

What is a Job Search Portfolio?

Broadly, a portfolio is a collection of works used to show one's capabilities to others. Thus, from the perspective of the applicant, the portfolio is a tool one can use to market oneself. However, from the perspective of the prospective employer, a portfolio serves as an evaluation tool for identifying the best candidate for a given position.

When should a Job Search Portfolio be used?

Such variables as your industry or profession, the employer's hiring processes, the job market at a given time, etc. will dictate whether a portfolio will be useful in the job search. It is safe to say that usually, unless specifically requested by an employer, a portfolio will not be a part of the initial application and screening process. More conventional materials like the resume, cover letter, and/or job application are most often used in the initial selection process. However, when interviewing, attending a career fair, networking, or simply keeping yourself current about your own qualifications and accomplishments, having a portfolio and the process of assembling and maintaining it can be of immense value.

What formats are available for a Job Search Portfolio?

Traditionally, portfolios have been a collection of paper materials organized in a professional binder with page protectors and labeled tabs. In recent years, there has been an increased interest in electronic portfolios (e-portfolios) or digital portfolios. You may choose to employ one or both of these options

Paper Portfolios

Basics ☐ Resume ☐ Official transcript ☐ Letters of recommendation

Table of Contents: Clearly outlines sections for easy finding

- Depending on your major and career field, sections may be organized by skill clusters:
 - **Communications** may include, but is not limited to:
 - Writing Layout Broadcasting
 - Computer Graphics Design Public Relations
 - **Education** may include, but is not limited to:
 - Lesson Plans by Unit Evaluations Classroom Management Philosophy

Artifacts Pertaining to Formal and Informal Education and Training

- **Communications** may include:
 - Brochures describing training events, retreats, workshops, clinics, lecture series
 - Certificate of mastery or completion, lists of competencies mastered, and/or licenses
 - Grants, loans, scholarships secured for schooling
 - Samples from classes (papers, projects, reports, displays, video/computer samples)
 - Samples from personal studies (notes, binders, products)
 - Syllabi or course descriptions for classes and workshops
 - Transcripts, report cards
- **Education** may include:
 - Philosophy of education
 - Sample lesson plans
 - List of classroom management strategies
 - Videotape of classroom teaching (made available)
 - Any education-related research project
 - Individual case study
 - Teaching unit (photos of projects, bulletin boards, and kids [with permission] can be applicable here if tied in with unit) Samples of other classroom work

Artifacts Demonstrating General Work Performance

- Descriptive material about the organization or class projects:
 - Writing samples from a past position, internship, or class project (press release, feature stories, public service announcement, newsletter, news or radio script, speech script, etc.)
 - Creative samples (print advertisement, newsletter, web page design, newspaper layout design, etc.)

Artifacts about Skills Using Data

- Communication pieces (memos, reports, or documents, a public service announcement)
- Writing abilities, demonstrated in actual samples of your writing (articles, proposals)
- Display or Performance materials (actual objects, or illustrations, or posters from displays)
- Computer related (any materials created from InDesign, PhotoShop, etc. that demonstrate your knowledge of the programs, desktop publishing documents, samples from using the Internet, computer video screen pictures or manuals covers illustrating programs you use)
- Formal and technical documents as in grant or loan applications (include proposal cover sheet or award letter), technical manual

Artifacts Pertaining To People Skills

- People and leadership skills (projects or committees you share, projects you initiated, photos of you with important people, mentoring programs, proposals, strategies related to negotiation)
- Planning Samples (summary of steps, instruments used such as surveys or focus groups)
- Problem solving illustrated with various artifacts. Use figures or pictures showing improvements in products, services, profits, safety, quality, time. Include forms used to solve problems

Artifacts from a Complete Project

- Feature samples from an “all encompassing” project where you demonstrate seeing a project from beginning to end (any project from an internship or capstone class like Advertising/PR Campaigns)
- This sample should allow you to define the problem, define the target audience, the value proposition, and the resulting work at the end.

Electronic Portfolios

Electronic portfolios include the information typically found in a paper portfolio, but allow for a more dynamic presentation style.

CD-Rom: A CD-Rom is a good way to preserve the components of your paper portfolio, keep all of the documents organized together, and can be easily copied to leave with or send to prospective employers. Items you possess that are not in digital format should be scanned into the computer. This type of electronic portfolio is useful because it demonstrates a degree of computer-savvy and allows for added features such as graphics, video clip, presentation slides, and animation.

Web-Based: Web-based electronic portfolios are the most accessible to employers and can be shared by simply adding the website URL to your resume and/or cover letter. It is an excellent way to demonstrate sophisticated computer skills and employers will never lose it! It is extremely important that this type of portfolio has a professional appearance, is easy to navigate, and is updated regularly (including checking links). To get started, consider:

Web Hosting Sites

Weebly (<http://www.weebly.com/>)
 Coroflot (<http://www.coroflot.com/>)

Angelfire (<http://angelfire.lycos.com/>)
 Tripod (<http://www.tripod.lycos.com/>)

Helpful Links:

- Ball State University, Career Center: [Professional Employment Portfolio](http://www.bsue.edu/students/careers/documents/portfoli/)
<http://www.bsue.edu/students/careers/documents/portfoli/>

- About.com: [Portfolios for Employment](http://jobsearch.about.com/cs/resumes/a/portfolio.htm)
<http://jobsearch.about.com/cs/resumes/a/portfolio.htm>
- Your Job Skills Portfolio: [Giving you an Edge in the Marketplace](http://www.quintcareers.com/job_search_portfolio.html)
http://www.quintcareers.com/job_search_portfolio.html

Use internet social networks to make connections with people:

We're tweeting! 

- Follow the Career Services Center on **Twitter** (twitter.com/MU_CSC) to stay up to date on the latest job search articles, highlights and Career Services Center happenings.

We're blogging! 

- Be sure to visit the Career Services Center's new blog, **Career Chatter** (marquettecsc.blogspot.com), regularly to get all the latest information and advice from our office. It's the Career Services Center... UNPLUGGED

We're on Facebook! 

- Become a fan of the MU Career Services Center on **Facebook** (www.facebook.com/mucsc). It can't hurt...right?

We're LinkedIn! 

- Network with professionals in our MUCSC Group on **LinkedIn**. If you don't already have an account - here is one good excuse to get one! To find us just search in groups for MUCSC and join.