Quickly Go to Info

Career Portfolios: Getting Started
Supporting the claims made in your résumé and cover letter.

Career portfolios: Your work in a nutshell.

Portfolios today are not just limited to paper. Stocky cases and bulky three-ring binders are now being molded to fit today's sleek, streamlined medium: the Internet. Those looking for a job – from historians to editors to mechanics – can create an innovative online collection of files and documents that show off their strengths, proclaim their individuality, and advance their chances of being hired.

The benefits of an online career portfolio.

Not to be confused with cover letters that quickly give reasons as to why you should be hired, or résumés, which list your work experience and qualifications, career portfolios take the extra step of providing a detailed overview of who you are and what you've achieved. Digital documents, multimedia examples of your work, personal statements, and references are concrete forms to support claims made in your cover letter and résumé.

Online career portfolios can be an effective tool to market "You," the brand. They show off your skills by neatly putting together your digital work samples, audio and video clips, projects, recommendations, awards, personal experience, and more into one convenient and updatable package.

Online portfolios can also save time. If you show your materials to potential employers before a face-to-face interview, it could give you a leg-up above other potential candidates. There's a possibility that it could get you hired sooner.

What to include in your portfolio.

Take into account what is important to you and your job search. All of those activities, awards, events, and citations not included in your résumé now have a place to shine.

Shape and mold your online career portfolio around your major and interests. Don't forget to update and re-organize as needed to be able to fit your target job.

Begin with the following, but add more if you can:
- -- Honors and letter(s) of recommendation
- -- Photos, videos, music, and audio clips
- -- Performances and presentations
- -- Workshops, seminars, and conferences you've attended
- -- Published or printed works
- -- Blog links (if relevant)
- -- Internships and co-op experiences
- -- Volunteer and community service
- -- Language fluency, travel, and relevant hobbies
- -- Sports and co-curricular leadership positions
- -- Scholarships and awards

Remember, an online career portfolio is exposed and open to public scrutiny – be sure to use common sense and be careful when uploading. Don't include anything you wouldn't want a potential employer to view. Think of it this way, if you wouldn't feel

Simply put:

Your career portfolio – online or not – is a representation of you. Make sure it's the depiction you're confident in:

→ Be organized, professional, concise, and relevant.

→ Document formats: Word doc, PDF, XLS, GIF, JPEG, MPG, MOV, SWF. Make file sizes as small as possible.

→ Be aware of copyright infringements.

→ Don't post anything you'll regret.

→ Update when/where needed.

→ Portfolios include career, art and design, music, and video.

comfortable showing it to your grandmother, then you probably shouldn't include it in your portfolio. Be cautious of copyright, private business, and privacy issues. For example: You don't always own the rights to some of the projects you may have created during an internship.

Find your format.

Save money, save time: Scan and digitize all of your files and documents into PDFs. Minimize your file size. Only upload items such as Word docs, .jpg, .mpg, etc. that you can confidently show as your best work. Organize your files in a logical sequence. Provide concise descriptions and statements. Present yourself professionally and address the employer's needs – it will make it easier for them to take your work seriously and determine your fit within the company.