



PORTFOLIO

A professional portfolio is a visual representation of your experience and contains samples of your work. It is a handy tool in the job interview process.

A portfolio is a collection of work samples or artifacts that you can bring to an interview, send to a prospective employer, or even post online.

A portfolio is a way to organize and present your skills, projects, training, education, and credentials. It allows you to display your best work. It also can provide a way to tell the story of your career by offering physical or visual proof of the quality of your product.



TYPES/PLATFORMS

Based on your presentation medium, there are two types of portfolios:

- **Hardcopy – Binder, padfolio, presentation book**
- **Electronic – Webpage, blog, on-line platform**

The rules regarding content and organization are the same for both types of portfolios.

In hardcopy (handheld) format, your portfolio can be easily created by using a high quality binder, padfolio, or presentation book. Sections can be organized by tabs and page separators. Pages are typically heavyweight paper or cardstock to allow effective mounting of artifacts.

Electronic (digital) platforms offer the same range of creative options as one would have in creating a webpage. By using on-line design tools, navigation features, and layout options, you can easily create a site that organizes your artifacts in a visually appealing way.

Either format should present images and information in an organized manner. Including a table of contents (menu, index) is an effective way of organizing your items. Group items into logical categories for increased user-friendliness.

WHO USES PORTFOLIOS?

As an interview tool, portfolios can be very useful for those fields that have a strong visual component. Perhaps your particular field focuses on tasks, projects, products, and results that are easily rendered in a visual or printed format. In some industries they are all but required. Some career categories lend themselves to portfolio use more than others. In particular, portfolios enhance the presentation of candidates in these field:

- **Project Management**
- **Education/Teaching**
- **Public Relations/Advertising**
- **Art/Graphics/Design**
- **Performing Arts/Entertainment**
- **Writing/Journalism**
- **Software Development/Computer Programming**
- **Fashion/Modeling/Interior Design**
- **Media/Film/Photography**



ENHANCEMENT

Presented as a physical presentation book or as a digital/electronic/on-line webpage, your portfolio enriches, expands, and extends your interview presentation. As a prop or device, it is an excellent enhancement tool to highlight and showcase your collective qualifications. You might think of your portfolio as a living or illustrated version of your resume.

Your portfolio adds a visual and tactile component to your interview presentation. A good portfolio should balance creativity with a professional image. It might include some casual elements, but should still generally be formal. It can be friendly without being cutesy. It should be created with high quality materials and good design skills.



CONTENTS

The specific contents of a portfolio greatly depend on the career field you are operating in and the extent to which there are appropriate artifacts that can be displayed or showcased in this manner. Some possible content ideas include the following items.

Written statements:

- Professional profile statement
- List of career goals
- Work philosophy statement
- Personal mission statement
- List of areas of expertise
- Brief biography (not too personal)



Documents:

- Resume/curriculum vita
- Copy of certification/license/diploma/degree
- Letters of reference/commendation/appreciation
- Articles written about you
- Academic transcripts
- Certificates of attendance (conferences, training)
- Membership certificates
- Performance evaluations/appraisals
- Award certificates
- Testimonials

Writing samples (Items you wrote):

- Articles
- Blog entries/media posts
- Press releases
- Speeches/scripts
- Research papers
- Work reports
- Stories/poems/narratives
- Grant proposals
- Lesson plans/syllabus/curriculum notes



Artifacts (Items you created):

- Artwork
- Photographs
- Promotional materials/designs/graphics/logos
- Brochures, pamphlets, posters, flyers
- Handouts/infographics

Rendering artifacts for display in a portfolio might involve scanning or photocopying printed materials or photographing 3-dimensional materials. You might include photographs of yourself in a professional setting or engaged in professional tasks.

If you are utilizing an electronic platform, you can include video and audio recordings. You can also include hyperlinks to websites, web pages, or blogs you created.

As an expansion of your resume, your portfolio can be utilized to present typical resume items in a more enhanced manner.

- List of awards
- List of community service projects
- List of conferences attended
- List of leadership roles
- List of research projects
- List of publications
- List of presentations
- List of functional skills
- List of technical competencies