



How to Use Your Portfolio

WHY DO I NEED A PORTFOLIO?

Traditionally, portfolios have been used by artists, architects and designers to get hired and promoted, but more and more people are using them in other fields to assist them in getting jobs and developing as a professional. It is becoming more common for business professionals, particularly business students who are starting their careers to bring portfolios into interviews to illustrate their qualifications. Portfolios can also be used once on the job to substantiate accomplishments. They can be particularly useful when entering a performance review and to support a request for a raise!

A well-targeted portfolio that is properly presented can be a great self-marketing tool for five main reasons:

1. It draws *attention* to the key information you want to convey about yourself.
2. It provides *links* that connect you with an opportunity.
3. It makes the key *intangibles tangible*.
4. It adds to your *credibility*.
5. It builds *confidence*.

PORTFOLIOS GET ATTENTION. We've all know ever since kindergarten that 'show and tell' is more powerful than just tell. The simple act of handing a potential employer a document from your portfolio not only gets that person's undivided attention, it also piques her curiosity.

PORTFOLIOS PROVIDE LINKS. Once you have a potential employer's attention, each item that you present in a well-targeted portfolio helps to make the link between what you can do and what the other person is looking for.

PORTFOLIOS MAKE INTANGIBLES TANGIBLE. Research indicates that employers and bosses are looking for certain key intangibles that can be brought to life in a portfolio.

PORTFOLIOS ADD TO YOUR CREDIBILITY. When you present an item from your portfolio, you are not just saying you are something, you are showing that your claims about yourself have real substance. In this way a portfolio that contains the right items adds to your credibility. Selectively shown items help to answer the question that always lurks when people are meeting for the first time: “Is this person for real?” There is something to that old adage, “seeing is believing”.

PORTFOLIOS BUILD CONFIDENCE. Even if you show up for a job interview and discover that you have forgotten to bring your portfolio, all is not lost. If you’ve done your homework and created a great portfolio, you will know exactly what you bring to this opportunity and will be able to articulate why you are the right person for the job with great confidence. You will know that what you say about yourself is true, and the sense that you truly believe what you are saying will come across, with or without your portfolio. But, of course, you will be more effective if you do remember to bring your portfolio with you!

Let the skill sets demonstrated in your portfolio give you confidence.

The process of targeting your portfolio should make you very aware of the particular skill sets you have that are right for the job under consideration. Focus on these strengths and you will start looking forward to going to interviews that will give you opportunities to discuss these skill sets. You will know that whatever claims you make about yourself, you can back them up. You will know this because you have a Career Portfolio!

HOW DO YOU ACTUALLY USE A PORTFOLIO & WHEN?

#1: TO ACE AN INTERVIEW

Here are some of the advantages that having a well-targeted portfolio can give you during a job interview, if it is used properly:

- The simple fact that you bring a portfolio to the interview distinguishes you from candidates who did not bring a portfolio; this shows initiative on your part.
- Having a nice-looking portfolio suggests that you are the kind of person who is well prepared and well organized.

-
- Having a portfolio that contains documents that verify your experiences, skills, abilities and personal characteristics that are relevant to the job under consideration suggests that you have a very serious interest in this job, and that you have a clear idea as to what is required to be successful in the job.
 - The items in your portfolio allow you to provide tangible evidence that you, indeed, have important qualifications for this job.
 - Your portfolio enables you to give examples that showcase the key personal characteristics being sought in the candidate.
 - You can discuss your qualifications for the job with confidence, with or without showing items from your portfolio. Even when you do not show documents from your portfolio, just Never leave your portfolio behind!
 - Knowing that you can verify the claims you make about yourself allows you to talk in a very confident and convincing manner about your qualifications.
 - You come across as a can-do candidate. You give the overall impression that you
 - are very much a candidate who is ready, willing, and able to get the job done.

Typically, a career portfolio is not shown in its entirety during an evaluation or an interview. Instead, at appropriate moments during the interview, you *selectively* show particular documents that both validate and bring to life the claims you are making. You must find the right moment to show a particular document, such as responding to an important question during a job interview, as in the following example:

Interviewer:

“This position requires a person who has a strong work ethic and the organizational skills necessary to work on multiple projects at the same time. Can you describe a situation where you had to work on several projects at the same time and what you did to achieve success?”

Job Candidate:

“Yes, last fall I was charged with creating a business plan for my division. This was a very comprehensive plan that detailed the potential of my division as well as set baseline goals to help the company make large profits. At the same time, I chaired a steering committee set up to recommend changes in the organizational structure of my division. Even though both projects were demanding and time-consuming, I was able to get both tasks completed successfully. In fact, I would like to show you some letters of

commendation I received from my company that describe my work ethic and creativity on these projects.”

Key Do's and Don'ts for using your Career Portfolio in a Job Interview:

- 1. Do not let go of your portfolio. It is leaves your hands, the whole direction of the interview will change. Instead, hand individual items to your interviewer.*
- 2. Keep the focus on **you**, not on your portfolio. Your portfolio should be viewed as something that enhances the presentation of your qualifications for the job, not as the central feature of the interview.*
- 3. Do not keep your portfolio continuously open. To do so would put too much focus on your portfolio.*
- 4. Use the peek-a-boo technique when showing your portfolio. Take your portfolio out to make a point, then close it and put it aside.*
- 5. Do not use your portfolio as a crutch. Do not use it to fill awkward silences or to remind you what to say next.*
- 6. Look for opportunities to use your portfolio in response to key questions. Your portfolio can really come alive when you use it to substantiate a point you want to make about yourself in response to a question that is obviously very important to the interviewer.*
- 7. Always explain the relevance of the documents you present. When you show an item from your portfolio, tell the interviewer quite explicitly the relevant skill sets that this document illustrates or verifies, “I included this document to illustrate my ability to ... It also, I believe, shows that I ... “*
- 8. Use portfolio items to demonstrate desirable personal characteristics. Personal characteristics that are desirable in candidates but are hard to prove can be nicely illustrated with your portfolio.*
- 9. Use most of your portfolio items as confidence builders that you don't actually show. Remember, you do not need to show items to speak confidently about the things you have done that generated these items. Just knowing that you can verify claims you make about yourself will enable you to talk in a very confident and convincing manner about your qualifications.*
- 10. Bring extra copies of items that your interviewer is likely to find particularly impressive. And make doubly sure all proprietary information has been carefully deleted from anything you intend to leave behind.*
- 11. Do not leave behind items that have not been explained during the interview. And do not send things from your portfolio that were not discussed during the interview.*

12. *Be careful not to show your portfolio too much. Less is truly more when presenting your portfolio. Follow the old show biz maxim, and “leave ‘em hungering for more.”*

2: TO GET A FAVORABLE PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Get started early. In order to create a portfolio that gives you an edge in your next performance review, it is important for you and your boss to have an explicit understanding of the criteria on which your performance will be judged.

Assemble a portfolio that shows you have met or exceeded your boss’s expectations. Here are some things to think about when you are assembling your portfolio:

1. *Identify the key performance criteria in your boss’s mind.* List the performance criteria on which you will be judged. If you are having difficulty determining this, talk to a person you trust who has had successful performance reviews from your boss in the past.
2. *List the particular skill sets and traits your boss considers most important.*
3. *Collect documents that demonstrate that you have met or exceeded expectations.* Performance figures, letters of appreciation, awards, citations, certificates – any document that gives evidence of one or more of the high priority skill sets you have demonstrated since your last performance review should be collected.
4. *Organize your portfolio according to your identified important skill sets.*
5. *Select the best documents to show.* Choose the documents that give the strongest evidence that you have met or exceeded important expectations.
6. *Assemble two copies of your entire portfolio.* Since you may be leaving a copy of your entire portfolio with your boss, you should create a second copy.

#3: TO GET A RAISE

Using a portfolio to get a raise is quite similar to using a portfolio to get a good performance review. In both cases, you will want to show everything in your portfolio that gives evidence of your having met your boss’s expectations. Review the suggestions made above for using a portfolio to get a good performance review.

Here are some further things to think about.

Know the reasons why you might qualify for a raise. You will want to include documents in your portfolio that help you make your case. But first you need to know what your case is. Why might you qualify for a raise? Were you promised a raise if you met certain expectations? Does your organization offer merit increases if certain criteria are met? Do industry salary figures reveal that other people are being paid more than you are for essentially the same job? Have you taken on new responsibilities in your job that should qualify you for a raise? Are you offering to take on new responsibilities?

Talk with someone who has been successful at getting a raise.

In addition to the documents which support your important skill sets, gather other key evidence that supports your case. If you believe you are underpaid, get a document that quotes industry salary levels for your kind of job. This data can usually be found using an Internet search engine. If you have taken on additional responsibilities not originally assigned to you that you believe qualify you for a raise, include a copy of your original job description along with your write-up of your present responsibilities.

#4: TO GET A PROMOTION

Using your portfolio to get a promotion is quite similar to creating and using a targeted portfolio to get a job with a new employer, particularly if the promotion is not controlled by your present boss.

Being inside an organization means you are well placed to find out about the precise skill sets that the people who will be interviewing you consider most important. And you are in a good position to demonstrate your ability to meet expectations in ways that are very meaningful to the people who interview you.

Demonstrate that you are a reliable performer who is ready for a new challenge. Your goal is to show that you can be relied upon to do what you are asked to do *and* you are ready for a new challenge. You should include documents that demonstrate you have consistently met past expectations during your tenure in this organization. Including these items is particular important if someone who does not know you very well is evaluating you for this position. But, unlike a portfolio that you use to get a good performance evaluation, you do not want to have in this portfolio mostly documents that demonstrate your ability to handle your present job. If you do so, you might come across as being indispensable in that job! The focus of your portfolio should instead be on the skills sets you have developed that make you ready to take on the new job.

Use your access to insiders to learn as much as you can about the new job and boss. Talk to people in your organization (or to friends of friends in the organization) who can tell you about the expectations associated with the job. What are the specific responsibilities, activities, and goals associated with the job? What are the particular skills sets that the person to whom you would report is seeking in a candidate? Are there people from human resources who will also be interviewing you? If so, what are their biases? If there was a problem in the past with how this job was done, what was it, and how can you present yourself as someone who can make significant improvements?

Get documents that verify relevant skill sets you have developed in your current position or elsewhere. When collecting documents for your portfolio, you should not limit yourself to items associated with your present job. You are trying to demonstrate that you have what it takes to succeed in a new job, which means that the desired skills sets are likely to be somewhat different from those required for your present job.

Show more portfolio items than if you were going for a job outside your organization. When you are applying for a promotion, the people who interview you are typically still thinking of you as someone in your present job. The burden is on you to demonstrate that you have important dimensions that your interviewers may have overlooked. To counter current biases, you may wish to show more items from your portfolio than you normally would if you were interviewing for a job at a different organization. You will also want to keep focusing on the future, or the interviewer might think you are too good to lose in your present position.

#5: TO CHANGE CAREERS

Changing careers means making a radical shift in the work you do. Examples of a career change include taking on a totally different kind of job in the same field, like transitioning from being a stage actor to becoming a marketing person for a theatrical company. Or, even more challenging, changing careers could involve changing both the kind of job you have *and* the field in which you will be doing the new job. An example is switching from being a schoolteacher to being a computer salesperson.

If you want to get a job that is completely different from what you are doing now, a properly targeted Career Portfolio can help you to convince a potential employer to take a chance on you.

Try to include evidence in your portfolio that you are a quick and dedicated learner. You want to be able to make the statement “I can learn new things quickly” and be able to back it up – particularly if the new job is perceived as a real stretch for you. Documents that refer to successful projects you have done in the past that required a lot of on-the-spot learning demonstrate that you are a ‘quick study’. Evidence that you have continually engaged in professional development activities, like attending workshops, could demonstrate that you are oriented toward continually learning new things.

Feature skills sets from your present job that would be useful in the new job. Rarely are two jobs entirely different. Any of the skill sets that are important in your present job that would be considered very useful in the new job should be demonstrated in your portfolio – especially if these skill sets are particular strengths of yours.

Explain your ‘translatable skills’ that will be useful in the new job. Skills that you have developed in one context that can be used in a new arena are often referred to as *transferable skills*. You probably have already developed and demonstrated a number of skills that could ultimately be used in the new career you are trying to enter. The problem is you may need to do some ‘translating’ so that your potential employer understands that you, in fact, do have relevant transferable skills.

If for example, you are a nurse who is applying for a position in an advertising agency, you can’t expect your interviewers to immediately understand the relevance of your nursing background for being a successful account executive or office manager. But, you can show your interviewers a picture of disgruntled and anxious faces in an overcrowded physician’s waiting room and explain how you have to use your people skills to calm these patients down and establish rapport with them. And you can show your interviewers letters you have received from grateful patients and say; “You know, people are people. Given the way I’ve been able to handle patients with very distressing medical problems, I think I could be quite effective working with some of your most demanding clients.”

Use a skills based functional resume. A resume that has skill set headings and uses a ‘function’ approach to organizing its items can highlight useful transferable skills and other important ‘translatable’ skill sets that a prospective employer might otherwise miss. If the items in your portfolio verify the skill sets you feature in your resume, handing your interviewer a copy of your resume at the start of the interview will set you up to show these key items from your portfolio.

Be prepared to show many items from your portfolio. Since you may have to overcome initial skepticism about your ability to add value in your new career, be prepared to show more of your portfolio than you would if you were not trying to make a radial shift.

#6: TO GET INTO COLLEGE OR GRADUATE SCHOOL

A properly targeted portfolio can give you a significant advantage if you are competing for admission to a school that interviews its applicants. The items in your portfolio can bring to life and make credible the things you say about yourself in your written application. And the fact that you have gone to the effort of assembling a portfolio to bring to an interview conveys the impression that you are strongly motivated, well organized, and 'have your act together,' – provided, of course, that the items you show from your portfolio do not undermine or contradict statements you have made in your written application! Here are some further things to consider.

Learn about the skill sets the school particularly favours and like to develop. Talk to someone closely associated with the school about the skill sets that are most valued in candidates for admission and the particular skill sets that the school prides itself on being able to develop. Ideally, you should talk to someone in the admission department prior to your interview. But you can also learn a lot about valued skill sets by talking to successful students, professors, and recent graduates. This step really should be done prior to sending in your application, as it will help you decide if this school would be a good fit for you.

Use your portfolio to establish your distinct identity. There should also be a focus to your portfolio that establishes a clear identity for you. You want to be remembered in a positive way after the interview is over, and this is most likely to happen if you can present a set of items that establishes you as a certain kind of person who can make a certain kind of contribution.

Try to 'stay on message' when presenting your portfolio. Since your goal is to have the interviewer be able to sum you up in a very positive way in a few sentences, you should try to show as many items as you can that support the distinct identity that you are trying to establish.

Hot Tip: Keep it Current!

Keeping your portfolio current is an important step in responding to the trend towards frequent work transitions. Current statistics indicate that most individuals entering the workplace will make significant changes in their careers at least five to ten times. Maintaining a current portfolio is a critical part of this process.

Resources Used:

Careerscope: looking in, looking out, looking around by: Norman Amundson, Gray Peohnell, Mark Pattern
The Career Portfolio Workbook by: Frank Satterthwaite and Gary D'Orsi, McGraw-Hill, Copyright 2003

Simon Fraser University Module Guide: The Master Portfolio

Your Journey

2021

Your Name



A Journal And Portfolio in One

This document is for you to work through, add to and revisit often. While the GROW and CCP+ programs are focused on your career future, knowing yourself and what your goals are is central to any success before, during and after the program.

“The success of every woman should be the inspiration to another. We should raise each other up. Make sure you’re very courageous: be strong, be extremely kind, and above all be humble.” – Serena Williams, professional tennis player who has won more singles titles than any man or woman

Welcome to you!

Grow Women Leaders Career Planning Portfolio! is a Career planning guide with a strong focus on practical applications. Unlike any other, this planner focuses on helping students develop an ongoing, flexible portfolio of information about themselves and work in order to prepare them for satisfying and productive lives in an ever-changing industry. The exercises and writing activities encourage students to take a proactive role in creating their futures, motivating them to become personally responsible for their life and to become an active participant in its process. The planning approach and step-by-step exercises keep students focused on the critical issues, self-developed goals, action plans, and execution of those plans. At the same time, various goal-setting techniques will help convey the importance of planning to overcome career obstacles and increase the likelihood of career success.

We're happy to have you on this journey!

Cheers

Xoxo

Tracy Barry

GROW Creator

Tereasa Maillie

GROW Writer

© 2020 Grow Women Leaders. All Rights Reserved

“We need to understand that there is no formula for how women should lead their lives. That is why we must respect the choices that each woman makes for herself and her family. Every woman deserves the chance to realize her God-given potential.” – Hillary Clinton, former Secretary of State and first woman nominated for U.S. president by a major political party

Introduction - A Life Portfolio

A Life Portfolio is about YOU. It is...

- A combination between personal and professional materials
- A life-long tool to help you discover and express who you are;
- A dynamic collection of materials or artifacts which summarize, document, and highlight the best of who you are, what you have done, and what you hope to do;
- ‘Evidence’ of your potential.
- Help making some educational or career decisions.

A Combined Portfolio is seen in the light of your past, your present, and your future. The portfolio may be used to assess strengths and weaknesses with a view to creating and reaching personal and professional goals.

What is a personal journal?

A Journal is a written record of incidents, experiences, and ideas. Also known as a notebook, diary, and log. People often keep journals to record observations and explore ideas that may eventually be developed into more formal writing such as essays and stories. People have been keeping journals since the invention of written language. A common modern form is a gratitude journal, where people reflect every day on the things they are grateful for and how to re-imagine their life.

What is a career portfolio?

A Career Portfolio is a collection of documents and other easily portable artifacts that people can use to validate claims they make about themselves. It is not a resume, which simply lists your experiences and accomplishments; nor is it a cover letter in which you write about yourself and your qualifications for a particular job. Instead, it is a collection of actual documents that support and make tangible the things you want to say about yourself in a cover letter, a resume, or a face-to-face interview.

***We must open the doors and we must see to it they remain open, so that others can pass through. -
Rosemary Brown***

Find your Heroes



Rosemary Brown was a Canadian politician. She was born in Jamaica in 1930, and as a newcomer woman she knew first hand the challenges of Black women in Canada. While attending university to obtain her Masters in social work, Brown encountered both sexism and racism. Rosemary Brown became involved with social groups that would shape her political mindset, including the creation of the British Columbia Association for the Advancement of Coloured People. In the 1960s, she became more politically active, and founding member of the Vancouver Status of Women Council (VSW). She entered provincial politics as an NDP candidate in British

Columbia. She won her seat and as an MLA, becoming the first Black woman to sit in the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia. During her 14 years as MLA, Brown created a committee to remove sexism in British Columbia's educational material. In 1975, she ran for leadership of the federal NDP. With the slogan "Brown is Beautiful," she came in second, the first Black woman to really challenge the existing system dominated by white men.

Brown received many national and international distinctions in recognition of her exceptional life of public service. This included a total of 15 honorary doctorates from Canadian universities, the Order of British Columbia (1995), the Order of Canada (Officer, 1996), and in 1973 the United Nations' Human Rights Fellowship. Brown's life, dedicated to breaking down traditional barriers against both women and Black persons in Canada, was documented in her autobiography *Being Brown: A Very Public Life*. Brown passed away in 2003. Her legacy lives on: On 2 February 2009, Canada Post Corporation issued a commemorative stamp that shows Brown standing before the B.C. Legislative Building.

(Rosemary Brown's story is taken from the [Canadian Encyclopedia](#))

Activity: We all need our own heroes and people we look up to. Can you write below about a woman you deeply admire and why? She can be a personal friend, or any woman in the field you'd like to enter in. Make sure you detail what they have done and how you take strength from her story.

“You cannot shake hands with a clenched fist.” – Indira Gandhi, first female Prime Minister of India

Open Up: The Process

The life portfolio process involves several stages. These stages tend to overlap each other but are instructive for thinking through what needs to be done to develop and use a portfolio effectively.

Self Assessments

You’ve already completed self assessments, but now you need to use the assessments to build your portfolio. But what do you include?

A ‘skill’ is a learned ability to do something well. Don’t underestimate the number of skills you actually have. This activity will help you to identify items for your portfolio and to gain an accurate picture of all your skills. First, learn to distinguish between a job title (the name of the specific job), job duties (tasks done to carry out the requirements of a specific job) and transferable skills (skills or abilities which develop over time and which can be used in a variety of school, work, social or other situations).

Knowledge of your transferable skills will help you find career options which match your skills. For example, a person, hired as a counter person at a fast food restaurant (job title), may perform specific duties (take orders, serve food and drinks, receive orders from co-workers, clean up, maintain inventory, handle cash, customer relations, etc). In order to fulfill these duties well, that person would need certain transferable skills (communication skills, skill in handling and preparing food and drinks, janitorial skills, money skills). These skills could potentially be used in other jobs, such as retail sales, other restaurant and hotel work.

You can discover your transferable skills by exploring past successes or accomplishments.

Activity : Write below about successes and accomplishments you've had in your life that had real meaning to you and were pivotal in creating who you are. An example is "I worked through my high school years and paid for my schooling myself" or "I ran a 5k fun run." If you need help, brainstorm with friends or classmates.

Activity: On separate sheets of paper, write complete descriptions of at least two accomplishments. This is an exercise to help you discover your transferable skills. While writing, think about these questions:

- What did you actually do?
- What lead up to the accomplishment?
- What happened after? How does the accomplishment relate to other aspects of your life?
- Underline any transferable skills directly mentioned in your descriptions.
- Write down in the margin any other skills which come to mind.
- You may discover even more about yourself by talking with someone else. Share your descriptions and findings with a Career Advisor. Ask him/her to suggest additional or related skills which you may have overlooked.

Review your accomplishments and then place a check mark beside all the transferable skills you have. While developing your Career Portfolio remember to keep in mind and highlight these important transferable skills!

Administrative Skills

Approve Arrange Catalogue Inspect

Financial Skills

Administer Allocate

Budget

Evaluate

Communication Skills

Address Write

Recruit Speak

Translate

Compile File

Generate Purchase

Audit

Balance Estimate Plan

Develop

Arrange

Correspond Debate

Monitor Organize Process Sort

Compute

Develop

Market

Publicize

Influence

Negotiate Persuade

Draft

Promote

Edit

Leadership/Management Skills

Formulate

Administer Analyze

Record

Assign

Retrieve

Close

Send

Commit

Forecast

Research Skills

Manage

Assess

Appraise

Clarify

Motivate

Collect

Interpret

Diagnose

Lecture

Service Skills

Moderate

Advise Wash Serve Show

Tabulate

Teaching Skills

Type

Adapt Advise Clarify Coach

Classify

Physical Skills

Project

Apply

Analyze

Spray

Calculate

Renovate Operate Rebuild

Conduct	Identify
Coordinate Delegate	Inspect
Develop	Interpret
Direct	Interview
Evaluate	Collect
Examine	Change
Extract	Clean
Focus	Encourage Evaluate Explain
Assist	Facilitate
Answer	Drive
Arrange	Construct Build
Communicate Coordinate	Check
Develop	Prioritize
Enable	Plan
Connect Assemble Unload Repair	Recommend Recruit
Sort	Review
Evaluate	Investigate Model
Increase	Organize
Initiate	Review
Lead	Prepare
Organize	Deliver

Explain

Theorize

Guide Inform Initiate Instruct

Sell

Measure Fit

Receive

Cultivate Drill

Remove

Risk

Plan

Schedule

Stimulate Train

Supervise

Regulate

Strategize

Mix

Problem-Solve

Install

Simplify

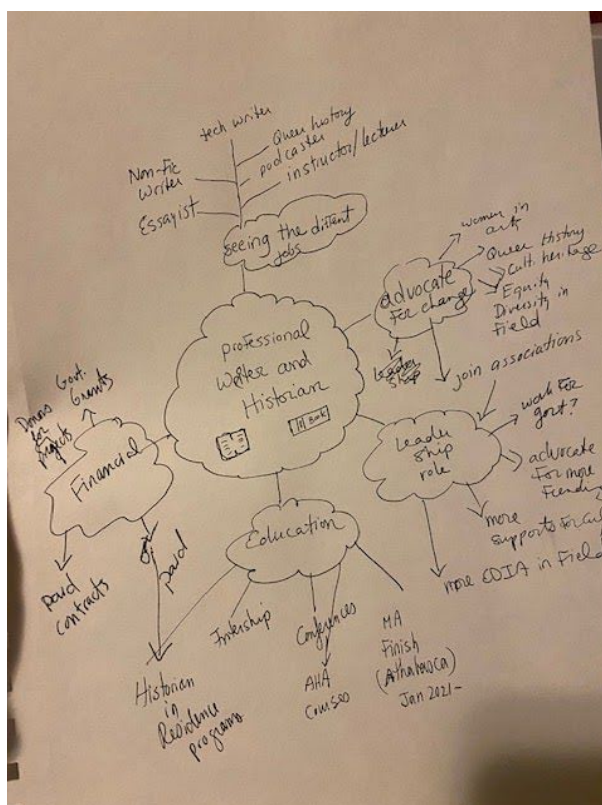
Locate

Summarize Survey

“We’re all water from different rivers, that’s why it’s so easy to meet; we’re all water in this vast, vast ocean, someday we’ll evaporate together.” – Yoko Ono, performance artist and peace activist

Your River, Your Dreams

Activity: Brainstorming is a way to let your ideas flow, but still have structure leading back to each other. Write down now everything about your dream job, your dream career. Use all your sense to describe it. Refer back to your earlier work on researching your career for specifics. Below is an example image graph for brainstorming. For yours, do it on a separate piece of paper or type it out, whatever works for you. Be messy for your first draft, then you can do as many refinements as you want. Also add pictures and notes as much as you want.



"It's great going up and looking at the earth, but all I could think of was getting back and having a glass of cold skim milk." Roberta Bondar, the first Canadian woman in space

Reality: Artifacts Of Your Life

ARTIFACTS

The technical term for an item in a portfolio is an 'artifact.' An **'artifact'** is any actual item that can provide **'evidence'** to demonstrate who you are (e.g. personal qualities) or what you have accomplished.

Artifacts can come in almost a limitless variety of forms including written text, pictures, documents, electronic presentations, web pages; artifacts may even include movies or sound files.

Artifacts may include things you actually made (e.g. reports, graphics, etc.) or things which represent what you've done (e.g. reflections, resumes, summaries, photos, etc.). Use your creativity to select and craft your artifacts in a manner which best represents what you wish to show others.

GATHERING ARTIFACTS

The place to start when developing your portfolio is to collect and store artifacts, things that in some way demonstrate who you are and what you can do.

The following list of artifacts is far from complete. Use these suggestions to help you generate ideas that will work for your portfolio. Add any other ideas you may have in the blanks provided. Think about each idea and ask yourself if you have anything similar which you can develop into an artifact.

Activity: Write out a full list of all the artifacts in your career and life. For example any licenses (drivers, business, professional & technical), certificates (first aid, lifesaving, food safe, WHMIS, etc.) and security clearances.

“Sometimes, you have to look back in order to understand the things that lie ahead.” — Yvonne Woon, *Dead Beautiful*

Reflections

This may be the most important step in the portfolio process. It is what distinguishes portfolios from mere collections of pictures and things.

Reflecting upon an artifact enables you ...

- to discover what it says about you
- to make connections between what you have done and your world to see patterns in your life
- to evaluate your growth over time
- to measure your achievement of goals
- to identify areas for further development
- to set meaningful learning goals
- to appreciate what you have done

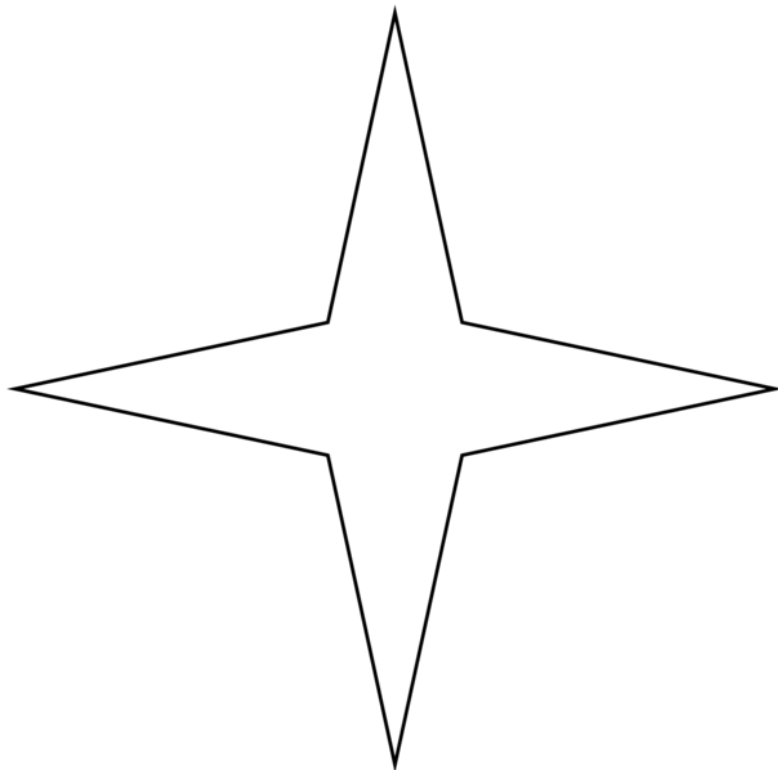
To do this, we’ll use the S.T.A.R. method.

The S.T.A.R. format comes from an area of behavioral interviewing in which there is an emphasis on giving concrete answers which are life-oriented, specific, and credible.

In the future, you will want to be prepared for these types of questions when you go for an interview. Besides using this format when using a portfolio in an interview, you can use the STAR format to help you unpack the story behind an artifact in an effective way.

Go through the important artifacts in your life. What ones are really important to you and that speak to your career goals?

Activity: Write the name of the artifact in the centre of the STAR. Answer each of the S.T.A.R. questions in order.



Artifact Name:

SITUATION - detail what was going on

TASK - what did you do

RESULTS - what happened

ACTION/ATTITUDE - how did you feel? Other people?

“I am well aware there's always going to be men who are physically stronger than I am. I think women make up for that difference in mental tenacity. It is important for women to get out and challenge themselves There isn't anything stopping women from doing it whatsoever.” - Denise Martin, first Canadian woman to reach the North Pole (1997)

You as a role model



Above are five powerful world leaders, but all needed support to lift them up as young women: Halimah Yacob, Angela Merkle, Theresa May, Tsai Ing-wen, and Sheikh Hasina. Empowering girls and young women changes our world. (Picture from Indian Express)

Multiple studies ([The World Bank](#), [Peterson Institute](#), [MSCI World Index](#)) have documented that strong female leadership improves the status of families and communities, improves employee productivity and increases corporate profitability. According to the [Harvard Business Review](#), companies that increased the number of women in executive and board positions to 30 percent saw a 15 percent increase in profitability.

The emergence of female leaders can become a centrifugal force for good in the world. For the first time, we're seeing examples of female leaders emerging from across the generations to cross-weave their knowledge and drive for change. If we take the environment and climate as an example, someone as experienced and respected as Jane Goodall is standing alongside teenage activists like Greta Thunberg. Importantly, there are now ambitious and capable

women running influential organizations who can activate physical change through technology and policy. The recent progress with the circular economy and blockchain is a prime example.

Activity: Brainstorm ideas on how you can empower and help other women and girls. What ways can you change the status of BIPOC women in Canada?

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” — Anthropologist Margaret Mead

Your Morals And Ethics

To put it simply, ethics represents the moral code that guides a person’s choices and behaviors throughout their life. The idea of a moral code extends beyond the individual to include what is determined to be right, and wrong, for a community or society at large.

Ethics is concerned with rights, responsibilities, use of language, what it means to live an ethical life, and how people make moral decisions. We may think of moralizing as an intellectual exercise, but more frequently it's an attempt to make sense of our gut instincts and reactions. It's a subjective concept, and many people have strong and stubborn beliefs about what's right and wrong that can place them in direct contrast to the moral beliefs of others. Yet even though morals may vary from person to person, religion to religion, and culture to culture, many have been found to be universal, stemming from basic human emotions.

How do you describe your morals and ethics?

Reflections on the past positive actions and situations can be empowering. As mentioned earlier, looking back to uncover your skills and background, can lead to a deeper understanding of who you are and your overall life goals.

While some people find they’re happier switching high-power business careers for lower-paying, more altruistic ones, the fact is that finding a job that feels meaningful varies from person to person, depending on what each of us values most. Charity work isn’t for everyone, and more often than not, “purpose” is personal—and can’t be summed up by a nonprofit’s mission statement.

We know by now that performance and engagement are closely linked, with most of us working more effectively when we’re invested in what we do. And one of the keys to feeling engaged at work is aligning your own idiosyncratic values with those of your organization, your team, and your direct manager—when you’re all working together towards something you believe in. That makes for a virtuous circle: When people pick jobs that fulfill basic psychological needs, motives, and values, they immerse themselves more in their work, experience higher levels of job satisfaction, and their productivity rises.

Activity: Your Life and Work

You will now write a paragraph answering each question in detail. Look back on your previous answers

1. Do you have a work philosophy? How would you describe it? For example, your approach to having a strong moral focus on your work is something important to you, so any career must be in the service of others. It has to speak to your own morals and beliefs.
2. Do you have leadership goals? What are they? For example, would you want to be in charge of projects or teams, be on committees, or a strong team member?
3. What morals and ethics do you have about your work? For example, in your chosen career, will there be times when your ethics and morals will be tested?

“We realize the importance of our voices only when we are silenced.”— Malala Yousafzai, Pakistani activist and Nobel laureate

Summary - putting all together

You’ve worked through the presentation “Building your career portfolio”, read the document “Uses of your portfolio”, and are almost done the creation of your life portfolio. The last step is to figure out how it will all go together for you.

Your task is to take what you’ve decided to go with and put it into a presentable format. You will need an appropriate carrying case for the documents you have selected, and you will want to have an attractive way of presenting each of these documents. Consider the following ideas for putting the final touches on your portfolio.

Carrying Case

Consider using some form of standard-size, three-ring binder for your portfolio.

Tabs

The items you bring with you need to be easily retrievable under pressure. We suggest that you use dividers with tabs. If a document could be filed under more than one heading, make extra copies of this document and file it under as many headings as you like, if that makes it easier for your to retrieve it when you are distracted and under pressure.

Tabs may include:

- Personal Characteristics • Experience
- Skills • Education & Training • Resume • Technical Skills Documents
- Accomplishments
- Leadership Skills
- Letters of Reference
- Knowledge
- Communication Skills • Creative Materials

Do not include original documents in your portfolio. Since portfolios can get lost or even stolen, we suggest that you make high-quality photocopies of your original documents and then store your originals in a safe place.

Photocopying documents will enable you to reduce or enlarge the originals so that they can fit comfortably into your carrying case. It will also allow you to create ‘collages’ of documents, when appropriate. For example, you can create a collage of several favorable customer service comments or employer evaluation comments on one page. Although it does cost more, photocopying your documents in their original colors is probably worth the extra expense, since when the photocopying is done well, the copies look like the real thing.

Be very careful to delete any information that should not be shared from the documents you place in your portfolio. And if you are taking any documents/materials from a past employer, be sure to first ask for permission!

Rather than punch holes in the documents you present, place these documents in standard-sized sheet protectors that are clear on both sides and are equipped with holes. Typically when you are showing documents from your portfolio, you will take them out of the binder and hand them to your interviewer. Having your documents in sheet protectors keeps them from becoming damaged and worn. You can also store extra copies behind displayed documents.

Have someone in the industry take a look at your portfolio.

Once you have put together what you think is a good portfolio, it is very helpful if you can have someone who is knowledgeable about the position for which you are interviewing give you a critique of your portfolio.

Do the best you can and then go with it.

Don’t be discouraged if you feel that despite your best efforts your portfolio doesn’t include everything you think it should. Maybe there’s an elusive document that you can’t seem to put your hand on. Or it could be there’s an important skill that you haven’t yet developed. No matter what you do, the fact is there will always be something you wish you had in your portfolio but don’t. Missing some items is not the problem you may think it is. The best way to use your portfolio in an interview is not to show the whole thing, but instead to present a few items at the right moment. You may be aware that you are missing an item or two that you would like to have, but the person to whom you are presenting your portfolio will not know this.

Your Bullet Journal

Bullet journaling is a specific record keeping system invented by designer Ryder Carroll. Ryder was diagnosed with learning disabilities early in life and designed the bullet journal out of a need to find ways to be more focused and productive.

The bullet journal is meant to “help you track the past, organize the present , and plan for the future.”

A bullet journal can encompass so much. It’s kind of like a to-do list, a diary and a planner all rolled into one. It’s yours, and you can include anything you want. Basically your bullet journal is a brain dump. Write it down, get it out, and organize your thoughts.

Common ideas include; a daily log, a monthly log, a three month log, to do lists, shopping lists. birthdays. sketches, quotes, habit tracking, goals, and priorities.

Bullet journals use “signifiers” or symbols. **A bullet point denotes each task in a list. A circle is used to signify events and dashes are used for notes.**

See the attached PDF file called BLANK JOURNAL for the pages you will use. Print a lot off and start using them and adding to them.

Here’s a great short video to show you how to build your own bullet journal. The one shown here is very detailed, but you can start with the basic PDFs included to get you started.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fm15cmYU0IM>