



Introductory Model

Introduction

Welcome to the ASCS Q275 Professional Portfolio course. We are excited to begin this journey with you and hope you will complete this course with more confidence and enthusiasm about selling your skills to potential employers or graduate programs.

After completing this module you should be able to:

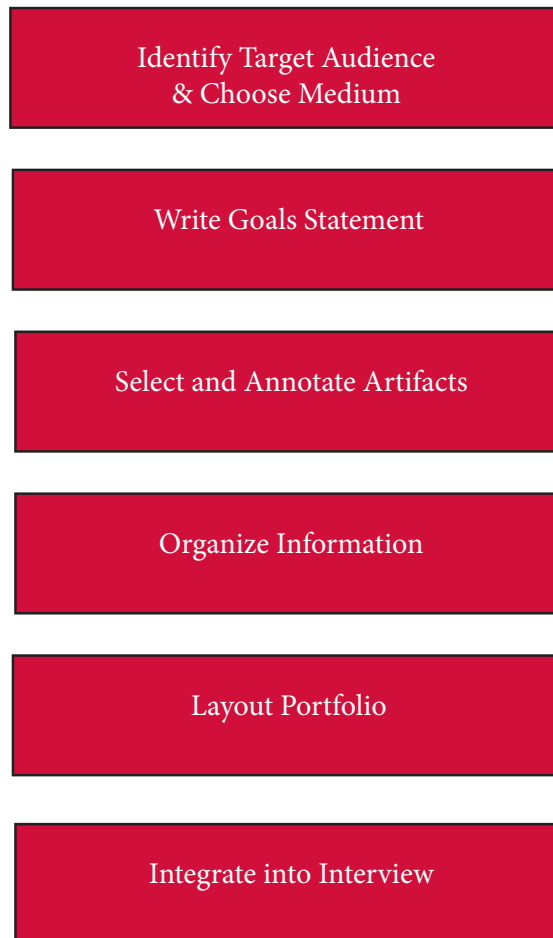
- Identify the purpose and overarching process for developing a professional portfolio
- Choose your target audience and an appropriate medium

Purpose of Portfolio:

A professional portfolio is a tool which allows you to showcase your relevant skills by providing tangible evidence, known as artifacts, as proof of your competencies. Your portfolio becomes a powerful interviewing tool as its development will help you be prepared for your interview and your artifacts will provide compelling evidence of the skills you are presenting to employers.

Process of Developing Portfolio:

Compilation of your portfolio will include several stages. This course will walk you through this process following the step-by-step outline provided below.





Target Audience:

Your target audience is essentially the individual, group or organization to whom you will be presenting your portfolio.

First, what is your field of interest? Your target audience will also be determined by your chosen occupation. If this decision has not been made, creating a portfolio will be a difficult if not impossible task. If you are uncertain about what career field you would like to pursue, you may need to step back from this process and engage in self exploration. It is helpful to delve into your values, interests, personality and skills. The Career Development Center offers many tools to help you gain insight and clarity in each of these areas. You may want to meet with your instructor for additional assistance.

Secondly, pause to consider where you are in your career planning process. What is your next step? Write down your responses to the following questions:

- Do you need to complete a professional internship?
- Are you entering the job market and seeking a full-time professional position?
- Are you planning to attend graduate or professional school at this time?

Medium:

Once you have narrowed down your career options and selected a target audience, begin to think about what medium is going to be most appropriate for your audience. Is a paper-based portfolio or web-based portfolio more relevant? Here are some items to evaluate as you make this decision below.

- What medium will effectively allow you to showcase all of your skills? Will you need to show photos, videos, and web design? Will you need to demonstrate paper-based artifacts such a flyer or brochure?
- What skills do you want to demonstrate to your employer based on the medium you choose? Do you want to highlight your design and layout skills in some way? Which medium will allow you to best represent your “professional story?”
- What medium will be the most cost effective for you? Will it be more economical to print copies for each interview? Or might you have to pay for a program or software to develop and maintain an electronic portfolio?
- How often will you need to update your portfolio? Will paper-based or electronic facilitate that process most easily?
- What technology will be available during your interview? How does that impact your decision on paper versus electronic portfolios?

Take a few minutes to work through each of these questions. After carefully evaluating each item, what medium is most appropriate given your target audience, your current skills and possibly your budget?

Conclusion

A professional portfolio is an instrumental part of your preparation and success in an interview. Equipped with an understanding of the step-by-step process of developing a portfolio, an awareness of medium options and clarification of your target audience, you are now ready to continue to the next step in your portfolio planning. Before doing so, complete Assignment 1, located under the “Resources Tab” of Oncourse.

Goals Statement Module

Checklist:

Before you begin this module you should have:

- Identified your Target Audience and Chosen a Medium

Introduction

With the initial decisions made regarding target audience and medium, you are now ready to begin the process of developing a goals statement.

After completing this module you should be able to:

- Explain the essential components of a well-constructed goals statement
- Write an initial draft of your goals statement to be used in your professional portfolio

Purpose of Goals Statement:

Assimilation of your portfolio begins with crafting your goals statement. Your goals statement informs the reader of your portfolio's purpose and its relevance to their organization/position. It will also guide your process of selecting the most pertinent artifacts for inclusion in your portfolio. Choose powerful language to help employers and graduate programs envision you completing significant tasks within their organization. Keep your statement concise (one to two paragraphs maximum). This may be challenging at first, so begin by answering the questions in the activity below, and then revise until you have included only the most essential information.

Goals Statement Activity:

Part 1: Brainstorming: respond to the following questions to begin developing ideas for your goal statement

- What are some of your short-term and long-term goals? (Though graduating college is a great goal, don't use it for your essay!)
- What classes have you loved and what courses helped to shape your future plans? (Use course names and departments, not numbers.) Explain what, specifically, you liked and how it shaped your future.
- What have you learned from experiences such as internships, community service projects, or jobs you have had? Share two (2) meaningful stories from your experiences.

Part 2: Key Questions: now that you have some information to work with, there are a series of questions to answer and decisions to make. Your statement should include answers to the following questions:

- In what industry or career field do you want to work?
- What are your professional short-term and long-term career goals?
- How will your education and/or skill sets be used to meet the specific needs of your target organization or school?





Required Research:

Responding to these questions requires extensive knowledge of your target audience. To gain this information, thorough research will be necessary on your part. Knowing the organizational values and interests, the most desired skills, and the trends in hiring and growth will help you determine what skills you need to demonstrate to your target audience. You can uncover this information through online research (see Researching Organizations handout) and through conducting Informational Interviews (see Informational Interviews hand-out on IUcareers.com).

Examples of Goals Statements:

As you review the examples below, take note of the guidelines described above. See the box below the example to reflect on the strengths and weakness of the first example.

Example 1: *“The ideal position for me is one that will recognize the skills I have and allow me to excel with them in a fast-paced and collaborative sports organization. Throughout college I have been developing and discovering not only the skills that I have, but those that I most enjoy using. For me those skills are promotional, conceptual, and collaborative skills. I believe these skills translate well to the marketing trainee position with the Atlanta Braves. My experience thus far has allowed me to work closely with two professional sports teams, and confirmed my passion for marketing in the sports industry. This portfolio is designed to show you more specifically how these attributes of mine are reflected through my high standard of output.”*

Strengths:

- This statement quickly identifies her target market (sports organization)
- This statement includes her short-term goal of attaining an internship position
- This statement articulates specific skills

Weaknesses:

- This statement does not articulate long-term goals
- This statement does not clearly communicate how her skills can be used to meet the specific needs of her target audience

Now that you have an idea of how to critique a goals statement, identify the strengths and weakness of the second example:

Example 2: *“The purpose of this portfolio is to present my skills to DePaul University’s School Counseling Graduate Program. I have a keen ability to interact with children and adolescents who struggle with an array of issues. I was given the opportunity to work hands on with children in my past internship and volunteer work. I took from these experiences the enjoyment of opening children’s eyes, and helping them find direction. I will take my undergraduate background in Psychology and enhance it through earning this Master’s degree. My long term goals focus primarily on the field of school counseling. I have a strong desire to be in a school setting as I enjoy being part of parent-student interactions. Although this is my preferred environment, I am also open to working in hospitals, institutional-care settings or private practice. Regardless of the setting, I am confident that DePaul’s Graduate program will enhance my knowledge and help me be more prepared to become an accomplished counselor.”*



Conclusion:

What have you learned after carefully reading and evaluating the goals statements above? How has this reflection informed your approach to writing a goals statement? Now that you have gained familiarity with the process and completed the necessary research, you are now ready to move on to the next step of selecting your artifacts; before doing so complete Assignment 2 in the Resources tab on Oncourse.



Artifacts Module:

Checklist:

Before you begin this module you should have:

- Identified your Target Audience and Chosen a Medium
- Written your Goals Statement
- Customized your Resume

Introduction

Now that you have an understanding of what a portfolio should entail and more specifically how your portfolio will be used, it is time to gather artifacts. Each individual will have a variety of different artifacts, so remember to think about what will highlight your skill sets in the best possible way.

By the end of this module, you should be able to:

- Define a portfolio artifact
- Explain the role and importance that an artifact plays within a portfolio
- Select what artifacts best highlight your skill sets and qualifications for your audience and the position
- Write clear and concise annotations for each of your artifacts

Selecting Artifacts

Artifacts are items within your portfolio that showcase your experiences and skill sets in a tangible way. In order to tailor and visually convey your capabilities, you should consider your audience and what they are looking for in a candidate when selecting artifacts. Remember that artifacts can be anything that will best represent your experiences.

Some examples of artifacts include:

- event flyer
- planning guide
- web-page
- artwork
- photography
- spreadsheets
- budgets
- emails
- evaluations/performance appraisals
- certificates of achievement
- recommendation letters
- transcripts
- research papers
- reports
- videos
- educational/training certificates
- presentations



Activity

Much like you did in your goal statement research, read through the job description or graduate school application requirements that you have selected and highlight skill sets that you see throughout. Once completed, take out a piece of paper and from the highlighted items brainstorm a list of all your potential artifacts. Review each item and choose the most relevant artifacts for this portfolio.

To help you select relevant artifacts you may want to ask yourself these questions:

- Does this artifact say something about me?
- Is it relevant to the employer and the position?
- Does this artifact express the qualities and skill sets that are needed for the organization and position?
- Is this the final document or a piece of the process from the experience and is it the highest quality?

Annotating Artifacts

After carefully selecting your artifacts, you are now ready to craft your annotations giving your audience a clear picture of the artifact’s relevance. Annotations are not merely labels, but interesting and informative blurbs about the artifact’s relevance within your portfolio. Each annotation should be concise, but contain the necessary information to explain why the artifact was chosen.

To help you craft your annotations ask yourself these questions:

- Context: Why did this get done? What was the purpose? What were the objectives of the project?
- Conditions: Was it is a project for an organization? Did you complete the project for a class?
- Scope: What size project/activity was it?
- Role: Did you do everything? Were you working as part of a team or individually (if working independently, no need to address)?

Examples:

As you review the examples below, review the questions above. How well were those followed? What are the strengths and weaknesses of each example?

Example 1: As the President of the xyz student organization, I plan, create an agenda, and facilitate weekly meetings. This is a copy of a weekly agenda meeting in which we discussed planning for an upcoming scholarship event. The meeting was productive and we completed our discussion of each agenda item effectively within the meeting time allotted.



As the President of the xyz student organization, I plan, create an agenda, and facilitate weekly meetings. This is a copy of a weekly agenda meeting in which we discussed planning for an upcoming scholarship event. The meeting was productive and we completed our discussion of each agenda item effectively within the meeting time allotted.

- XYZ Weekly Meeting Agenda
 3/10/2010
- I. Officer Updates
 - a. Vice President
 - b. Treasurer
 - i. Overall Budget update
 - ii. Fund budget breakdown
 - II. New Project Planning Committee Discussion
 - a. Scholarship Event Timing and Planning Update
 - i. Date and Time
 - ii. Venue
 - iii. Decorations
 - iv. Food
 - v. Invitations
 - III. Old Business
 - IV. New Business
 - V. Adjourn

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Example 2: "As the editorial director for ABCNews.com, a division of Disney ABC Media Networks, this is one of many news stories I produced. I read this story on the front cover of the Orlando Sentinel and pitched it to my editor. I was the first ABCNews.com employee to cover the story of Caylee Anthony for ABC News. This is the second draft of the article that was updated later that day based on additional facts (the shovel). This story became the #1 most read article of the day on ABCNews.com and became one of the biggest topics of 2008 covered by full-time editors. I conducted all interviews, and fact gathering for this piece as well as writing it. The complete article can be found in the appendix, A.6."



As an editorial intern for ABCNews.com, a division of Disney ABC Media Networks, this is one of the many news stories I produced. I read this story on the front cover of the Orlando Sentinel and pitched it to my editor. I was the first ABCNews.com employee to cover the story of Caylee Anthony for ABC News. This is the second draft of the article that was updated later on in the day based on additional facts (the shovel). This story became the #1 most read article of the day on ABCNews.com and became one of the biggest topics of 2008 covered by full-time editors. I conducted all interviews and fact gathering for this piece as well as writing it. The complete article can be found in the appendix, A.6. Additional news pieces from my internship at ABCNews.com can be found in the appendix (A.7-A.12). The artifact is titled, "Search for Missing Fla. Toddler Continues."



Search for Missing Fla. Toddler Continues

Investigation Continues as Neighbors Say Mother Borrowed Shovel Last Month

By KELLY MOELLER

July 18, 2008—

The search continued Friday for Caylee Anthony, a Florida toddler who disappeared five weeks ago but was only reported missing on Wednesday, police said.

Late Thursday night, Orange County Sherriff's deputies dug up the backyard of Caylee's grandparents' home after they received a tip from a neighbor claiming the girl's mother, Casey Anthony, borrowed a shovel from them a month ago, according to the *Orlando Sentinel*.

Meanwhile, in an interview with Orlando ABC affiliate WFTV, the mother's former fiancé was cryptic when asked whether Casey Anthony could have killed Caylee, age 2.

"I don't want to say yes or no to that. I really don't know," Jesse, who didn't want his last name used, told the TV station.

According to police, Caylee's 22-year-old mother told them she dropped off the child with a babysitter on June 9. The sitter, Zenaida Gonzalez, whom Anthony claims to have known for four years, had watched Caylee on and off over the last year and a half, Anthony said.

Anthony told police that when she returned to the apartment after work there was no answer, according to a police report. She says she began to search places that she knew Gonzalez visited but was unable to locate Caylee or the babysitter.

Anthony said that she has been conducting her own investigation but never went to authorities.

"Detectives are very concerned," Deputy Sheriff Carlos Padilla of the Orange County Sherriff's Office tells ABCNews.com. "We are talking five weeks here. The quicker you call, the easier it is to track someone down."

Frustrated investigators held a press conference Thursday afternoon to plead for the public's for assistance in tracking down Caylee.

"We are no further than we were yesterday at this time," said Padilla.

Authorities were finally notified of Caylee's disappearance on Wednesday after her grandmother, Cynthia Anthony, called police, she told ABCNews.com.

"I first learned Caylee was missing on Tuesday of this week. I found something that put Casey in Orlando instead of Jacksonville and she was without Caylee. When I found out I called the police," said

Example 3: The political science courses that I have completed while at Indiana University have ultimately increased my interest in the legal system and law school. Each course has provided me with knowledge of the United States government structure as well as political theory. Below is an excerpt from my transcript indicating the specific courses and grades received. My complete transcript can be found in the appendix, A.3.



Excerpting Artifacts

As discussed in the organizing information section of this module, deciding how you want your artifacts to look is essential because these components combined, will comprise your story. Here are some useful strategies to use when organizing your portfolio.

If an artifact is too large to fit on a single page or screen, it should be excerpted and placed in an appendix (located at the end of your portfolio). The excerpt should visually look like part of the document as a whole, which can be done by using screen shots, video editing software, PDF files, etc. If you use an excerpt from a document as one of your artifacts you will need to explain this in the annotation, informing the reader of where to find the document in its entirety. Again it is important to remember that you should choose artifacts which highlight relevant employer and position qualifications.

Conclusion

The artifacts that you choose to use in your portfolio are key components because they are visible representations of the skill sets that you would like to convey to your audience. It is important to spend some time selecting the best possible artifacts for the position and audience. Once you have selected artifacts and crafted your annotations your portfolio is one step closer to completion.



Organizing Information Module:

Checklist:

Before you begin this module you should have:

- Identified your Target Audience and Chosen a Medium
- Written your Goals Statement
- Customized your Resume
- Selected and Annotated your Artifacts

Introduction

Portfolios are meant to tell stories. As the author of this story, it is your responsibility to provide movement and structure for the reader. This will not only engage the reader, but guide them to the most important elements of your story. For this reason, it is important to think about the process at the micro and macro levels.

After completing this module you should be able to:

- Develop audience appropriate divider pages
- Create an appendix (if applicable)
- Create a storyboard for your portfolio

Divider Pages

When organizing the information in your portfolio, consider the use of divider pages. Divider pages provide structure and guide the viewer.

Example: After reading over the key skills requested in her chosen job description, Molly noted that written communication was specifically requested by the employer. After creating a storyboard for her portfolio, Molly noticed that a large number of her artifacts were related to writing. She created the following divider page to alert the employer of written communication skills in her portfolio.

(See example in Resources)

Appendix

As discussed in the artifacts module, an appendix should be considered if your artifacts consume more than one page in your portfolio. The appendix is located at the end of a portfolio and typically includes full documentation of your artifacts.

Example: Kevin's portfolio includes a section focused on written communication skills. Kevin completed a writing project in college that he would like to include as an artifact. However, the paper is 25 pages long. Kevin has decided to include an excerpt of his writing as the main artifact within the portfolio. He will then refer the reader to the appendix for the complete version of this paper.

(See example in Resources)



Storyboarding

Now that you have created and collected the components that will comprise your portfolio, it is important to consider the organization of this information. A great place to start is with a storyboard. Although more common for creative projects, storyboarding allows you to create a template for your final portfolio. This is a low-tech process that will only involve a pen/pencil and a piece of paper. To begin, you will create a rough sketch for each page in your portfolio. This sketch should include the content and expected layout. By creating a rough sketch of your portfolio, you will have a birds-eye view of your entire portfolio. This activity will allow you to consider the content and look/feel of the portfolio before committing to the time-consuming layout process.

Storyboard Considerations

When creating a storyboard, consider what your finished portfolio will look like visually.

For content, consider the types of pages that will comprise your portfolio:

- Title page
- Table of contents/outline
- Goals statement
- Resume/CV
- Artifacts with annotations (6-8 is often appropriate)
- Divider pages
- Appendix (if applicable)

Questions for consideration:

- What is appropriate to your target audience?
- What will your skills allow you to do?
- How will you express your creativity?

At this stage, it is helpful to broadly consider the layout of your portfolio. Some areas for consideration include:

- Location of images
- Location of text
- Color, shapes, typefaces
- Columns, boxes, menus

(See example in Resources)

Activity:

1) On a sheet of paper, create a list of boxes that correspond to the number of projected pages in your portfolio. These pages will serve as a mock-up for your projected finished project.

2) On each page, write the following information:

- Titles, headings, projected text, page numbers
- Layout considerations (location of images, location of text, etc.)

Conclusion

With a storyboard in hand, you have created the overall template for your portfolio. Are you happy with the movement and structure that you have provided for future readers? Do the divider pages highlight your most relevant skills? As you begin the refinement process for content and layout, use the storyboard as a guide. Before moving to the layout module, complete Assignment ??, located under the “Resources” tab on Oncourse.



Layout module

Checklist:

Before you begin this module you should have:

- Identified your Target Audience and Chosen a Medium
- Written your Goals Statement
- Customized your Resume
- Selected and Annotated your Artifacts
- Organized Information

Introduction

So, you've thought about your audience, selected and annotated artifacts, and developed a plan for organizing your information. Now it's time to actually start pulling the pieces together to create your portfolio; this is known as the layout phase.

The layout of your portfolio is critical to communicating your message. You might have great artifacts to demonstrate your skills and experiences, but if they are not presented in a way that makes your intended message(s) clear to your audience, all your diligent work to create a portfolio will have been a waste of time and effort.

Most of us are not graphic designers and have limited experience in design and layout. Few are expecting this level of expertise or sophistication in the "look and feel" of your portfolio (we aren't!). What is expected, however, is that you take the design of your layout into consideration and do your best with the tools and abilities you have when assembling your portfolio.

By the end of this module, you should be able to:

- Define what layout means and discuss the various factors that should be considered when laying out a portfolio;
- Apply layout principles to your portfolio design; and
- List resources that can assist you in laying out your portfolio.

Confirming Your Medium

Early on in the course, you selected the primary medium you would use for your portfolio. Now that you have actually selected your artifacts, considered your overall message and how you communicate it, and developed a better understanding of your audience, take a moment to think critically about your selected medium. Is it the right choice? If not, this is your opportunity to move in a different direction before you start doing work that might not be usable should you change your mind later.



Many choose a paper-based portfolio because they feel it is easier. This may be true in some cases, but it should not be an excuse to do less. Research was done on a group of medical students who were required to put together a portfolio for their exam. The researcher concluded that web-based portfolios were generally favored by reviewers over the paper-based ones, but not for the reason one might suspect; it seems that the preference developed out of the fact that, on average, those who developed web-based portfolios had spent more time (hours more!) on developing and laying out their portfolios. This is not to dissuade you from the medium choice you may have already made, but instead reinforce the importance of layout and the fact that this phase also deserves considerable attention and time.

General Layout Considerations

There are many theories of layout and design, but most have—regardless of whether paper-based or in some other format—the following principles in common:

- **Alignment.** This is the placement of text and graphics against a boundary (imaginary or otherwise). Elements can be aligned left, center, right, or justified. (Justified should be avoided in most cases due to the uneven spacing that often occurs.) You can have multiple alignments on a page, but whatever you choose, make sure you do so with good reason and that you follow the other principles below.
- **Balance.** Balance concerns the arrangement of the various elements on the page. A balanced page gives the impression that no one part of the page is “heavier” or “lighter” than the other. While one often strives for balance on the page, there may be times when you want to create dissonance or tension by having an unbalanced page.
- **Contrast.** If all your different page elements are similar, the page can become monotonous. Use font face and size, white space (some feel so strongly about white or empty space that they make it its own category), graphics, and columns to create contrast on your pages. Contrast well-done will draw your audience to the right information on the page.
- **Proximity.** This concerns how close two elements are to one another on a page. Elements that are closely related are usually in close proximity to each other while elements that are less related are further away. When appropriate, a third element can be used to link other elements.
- **Repetition.** Clarity of meaning is often easily achieved through repetition. Repetition of headings, font face, and graphic placement—to name but a few—can help your audience navigate more easily through the information you present them.

As you design the layout of your portfolio, take the above principles into consideration. They apply to any medium you choose. Ideally, you will develop a template that you will be able to “plug” your information into. And this really does apply to every artifact in your portfolio, even your resume!



Let's critique a few examples together.

Example #1

Design Principle	Comment
Alignment	Fairly well aligned, but lots on the page.
Balance	Page is heavy and block-y.
Contrast	Not enough contrast on the page; unclear as to what is artifact and what is annotation; very little white space.
Proximity	Related items are proximate to each other, but there is little division between the elements.
Repetition	Repetition is not used; it would help a lot!
Recommendations for improvement	Because there is too much on the page, it's ultimately unclear what is being communicated. Perhaps the items could be split across a few pages. This, along with better distinguishing between the artifacts and annotations would help with the other issues that exist.

Example #2

Design Principle	Comment
Alignment	Generally, good efforts are made to align things in on the page. The annotation is placed across the top with offset boxes, and the artifact is centered down the remainder of the page.
Balance	The offset textboxes for the annotation create balance on the page horizontally. The dominance of bold color across the top of the page does, at times, cause it to feel top-heavy.
Contrast	The delineation between the annotations and artifacts is clearly made, which ultimately helps the reader to comprehend the information as it is intended.
Proximity	While related items are grouped together, the spacing of the elements on the second page of the example (labeled page 10 in the portfolio) is uninteresting.



Design Principle	Comment
Repetition	As previously mentioned, the repetition of the annotation format is a great. There are some issues, however. The newsletter pages (portfolio page 10) are set graphically as individual pages, but they are all different sizes and some boundaries unclear; also, the news story is not set as an individual page.
Recommendations for improvement	This student is doing some very good things with her portfolio! She can make it better by polishing some things graphically and paying a bit more attention to detail. A collage of her articles (while keeping the “Search for Missing Fla. Toddler Continues” article in the foreground) would look great—especially if she laid them out in an interesting way graphically. The fact the newsletter for her sorority has the same color scheme as her portfolio feels a bit odd, too. She might need to rethink her portfolio color palette.

Example #3

Design Principle	Comment
Alignment	A 2-page spread approach was taken with this section of the portfolio. It is different, and could work if printed correctly so that the reader could experience the portfolio with no white space between the two pages that is often left by standard laser printers (as they do not print full-bleed pages).
Balance	The balance on the page is good.
Contrast	There is a nice contrast of elements on the page. White space is lacking here and there is a lot of text to read. The bolding of some elements draws your attention to certain information, but it is unclear as to why.



Design Principle	Comment
Proximity	The annotations are places in different places relative to their artifacts. This in of itself is not a bad thing, but there is no strong link between the elements.
Repetition	Repetition is lacking in this example and could help the reader understand the intended message better.
Recommendations for improvement	One issue that was not address above is that the graphics used or extremely pixilated—something that detracts from the users graphic design skills. The annotations need to be slimmed down and graphically tied to their respective artifacts.

IU’s University Information Technology Services offers a three-hour workshop on page design where you can:

- Learn how readers perceive and view elements of text, graphics, and “white space”
- Explore how to best convey the purpose through placement choices
- Learn about the anatomy of typography and usability
- Learn how to examine and troubleshoot type, graphics, and visual elements
- Learn to plan color in a document
- Gain a basic understanding of publication terminology

See <http://ittraining.iu.edu/> for more information.

Paper-based Portfolios

The computer program you choose to layout your portfolio program will make all the difference in your ability to lay out your work. Below are some common choices with a pro and con list and ranking (1=not at all recommended, 10=highly recommended) for each. All the programs are available for free to IU students.

Program	Remarks	Rank
Microsoft Word	<p>Pros: Easy to use and most are quite comfortable using it. Templates for usage. Many of your artifacts are probably already in this format.</p> <p>Cons: It is not a layout program. While some basics can be accomplished, it has a difficult time handling graphics and has some idiosyncrasies when trying to move information.</p>	5
Microsoft Powerpoint	<p>Pros: Easy to use with lots of design templates available for download. (Sometimes used as a “digital portfolio” because it easy to embed some media inside the presentation.)</p> <p>Cons: It, too, is not a layout program. It has a default landscape orientation and does not handle dense information very well. It is not recommended at all for paper-based and should be avoided for digital as well.</p>	2
Microsoft Publisher	<p>Pros: Unlike the others mentioned previously, this is a layout program. Because it is a Microsoft program, copying and embedding of existing documents (Word and Excel, etc.) is relatively easy. There are also templates available for download.</p> <p>Cons: It is not a robust layout program. The fonts and tricks that are so easy to use are often trite and highly recognizable, often detracting from more than enhancing your overall product. Should this program be chosen, be original!</p>	6
Adobe Indesign	<p>Pros: Arguably the definitive layout program—and its sole purpose! Gives you get control over your layout and the ability to set style parameters for continued usage across the document. Easy to pull in files from companion products like Photoshop and Illustrator.</p> <p>Cons: Definite learner’s curve. It can be intimidating to start working in the program, but with patience and training, it becomes easier. Plus, the results are often worth it!</p>	10

Want help learning any of the above programs? IU offers training—free of charge to you—on a variety of topics, including InDesign and Word through either an in-person course or online self-study through Lynda.com. See <http://ittraining.iu.edu/> for more information.





Those who decided to do a paper-based portfolio are probably going to print it at some point, right? All materials should be printed on—at least—a high-quality laser printer, preferably in color. Print on both sides of the paper and make sure you have some type of cover. The binding should be “perfect” or coil, making sure to avoid comb binding, 3-ring binders, and metal-pronged or plastic report covers. Spending the few dollars for the perfect or coil binding is money well spent.

Web-based Portfolios

Those who choose a web-based portfolio often do so because it allows for various media to be integrated and made readily available and immediately accessible by the viewer. Done well, web-based portfolios can be powerful; done poorly, and they can do more harm than had you not presented a portfolio at all. The layout and design of a web-based portfolio is critical because the audience interaction and navigation is reliant upon the user knowing where to click the mouse. We all know how to navigate a book by turning the page. Each website is a new journey and how to navigate it must be learned.

You must first consider if you’re going to design a website for your portfolio yourself, hire someone to develop it for you (how will you maintain it later?), or use a vendor product. There are various vendor products on the market for online artifact storage and portfolio development, but they do have limitations:

- Some are free; others are not
- Each site varies on how the files are stored and protected
- How long you have access to your materials varies (only while a student, indefinitely, etc.)
- Look and feel and branding can range from limited flexibility to no control whatsoever (ads could even be part of your portfolio); this makes it more a repository for artifacts rather than a portfolio and thereby more difficult to tell a story through it



Below is a partial list of vendors who provide online portfolio services followed by a list of website layout programs available free of charge to you.

Vendor	Description	URL
Optimal Resume	Package has a portfolio module and is free of charge to IU students. Account expires two terms after graduation from IUB.	https://indiana.optimalresume.com/
ePortfolio	Portfolio website. 30 days free; nominal annual fee thereafter depending on space required.	http://www.eportfolio.org/
DIGI[cation]	Portfolio website for nominal annual fee. Includes template and portability features.	http://digication.com/personal
VisualCV	Free portfolio website.	http://www.visualcv.com/
Interfolio	Portfolio website for nominal annual fee.	http://www.interfolio.com/
eFolioWorld	Portfolio website for nominal annual fee.	http://efolioworld.com/

On the other hand, if you're thinking about creating your own website, you've got other logistical considerations:

- Web hosting (who is storing your data?)
- Access control (want everyone to see it?)
- Do you know a scripting language or how to use a website layout program?

Whichever you choose, remember that the layout design must be taken into consideration. You'll also want to consider whether and how you will show your portfolio in an interview situation. Technology may not be readily available (and it never seems to work when you need it the most). What will you do?

Some programs you might consider using are Adobe Dreamweaver or Microsoft Expression Studio. Better yet, if you're skilled enough, build your website from scratch using HTML and CSS.

IU offers training on these topics too! Take an in-person course through the UITS STEPS program or do online self-study through Lynda.com. Visit <http://ittraining.iu.edu/> for more information.

Other Considerations

If you decide to use another electronic approach other than web-based (PowerPoint, DVD, etc.), the same design considerations apply. And regardless of the program or media you use, you will need to convert documents (or your entire portfolio) to PDF format so that it can be read universally. PDF readers are free to download and in addition to being universally readable, they



preserve your formatting—something that can be otherwise compromised due to various computer settings. As an IU student, you have access to free PDF writing software.

Conclusion

Layout of your portfolio is critical because if your artifacts are not presented in a way that is clear, consistent, and visually appealing to your audience, it is unlikely to add to your candidacy (if it is even viewed at all). The majority of your time developing your portfolio will be spent in this phase. If you want to make the best use of the time, make sure you apply the principles of layout and design and take advantage of the wealth of resources (both in terms of software and training) that IU has to offer.



Interviewing Module:

Checklist:

Before you begin this module you should have:

- Identified your Target Audience and Chosen a Medium
- Written your Goals Statement
- Customized your Resume
- Selected and Annotated your Artifacts
- Organized Information
- Layout Portfolio

Introduction

Investing time in the portfolio development process has actually laid the foundation for your interview preparation. Now that you have a completed portfolio tailored to your position/audience, it is time to continue in the preparation for the interview. Using your portfolio in an interview can give you a competitive edge above other candidates because it provides a visual component to your experiences, which you can add depth to interview question answers. However if you don't practice using your portfolio beforehand, integrating it into the interview may seem awkward. The content of this module is geared toward helping you prepare for the interview process using your portfolio.

By the end of this module, you should be able to:

- Understand the importance of preparing for an interview
- Use the rules and strategies of interview preparation
- Incorporate elements of your portfolio into the interview

Interview Preparation

In order to prepare for the interview process to read Chapter 6 in *Ready or Not: The Art and Science of the Job Search* book. This chapter contains essential interviewing information that will be an excellent resource as you prepare for your interview. Some key highlights from the chapter include:

The Rules

The rules that follow are intended to give you a strategy when responding to a question during the interview.

- Examine intent. Questions asked of you in an interview are typically intentional. After each question is asked, briefly analyze it by asking yourself “What is really being asked?”
- Tell a story. Your responses in interviews need context. Every response should contain a true story from your experience that highlights or proves what you are trying to say. The acronym, SPAR—standing for Situation, Problem, Action, and Result—with the idea being that your response should describe a situation, the problem at hand, the action you took, and the result of your action is a great way to form your interview responses.
- Keep it relevant. Whatever information you divulge or story you tell in an interview, keep it relevant to the position.
- Be positive. You should remain positive at all times during the interview.



Interviewing with Your Portfolio

Once you have read chapter six and reviewed the rules, it is time to practice interviewing using your portfolio. This may seem a little overwhelming at first, but as you become more comfortable with utilizing a portfolio you will find that the process enhances your interview answers. Below you will find a list of strategies on how you can incorporate your portfolio in an interview.

- Be prepared. It is important to think about gathering and organizing the appropriate materials when preparing for your interview.
 - Paper Portfolio: Bring multiple finished copies of your portfolio to pass out to your interviewer(s), so that they can follow along during the interview.
 - E-Portfolio: Ensure that the appropriate technology is available and that you have checked that everything is functioning properly. In the event that the technology does not work as planned, bring additional paper-based resources to show.
- Know your portfolio. Make sure that you are very familiar with the content of your portfolio. Being able to tell your interviewer(s) what page number and section that information can be found and/or being able to locate the information to show electronically is a key element to successful use of your portfolio.
- Use artifacts to tell a story. As stated previously, it is important to provide context to every interview answer. By using your artifacts to answer interview questions, you are providing a visual to go with your story. Using your portfolio artifacts to help you tell a story not only gives the interviewer a visual representation of your experience, but can also be a helpful reminder to you concerning what skill sets you would like to convey. Be sure to have at least one story for each of your artifacts using the SPAR technique, explained above.



Before and After Portfolio Interview Examples:

Interview Question:
Tell me about yourself.

<p>Answer (before portfolio):</p> <p>As a junior at Indiana University majoring in History, I have had the opportunity to read and research the life of Abraham Lincoln. Through this experience I developed an interest in his life and the Civil War time period. I am extremely passionate about working for an historical site, such as the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, dedicated to preservation and research.</p>	<p>Answer (after portfolio):</p> <p>As a junior at Indiana University majoring in History, I have had the opportunity to read and research the life of Abraham Lincoln. If you turn to page 15 in my portfolio, you will see an excerpt from The Life and Times of a Great American President, a research paper that I wrote in my American Civil War course. This class and paper solidified my interest in Abraham Lincoln’s life and the Civil War time period. I am extremely passionate about working for an historical site, such as the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, dedicated to preservation and research.”</p>

Interview Question:
Tell me about a time in which you worked as part of a team. What role did you take on?

<p>Answer (before portfolio):</p> <p>I typically take on a leadership role. As the chair of the philanthropy committee for XYZ Fraternity, I was in charge of coordinating a large philanthropy event to raise money for the Ronald McDonald House Charities. We raised over \$10,000 dollars for the charity and were able to stay within our budget of \$1,000.</p>	<p>Interview Answer (after portfolio):</p> <p>I typically take on a leadership role. As the chair of the philanthropy committee for XYZ Fraternity, I was in charge of coordinating a large philanthropy event to raise money for the Ronald McDonald House Charities. If you turn to page 10 of my portfolio you will see the plan and budget for this event. The plan contains a detailed description of the event, which ended up being a campus battle of the bands with 10 bands participating and over 1,000 students in attendance. We raised over \$10,000 dollars for the charity and were able to stay within our budget of \$1,000.</p>



Interview Question:

Give an example of a time when you used good judgment in solving a problem.

<p>Answer (before portfolio):</p> <p>During my sales internship at MNO radio station, one of my responsibilities was to research and approach potential new local organizations in hopes that they would buy advertising space. During the first month I sold my quota of ad sales without any problem, but the next month it became harder and my numbers went down. In order to solve this issue, I discussed the situation with my supervisor and observed several different full-time sales associates. I also researched different sales techniques and devised a strategy which incorporated a greater understanding of the company I was working with and how radio advertising could help build clientele or boost sales. As a result of this change, I was able to make my quota plus and was awarded overall best sales in that month.</p>	<p>Interview Answer (after portfolio):</p> <p>During my sales internship at MNO radio station, one of my responsibilities was to research and approach potential new local organizations in hopes that they would buy advertising space. During the first month I sold my quota of ad sales without any problem, but the next month it became harder and my numbers went down. In order to solve this issue, I discussed the situation with my supervisor and observed several different full-time sales associates.</p> <p>The sales experience section of my e-portfolio contains my final sales approach and research concerning different sales techniques and how they could be incorporated. As you can see from the final draft, I decided to develop a strategy that focused on an understanding of the company I was working with and how radio advertising could help build their clientele and boost sales. As a result of this change, I was able to make my quota plus and was awarded overall best sales in that month, as seen in my e- portfolio.</p>

Conclusion

Your portfolio is an excellent way to help you stand out above the other candidates interviewing for the same position. However it is not a guarantee that the interviewer(s) will review your portfolio after the interview is completed. In order to maximize your portfolio’s potential, it is up to you to reference its content and explain the relevance to the position. Having a visual representation of your skills to use when responding to interview questions brings depth and a tangible representation to the story you are telling. Remember that preparation is the key to a successful interview.



Steps to Developing your Professional Portfolio

Identify Target Audience & Choose Medium

Write Goal Statements

Customize Resume

Select and Annotate Artifacts

Organize Information

Layout Portfolio

Integrate into Interview