Portfolio Guide

A portfolio showcases achievements, strengths, and skills you have attained through school, work experience, and training. A portfolio, electronic or a hard copy, can set you apart from other job candidates if you present it well, know what to include, and how to use it properly.

WHY DO YOU NEED A PORTFOLIO?

- Allows you to expand your resume; resumes are usually limited to one page
- A portfolio allows for expansion on areas of expertise
- Contains actual proof of your skills and accomplishments
- You can show examples of your work or letters of recommendation, which testify to your quality of work
- Helps keep all your important work-related documents and samples in one protected place
- It can be a reminder of things you want to highlight in documenting your skills
- Enhances creativity
- A portfolio can contain a variety of colors, papers, and graphics

WHAT TO INCLUDE IN YOUR PORTFOLIO?

A portfolio includes a multitude of items which can be arranged in a variety of ways, depending on your preference. Items could be organized by education, activities, work-related activities, work experiences, personal qualities or strengths, achievements, international experience, and recommendations. These are just a few options. Each student is different and has different experiences or items to showcase. Feel free to include all or some of these and add your own.

Suggestions Include:

- Resume
- Official copy of transcript
- Course descriptions
- Fact sheet with list of skills
- List of experiences that may not have fit on your resume
- Special projects (school or work-related which are relevant)
- Certificate(s) of achievement(s)
- List of membership in professional organizations and/or honor society
- Learning agreements/contracts from internships and/or apprenticeship experiences
- Evaluations from internships or other work-related experiences

- Writing Samples
- Documentation of technical or computer skills
- A program or flyer from an event you helped plan or coordinate
- List of activities and positions held
- Community service participation
- Hobbies or interests
- Accomplishments in sports or other groups
- Letters of recommendation
- Strengths (personal qualities which will help you contribute to an employer such as teamwork, problem-solving, budgeting, time management, planning and organization)

USING YOUR PORTFOLIO

Your portfolio should be presented in a professional manner. A binder with an attractive title page, table of contents, labeled dividers, and sheet protectors are a good way to display and protect your materials. Arrange your portfolio, whether it is an electronic version or hard copy, similar to the way you would your resume. Only show the information which is most relevant to the needs of the viewer.

- Your portfolio may look great and be self-explanatory but it will not speak for itself. You must explain what is in your portfolio.
- If time is limited pick out what would be most relevant to the reviewer and demonstrates your best accomplishments or pieces of work.
- It is a good idea to always bring your portfolio to interviews. It can help support your answer and show an example of something you have done.
- You may not always have time to show your portfolio. You could bring extra copies of pieces you are most proud of or are most relevant to the interviewer and offer to leave them; you could also offer to send copies of some materials as a follow-up to the interviewer. Another option is to offer to e-mail an electronic version of your portfolio.
- Your portfolio can help you prepare for an interview. Reviewing the contents will provide you with fresh examples to draw from during the interview.