

Developing a Career Portfolio

Career and Employment Service (CES) Committee
AIHce *CareerAdvantage* Development Fair 2016

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What is a Career Portfolio?

- A collection of documents and other easily portable artifacts that people can use to validate claims they make about themselves
- Supports and makes tangible the things you want known about yourself in a cover letter, a resume, or a face-to-face interview



Why Use a Career Portfolio?



→ Career Portfolios:

- Get attention
- Provide links
- Make key intangibles tangible
- Help “sell yourself”
- Add to your credibility
- Build confidence
- Illustrate accomplishments

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Portfolios Give Audience More Information

- Resumes only give employers a snapshot view of skills and education
- Good cover letters are short and to the point – describes why an applicant is applying for a position
- A career portfolio can be used to fill in the gaps lost in a resume and cover letter
- Career portfolios help audience remember topics discussed during an interview or meeting

When to build a Career Portfolio:

- Seeking employment
- Seeking admission to college or graduate school
- Preparing for a competitive job interview
- When “between opportunities”
- Changing careers or fields
- Seeking a promotion
- Consultants looking for referrals
- After taking time off from the working world
- Early on in your career
- Anytime - to be prepared throughout your career



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Basic Steps for a Successful Career Portfolio

1. Determine sections
2. Identify documents to include within each section
3. Organize documents within each section
4. Compile into a professional folder
5. Practice using your portfolio
6. Use for an interview, performance review, raise, and more!
7. Maintain your portfolio

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Step 1: Determine Portfolio Sections

- Consider the company's key Success Factors
- Keep it simple and straightforward
- Example list of sections:
 1. Personal Characteristics
 2. Experience
 3. Accomplishments
 4. Knowledge
 5. Skills

Step 2: Identify Documents

- Career Summary and Goals
- Resume
- Samples of Work
- Awards and Honors
- Transcripts and/or Degrees
- Letters of Reference



Use existing documents and build new ones!

Step 3: Organize Documents into Sections

→ Personal Characteristics

- Resume
- Personal history
- Hobbies
- Extracurricular activities
- Business cards (past, present)
- Evidence of good health: for example, a record showing you've accumulated credit for not taking sick days
- Web site address and home page print out
- Military service, honors
- Sports affiliations, honors
- Security clearance
- List of references
- Leadership activities (at work, in school, or in the community)
- Evidence of being appointed to a leadership position and commendations received for your leadership skills
- Evidence you were elected to a position by your peers
- Personal and Professional Affiliations

→ Experience

- Job Description
- Performance reviews
- Examples of academic work
- Still photographs from a video of a presentation you have made
- Project or work samples that illustrate a task skill, such as the ability to create a marketing plan (black out or delete proprietary information)
- Section of a business plan you created
- Evidence of revenues or profits you were responsible for achieving
- Training manuals and programs you created
- Positive performance appraisals
- Diversity of Businesses or Industries Experience
- Passport, work permits, and visa enabling you to travel/work and/or study abroad
- Foreign travel/languages
- Evidence of competence in more than one language
- Evidence of interest in and exposure to more than one culture; proof of foreign travel/study

Step 3: Organize Documents into Sections

→ Accomplishments

- Letters of recommendation
- Introduction from faculty or past employers
- Military service, honors
- Sports affiliations, honors
- Academic awards: dean's list, honors, prizes
- Scholarship award letters
- Letters from faculty noting your accomplishments
- Favorable faculty evaluations
- Pictures of something you created or documenting your participation
- Awards for a task accomplishment
- Letters you have received relating to your accomplishments
- Letters of appreciation, employer testimonials
- Letters from satisfied clients
- News articles about you or something you were significantly involved in
- Photographs of you in newspapers, magazines, or in-house publications, because of an accomplishment
- Certifications
- Pins/medallions awarded
- Personal mission statement

→ Knowledge

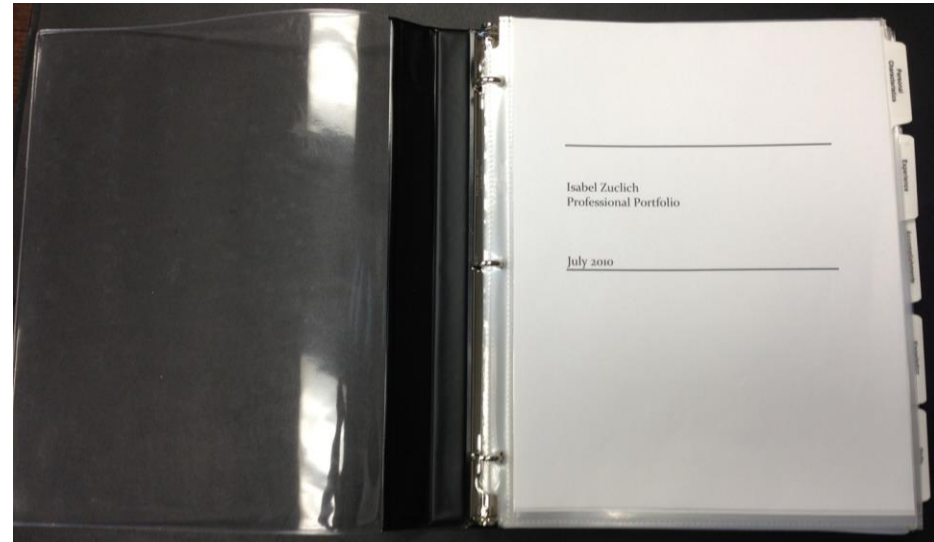
- Degrees Resume
- GPA
- Transcripts from schools
- High grades in individual courses
- Experiential learning (self-directed)
- Writing sample with highly favorable handwritten comments; samples of articles you've published
- Career Gap Analysis Tool

→ Skills

- Certifications/Licenses
- Evidence of communication skills: written, oral
- Evidence of competence in more than one language
- Evidence of computer and other technical skills
- Management experience
- Time management skills

Step 4: Compile into Folder

- Use a 3-ring binder
- Divide sections with tabs
- Use transparent page holders for each document that are easy to pull out
- Keep it professional



Step 5: Practice

→ Conduct a mock interview

- Offered by the CES committee
- Ask a colleague, friend, or family member

→ Anticipate interview questions and how to link your documents

→ As a part of preparing for your interview



Step 6: Utilize your Portfolio

- Show documents at appropriate moments to validate and bring to life claims you are making
- Include information relevant to interview or meeting
- Memorize what documents are in each section for quick reference
- Do not hand over your portfolio



Step 7: Maintain your Career Portfolio

→ Master Portfolio

- Ongoing “live document”
- Consists of all potential useful documents
- Minimum annual review
- Use as a career management tool

→ Targeted Portfolio

- Select targeted documents from Master
- Bring to interviews



Let's See it in Action!

→ Case Study – A Job Interview

→ Key Points:

1. A portfolio can be used as an organizational tool and confidence builder.
2. Maintain control of the portfolio throughout the interview.
3. Show your Personal Characteristics through performance reviews, letters of recommendation, & e-mails from colleagues or managers.
4. You can use your portfolio to illustrate accomplishments that may not be showcased in your resume.
5. Don't over use portfolio. Go with the flow of the interview.
6. Could use "Skills" section of portfolio for a strong, confident closing.

Portfolio Overview

- Your portfolio is a reflection of your organization skills and attention to detail
- Leave a lasting impression



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Available Resources

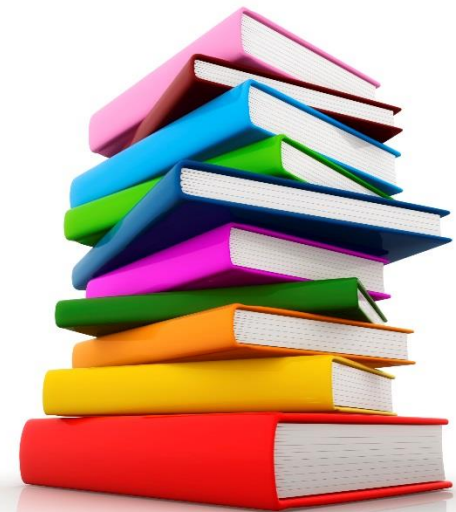
→ **Guidance Documents available from**
www.aiha.org

- Career Portfolio Workbook
- Sample Career Portfolio

→ **CES Committee Members**

→ **References:**

- Published books
- Published literature
- Search engines



Questions?



Contact the Career and Employment Service Committee at wbarbour@aiha.org with any additional questions or requests

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