

PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO ASSIGNMENT

Purpose

- To exemplify rhetorical skills and principles
- To establish a professional identity
- To present academic, employment, leadership, and professional artifacts
- To reflect on knowledge, skills, and experiences
- To apply visual rhetoric in creating a professional presence

Professional Portfolio

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Portfolios have been used for many years by artists, photographers, designers, and artisans to display and promote their work. It's only in the last couple of decades that the portfolio concept has been integrated into the field of career development. In this context, professional portfolios can be seen in two different and complementary ways—as both a product and a process.

As a **product**, the professional portfolio can be defined by examining the meaning of the word *portfolio*. *Port* is from Latin, meaning to move. In the portfolio context, *port* means that one's credentials are portable, transportable, manageable, and convenient. *Folio* refers to papers or artifacts, and in this case, the means of packaging evidence of skills and abilities. So, a professional portfolio is a portable means of storing, tracking, and presenting samples or artifacts which demonstrate skills and abilities. Individuals can use portfolios to show others what they have accomplished, learned, or produced.

As a **process**, the portfolio offers a framework for individuals to guide and capture all aspects of their academic and professional development, including self-assessments, goal-setting, skills identification, career and educational transition, getting and keeping work, and lifelong professional development. As an ongoing, developmental process, the professional portfolio provides documentation of the past and offers a guide to the future.

The concept of the career portfolio also becomes a metaphor which captures the profound shift in thinking about work we have experienced in the last two decades—away from jobs and occupations towards a focus on skills and knowledge individuals must acquire if they are to succeed in the new world of work.

Portfolio Formats

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The format that a professional takes will depend on the application, the requirements of the setting, the level of the individual's skills, and the technology that's available. One of the most exciting aspects of the professional portfolio process is that it can be totally open-ended, offering individuals the opportunity for creativity and free self-expression. Given the diverse applications of the portfolio, there is no one approach that can fit all circumstances. However, the portfolio must exemplify professionalism.

Portfolio Artifacts

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So, what types of things go in a portfolio? Here are some basic categories. Don't feel you need to use these exact ones for your portfolio. The key to remember as you contemplate these items is that you want to give reasons for the employer to hire you—you want to showcase your education and work experience by showing examples and evidence of your knowledge, skills, and experiences.

- Career summary and goals
- Resume (consider both chronological and functional)
- Academic skills, abilities, and marketable qualities
 - Major
 - Minor
 - Emphasis/Cluster
- Employment skills, abilities, and marketable qualities
- Leadership skills, abilities, and marketable qualities
- Internship skills, abilities, and marketable qualities
- Accomplishments
- Samples of your work
- Research, publications, reports
- Presentations
- Testimonials and letters of recommendation
- Awards and honors
- Conferences, workshops, professional or academic organizations
- Professional development activities
- Reference list

Portfolio Submission

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Students will submit an electronic portfolio (200 points). In many instances, students will also post assignments such as the resumes, final research reports, articles, and *Spori Business Review* through their professional portfolio.