Choose team members who will best represent your company during this event. If you are in a formal partnership, your agreements on roles and responsibilities will shape the Job Fair Team.

Here is a possible structure for the Job Fair Team:

Team leader

You are responsible for overseeing all aspects of the Job Fair: planning, leading, organising, coordinating and controlling and ensuring successful implementation. You also need to keep the idea of relationship management with all your external stakeholders front of mind, and make sure your team does too. Any relationships built up through the planning and implementation process can be actioned after the fair to achieve various goals. In addition, you will need to approve all applications and outbound requests by the Job Fair Team, particularly those with financial implications, before and during the organisation of the fair.



Promotions and Advertising Coordinator

This person is responsible for the Job Fair promotion, including public relations and the development of themed branding and promotional collateral aimed at attracting qualified job seekers, students and employers. The promotions and advertising coordinator is also responsible for ensuring that other influential stakeholders (such as media houses, relevant people in government departments, municipal officials, trade and industry decision makers etc.) are included in marketing and invitations. You should only outsource the management of this function if there is no competent staff member, and if you have the budget. Any marketing and branding agency used should work closely with the Team Leader.

TVET Training Provider Coordinator

This person is responsible for inviting and committing TVET Colleges and other training providers to attend the Job Fair, providing guidelines for student participation and ensuring that their needs are met before, during and after the Job Fair. This is a key relationship management role.

Administration and Logistics Officer

The admin and logistics officer is responsible for preparing all legal forms and applications related to the Job Fair organisation. In addition, the officer will be responsible for procuring

the venue, arranging transport, providing equipment, supplies, and services before, during and after the Job Fair. This person may need a financial assistant to process all administrative and financial forms and applications, handle communications, and assist the team leader and other team members when necessary.

Other potential Job Fair Team members, or support staff, could include:

Recruiters and HR staff

They network as part of their jobs. They're best positioned to initiate discussions with Job Fair attendees, present your business in the best light and manage administrative tasks (e.g. gathering CVs or contact details.) They can also help coordinate interviews.

Hiring managers

They can screen and interview students and any other job candidates on-site. They can also describe the scope of responsibilities for any positions they're hiring for and answer questions from job seekers.

Other team members

Employees can provide an authentic account of what your work culture is like. Consider involving co-workers who are alumni of a TVET College on your invitation list. Students might find it easier to relate to them.

The first Job Fair Team meeting

The first team meeting is crucial to establish an effective team, and to clarify roles and responsibilities. Topics that will need to be addressed and put into an agenda include:

- The Job Fair objective(s)
- Team member roles, responsibilities and tasks
- Potential dates, taking into account factors such as the weather, production schedules, student holidays, or conflicting events
- Potential venues/locations on or off the premises
- Logistical issues, such as venue requirements (e.g. lighting, sound, decor), floor lay-out, permits and insurance, supplies, assets and equipment required, and all services needed
- Project timelines
- Job Fair Theme and programme development (including speakers, entertainment etc.)
- Promotion and marketing
- Overall communication strategy and target audiences, including invitation process and database
- Potential vendors for products or services at the event
- Potential sponsors
- Relationship management
- Risks

Depending on the nature and size of the event, and of the Job Fair Team, your first meeting may not cover all these topics. For example, the Job Fair theme and the development of the event programme will require a separate brainstorm. In a formal partnership, the Job Fair Team will need to cover the same items.



Pro-Tip:

Allocate and distribute specific activities across the team wisely. Delegate tasks to your team proportionately, so that everyone can do their job without feeling overwhelmed or, on the contrary, bored.



Useful Tools:

1. To-Do List



STEP 7 *Preparing for your Job Fair*

Event Checklist and Contingency Measures

Where do you start your event planning checklist? Lay a solid foundation for your event. From signing contracts to negotiating sponsorships, everything needs to be written on your checklist, no matter how large or small.

The key is to first take care of any tasks that can be completed in advance to allow more time in your schedule for those to-do items that occur closer to the event date. The Checklist should have tasks, deadlines, responsible persons, progress. The plan has to be prepared jointly and agreed with the Job Fair Team.

Pro-Tip:

No matter how much effort you put into the planning, there are always some incidents ready to wreck the big day for you. They could be as small as the malfunction of one microphone and as big as a natural calamity. It is important to have contingency

measures in place to direct every activity in your checklist in the case of any major or minor trouble. This plan not only works as a predictor of emergencies but will also make sure you are able to cope with them.



Here are some example items for your checklist:

Table 1: Job Fair Preparation Checklist

Activity	Description
A few months before	
Create a budget Decide on a theme Define your audience Decide on a date and time Decide what areas of the premises will be used for the Job Fair Research catering Recruit a Job Fair Team Develop your Job Fair programme Manage relationships Set up formal partnership agreements, if running the Job Fair in a partnership	<p>These activities have been outlined in Step 1-6 of this Handbook and should be implemented at least 90 days before the event.</p>
Reminders	Put your event on the calendars of your core team and other staff members.
A few weeks before	
Content Development	If your event requires content, like a video, slideshow or presentation, start working on it now.
Event Layout	Finalise the placement and locations of tables and information desks. Decide where the keynote speaker will present, where interviews will take place or where food will be served.
Site Visits	<p>Reserve the actual site and different areas for your Job Fair. Review your sites in advance to determine your seating arrangements, the exact number of informative signs needed for the locations, catering etc.</p> <p>If you are conducting any practical or technical demonstrations, make sure all these arrangements are in place.</p>
Stakeholder Briefings	<p>Send an instruction email to the speakers, TVET Colleges and training providers, any other stakeholders who confirmed their participation so they can prepare for the Job Fair. Briefing notes for speakers need to be prepared, covering themes, expectations and the programme.</p> <p>Use the <i>Level Up and Crush it: A Job Seekers Guide to Job Fairs handbook</i> to prepare your student attendees.</p> <p>Make sure your team knows what to do (e.g., greet students and provide directions; circulate around the room to assist attendees with questions).</p> <p>Prepare name tags for Job Fair event staff and speakers.</p>

Promotion	Create an event microsite to start incorporating a Job Fair tab on your existing webpage. Requiring RSVPs is helpful, especially if you need to get a headcount for food and drinks or want to build buzz by showing who's planning to attend. Send email invitations, get your event listed on relevant event directories and promote your event on social media. The promotion phase continues until the day of your event.
Logistics & Timelines	It's all about logistics. Make or review your timeline of everything that needs to happen during the event and assign roles to your events team. Make a list of all the furniture, supplies and equipment you might need, too.
Media	Secure a photographer and videographer and provide them with a media plan.
A few days before	
Prepare your questions	<p>You will have limited time with each job seeker, so prepare your questions in advance.</p> <p>Here's what to ask:</p> <p>Role-specific questions. These will help you learn if candidates have the minimum requirements for your open roles (e.g. "Do you have experience with X software?").</p> <p>Questions about interests and career goals. Use these to learn if candidates would be compatible with your company in the long-run (e.g. "What's your area of expertise and what would you like to learn more about?").</p> <p>Questions about your company. These questions will help you identify candidates who have done their research, are already familiar with your brand and are interested in joining your team (e.g. "What do you know about our company?").</p>
Site Design	Post vacancy announcements at accessible locations and arrange these so that participants can quickly locate the type of jobs they are seeking.
Printing of Forms	<p>Check that all the forms you need in print or online format are ready. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event programme and brochures • Job Application Forms • Name tags • Evaluation Forms for students and TVET Colleges • Registration forms for attendees • Event checklist • Speaker checklist

Other areas to consider	Order your food, send one last email reminder to your guests, and remind your teammates about their roles. Free up some time to take care of any unexpected issues.
Throughout	
	<p>Provide regular updates on remaining tasks and activities to be followed up by your team members. Discuss problems, delays and constraints and find solutions. Monitor and revise the Job Fair To Do List on an ongoing basis (daily).</p> <p>Identify and monitor potential problem areas and risks, and devise ways to anticipate, avoid or mitigate these to minimize their impact.</p> <p>Respond to questions on Facebook promptly (within 24 hours).</p>
After	
Monitoring and evaluation	<p>Conduct an evaluation of your Job Fair against your objectives. Some of the evaluation activities (such as collecting feedback) may take place during the Job Fair. It's important to prepare for the process.</p> <p>Connect with promising candidates on LinkedIn and list your event as a sourcing channel. You should also share any information you gather about professional groups or meetups you heard about at your event with your team. This kind of networking is critical for building your talent pipeline for future roles.</p> <p>Share information about successful candidates with their training provider. Consider ways of tracking performance and sharing data.</p>

For a full breakdown of all the activities you can expect to implement when planning your Job Fair, please use your **Checklist(s)**.



Pro-Tip:

Outsourcing. You will not be able to do everything in house. Many of the services or goods that you may need to hire for your Job Fair are set out in **Vendor Agreement**. These include: Graphic Design of promotional material; Lighting; Coffee bar and restaurant installations; Technicians and porters for setting up stands; Direction signs; Cleaning; Wi-Fi connections (e.g. 4G internet provider, etc.).



Useful Tools:

1. Template: Event Checklist
2. Template: Vendor Agreement



STEP 8 *Promoting your Job Fair*

Promoting your Job Fair and raising interest for participation is vital to its success. Reaching your target audience can be done either directly or through stakeholders. Your promotional campaign should start 30 days before the event and should be based on the overall goals of the Job Fair.

Here are some steps to creating a successful promotional campaign.

Develop event branding

From the event name and theme, to the event website design or announcement on your company website and social media accounts, through to the on-site look and feel – your event’s branding sets the tone for your event. When people think of your event, you want a strong personality to shine. Additionally, a strong event brand provides a vision and helps to steer the direction of your event.

If you don’t have qualified staff who can write copy and produce graphics and visuals, we recommend you engage a copywriter to develop the Job Fair message and hire a marketing and design company that works in close cooperation with the Job Fair Team.

An event brand should reflect your company brand, but it should also have a brand of its own consistent with your theme.

Additionally, think about how your brand will come across online and in real life. Lastly, consider how you will weave your event brand into the individual elements of your event, including intangible experiences like food service for esteemed guests.

ALL your branding should incorporate:

- **Your event name.** Your event’s name is the first thing all stakeholders will see, so you want it to reflect your vision for the event.
- **Your theme.** Your event name alone can’t tell the whole story. Your theme will create that golden thread that will tie your Job Fair together.
- **Logo, colors, typography.** There should be consistency across all marketing touchpoints. On-site decor, email signatures, signage, social media visual assets, t-shirts and so much more. While every touchpoint doesn’t need to be hyper-branded, individual elements should come together to support the story you are telling.

With these branding elements solidified, you should use them across all platforms. The branding should be included on your social media, email signatures, event announcement on your website, and can also be shared on invited TVET Colleges’ websites.

Develop your electronic press kit

An effective electronic press kit (EPK) is designed to help members of the media develop stories related to your Job Fair. Your press kit should contain all of the content a reporter, producer, or blogger might need to tell your brand story within their coverage area. Your digital press kit can be created in a variety of acceptable formats, from a PowerPoint deck to a PDF file. However, a dedicated press tab on your website is best, because it creates a one-stop shop for all your event information.

The EPK includes:

- Company background
- Management/Staff Bios
- A selection of important press releases about the Job Fair
- Job Fair Fact Sheet(s)
- Case Studies/ Testimonials from alumni who now work at the company (if any)
- Open positions for WBLES, internships and permanent employment
- Noteworthy press coverage
- Industry awards and accolades
- Digital artwork
- Contact information

Use the Press Release Template

Design and production of promotional collateral

Once you have developed your brand, it is time to work on your printed and digital materials. The following are typical marketing assets for promoting a Job Fair:

- Banners for the internal premises
- Street banners and posters (budget permitting)
- Signs, stickers and badges for Job Fair staff and attendees
- Digital:
 - Social media banners (Facebook page/ twitter/email etc)
 - WhatsApp Poster
 - Digital Adverts (Facebook/LinkedIn)

Some design tips:

- Content should be readable from a distance
- Create some contrast with your colour choice
- Use a big image
- Don't forget the "Call to Action"

Promoting your Job Fair on social media

If you're planning an event, promoting it on social media is one of the most effective ways to generate buzz. The power of social media is amplified when you put specific strategies to work on each platform.

Below, you'll learn about the benefits of various social media platforms and numerous ways to promote your event.

- Choose an event page
- Choose a great hashtag
- Create compelling content
- Partner with student and community influencers
- Invest in the right tools

Choosing the right social media platform

Each social media platform has a unique set of benefits and often attracts certain demographics. Taking your stakeholders and target audience into account, here are some social media platforms you can use:



Social college platforms e.g. intranet



Facebook



Twitter



LinkedIn



Instagram



WhatsApp



Facebook

If you're unsure about promoting an event on social media, Facebook is a solid beginner's choice. Facebook lets you:

- **Share event updates** using a Facebook Business Profile.
- **Communicate with followers** via comments and messenger.
- **Create detailed event pages** to allow your stakeholders to interact.
- **Target your audience** using paid ad tools.
- **Mention and tag** TVET Colleges, other skills training providers, career centres, community and campus influencers.



Instagram

Instagram is a visually driven platform that is a force for connecting with potential attendees of your event. Instagram makes it easy to:

- **Post eye-catching content.** Tip: post on your feed. Include captivating photos/videos, write a good caption, and include trending, relevant hashtags.
 - **Create short-lived content.** Link them to your Job Fair website or landing page.
 - **Engage with followers** by responding to comments and chatting over direct messages.
 - **Link to your Job Fair website, or event page on the college website.** Provide a link to direct traffic from the app to your event page.
 - **Mention and tag** TVET Colleges, other skills training providers, career centres, community and campus influencers.
 - **Target your stakeholders** using paid ads that target your desired demographics.
-



LinkedIn

LinkedIn is best for hosting an industry-specific, business-related event. It provides:

- **Content marketing capabilities.** Highlight content like blog posts, case studies, and videos.
 - **Opportunities to network.** Network with colleges, NGOs offering skills programmes, businesses in your area, online media publications influencers and leverage endorsements. Interact with other professionals in the comments or direct messaging feature.
 - **Event management.** For corporate events, including Job Fairs, LinkedIn hosts an event management tool to streamline the promotion process.
-



Twitter

This fast-paced platform thrives on short conversations between users. Successfully promote your event on Twitter by:

- Using relevant and trending **hashtags** to attract traffic.
 - **Engaging Twitter users** in their groups and be part of the “in-crowd”.
 - **Posting promotional content** through event announcements in JPEG or PNG and videos.
-



WhatsApp

Many African citizens communicate via WhatsApp. Do this:

- Create mobile friendly **event posters**.
- **Develop content** that will make your audience want to share in groups.
- **Post on** team members’ **statuses** and profiles, including volunteers, and share and link **via Facebook stories**.
- Create an **event profile** where you communicate to all stakeholders.
- **Create a group** to communicate internally.

ADDITIONAL MARKETING TOOLS

Email marketing

Every day and after each event use your database to promote your event. You can also promote open positions, locations, times and much more.

SMS

Not only should you reach out to your target market through multiple media outlets, you should also reach out to them on their phones. Take the time to message every applicant via SMS to remind them of date times, to bring their CVs and to dress professionally.

Broadcast and print media

Create media partnerships with TVET College campuses and community radio and TV stations, or send your press release to commercial broadcasters; contact stations to receive unpaid airplay through live interviews.

TVET College Boards

Target ALL TVET Colleges and other skills training providers for your Job Fair through popular websites, newspapers and career centres.



Useful Tools:

1. **Template:** Press release template
2. **Template:** Vendor contracts
3. **Level-Up and Crush It: A Jobseeker's Guide to Job Fairs**
4. **Template:** Event Checklist
5. **Template:** Event Planner
6. **Template:** To-Do List
7. **Template:** Budget Planner
8. **Template:** Social Media Content Plan & Scheduling
9. **Template:** Event Speaker checklist
10. **Template:** Event Marketing time-line
11. **Template:** COVID-19 Event Checklist
12. **Resource:** Legal Requirements: Ambulance Services. Job Fair Clearance
13. **Resource:** Photographers & Videographers Content Guide



STEP 9 *Implementing your Job Fair*

The Event Day

It might seem obvious, but as you plan your event it's crucial to keep one thing in mind: the Event Day experience. There are a few key areas that we recommend focusing on: location, content and collaboration. These Event Day tips will help you curate the best possible experience for your attendees.

Once the event is in full swing, the primary focus is to make sure the event stays on time. It is important to be available to students and guests, and to your staff in case they have questions. If there is a problem, stay calm and don't draw attention to the issue. Remember, most guests do not have a blueprint of the event and will most likely not have any idea that a problem presented itself.



Pro-Tip:

Be on premises at least two hours before it starts. This includes your technical team, Job Fair core team and recruiters. Complete a full dry run, sound check and tech check the day before the event. If appropriate, bring laptops so that candidates can look at your website and get a better idea of your mission and products.

To make the most out of your Job Fair, brief your team to:

- ✓ Speak to as many job seekers as possible. You'll increase the chances of finding qualified candidates.

- ✓ Keep interviews within specific timeframes. Long queues will turn candidates off. Consider assigning someone on your Job Fair team the role of the interview coordinator to make sure conversations are structured and brief.

- ✓ Write down notes during interviews. It's difficult to remember candidates after Job Fairs unless you take brief notes as you talk to them.

- ✓ Gather candidates' CVs and contact details. You could also prompt them to apply for the job on your webpage.

- ✓ Let candidates know what to do next. Inform qualified candidates when to expect hearing back from you (e.g. "We'll call you by the end of next week to schedule a more formal interview"). And tell candidates who are not a good match at present that you will keep their details for future contact when there's a suitable open position.

- ✓ Answer candidates' questions. Job seekers want to know about your company as much as you want to know about them. So make sure you provide them with interesting information (e.g. about your teams, open roles and future plans).

Additional Tips:

- ✓ Note “no-shows” by saving the unclaimed name badges
- ✓ Note “walk-ins” for tabulation
- ✓ Assign a greeter and assist any guest who may have a physical disability
- ✓ Greet the local media and provide them with press packs and food
- ✓ Check that the photographer and videographer have arrived
- ✓ Ensure catering services are running smoothly
- ✓ Make sure the following forms are easily accessible and completed: **evaluation form for students and employers, volunteer sign in form** and **attendee registration form**
- ✓ Confirm that all permits (when applicable) are displayed and easily seen
- ✓ Monitor lines and make sure the flow of the room is adequate
- ✓ Check if all team members/recruiters/HR Managers/Demonstrators are in their assigned areas .
- ✓ Ensure that the registration desks are in place and well equipped
- ✓ Ensure that the information desk and vacancy announcements are visible
- ✓ Check if signs for Toilets and Exits are placed appropriately
- ✓ Make sure you have a thorough cleaning schedule, particularly for toilets
- ✓ Check the Wi-Fi connection
- ✓ Ensure that the PA and lighting system are working- do a sound check

For a more extensive list of recommended activities to make your Job Fair a success please use your **Checklist(s)**.



Useful Tools:

1. Template: To-Do List
2. Template: Bathroom Cleaning Roster



STEP 10 *Carrying out Monitoring and Evaluation and follow-up*

Your Job Fair may be over, but don't relax yet: there is still a lot of work that needs to be handled before you can consider your event complete. Tie up loose ends, complete the paperwork and compile and store all this information for future reference. Has your event register been updated? Does it reflect "no-shows"? Have you paid all your outstanding invoices? Have you reconciled your accounts? Did you debrief with staff and volunteers that attended your event?

Contact Candidates

Job Fairs are only the first step of your hiring process. So, don't leave qualified candidates waiting. Contact Job Fair candidates to coordinate next steps.

Analyse the financial performance of your Job Fair

Once your Job Fair is over, you need to close the loop and add up all expenses and revenues. This is not only important to show your stakeholders (and partners if you are in a partnership), but also for you to learn from your experiences and improve your next Job Fair by analysing your financial performance. Go back to the success measures and benchmarks that you set up before the event to determine if you were successful.

These might include:

- Completing a detailed application form
- Participating in a screening call to discuss a position's details
- Completing an assignment so you can assess their skills
- Coming in for a first or second interview at your offices

The Job Fair Team's tasks will include:

- Processing applications
- Measuring results
- A follow up meeting to discuss overall impressions and high-potential candidates. Decide whether this Job Fair was beneficial to your recruiting efforts and talk about ways to improve your strategy for next time.





Say “Thank You!”

Thank your core team and all other staff that helped bring your Job Fair to reality. Neglecting to thank vendors and important contact people sends the wrong message about you and your event - you aren't organised, you didn't give value to the event and you don't appreciate your help. Thank-you messages or letters need to be warm, sincere, and quickly sent within 48 hours of the event. Personalise your communications.

A personalised thank you creates relationships of growth, trust, and positive affirmation in you and your company.

Complete the paperwork

Take the time to update your attendee list and note the guests that did not attend. An accurate list of attendees will help to build a relevant database, and is vital to evaluating the event.

Process the Evaluation Forms used to get feedback from your attendees (especially from TVET Colleges and other training providers) on the overall experience, and their interest in participating in future events. Summarise and compare the results from Job Seeker and TVET Training Provider Evaluation forms.

Pay any invoices that may be outstanding. Complete a **Job Fair Report** and share with all relevant stakeholders not more than a week after your event. Your report should account for all expenses. This statement will confirm at a glance how much you paid and to whom and your final total expense.

Store all files, pictures, promotional materials and documents for the next Job Fair. Examples are budgets, forms, letters, lists, memos, signs, posters, templates, press releases, advertising and promotion materials, planning and meeting notes, schedules, timelines, reports, evaluations, supplies, equipment, etc.



Debrief

Take all team members' comments and suggestions into consideration for improving future Job Fairs. In addition, immediate feedback from attendees is also a wonderful tool to measure success. Openly discussing the Job Fair with key stakeholders that attended will reaffirm what worked, what did not work and how to

improve the event. A debriefing meeting should be scheduled within three to seven days after the Job Fair and should be facilitated by a neutral party that can record comments and lead the discussion in a conversational, unobtrusive manner.



Use the Debriefing Procedures as a guide.



For more feedback, conduct follow-up interviews telephonically or virtually using communications platforms such as Zoom, Google Meets or MS Teams, not more than one month after the Job Fair.

Measure results

To better understand the benefit vs. cost of your Job Fair, it's helpful to develop Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in relation to the Job Fair, and compare them with other recruiting strategies. Ask questions like:

These might include:

- How many candidates did we source during the event?
- How many of them were qualified?
- How many did we interview in our company?
- How many did we hire?
- What was the overall time-to-hire?
- Where do Job Fair events fall in our list of best sources of hire?



Pro-Tip:

In the context of a formal Job Fair partnership, a post-event meeting is crucial to discuss the Job Fair outcomes in relation to further partnership activities. These could include areas such as curriculum input (including design of WBLE, internships and mentoring programmes); TVET staff and workplace trainer development with industry experts; linking into other related

skills development programmes in the area; and funding, equipment or infrastructure development opportunities. If there was no formal partnership set up for the Job Fair, you should consider how to leverage some of the relationships built through the event for some of these future collaborations.



Useful Tools:

1. Template: Evaluation forms for students
2. Template: Evaluation forms for TVET Training Providers
3. Template: Job Fair Report
4. Resource & Template: Debriefing Procedures
5. Template: Self-Evaluation Form



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