

## Using Your Portfolio

- A portfolio is a support tool and not the central part of an interview.
- Mention having a portfolio in your cover letter or resume.
- You must take the initiative to present your portfolio early in an interview because the employer may not be accustomed to seeing portfolios.
- Alternatives to a print portfolio include: Web site, PowerPoint video presentation, or CD/DVD.
- You can present your portfolio at one time, or refer to it as needed.
- Sample online portfolios can be found at [www.kzoo.edu/pfolio/outstanding](http://www.kzoo.edu/pfolio/outstanding)



## Portfolio Tips

- Your portfolio is a work in progress. Always look for new items to include.
- Use charts, lists, logs and descriptions to highlight your accomplishments.
- Look for common themes and strengths. This may help you think of other items.
- If an item is too lengthy, include only a portion or write an abstract.
- Create brief summaries for items that are not self-explanatory.
- Reproduce items that are not of the best quality.
- Clearly express whether you completed projects alone or if they were a group effort.
- Develop a master portfolio that will allow you to easily pick items for the portfolio you take to specific interviews. Look at the job description when deciding what to include.
- Your portfolio should not be too long or too short. Use your best judgment. It is better to only have a few outstanding items in your portfolio than to pack it full of average items.
- Always consider how your portfolio will be read. Create it with the employer in mind.

Find more details about portfolios  
on our Web site at  
[www.uncw.edu/stuaff/career/portfolios](http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/career/portfolios)

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PORTFOLIOS

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Career Services  
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## Portfolios 101

Resume = SAYS what you've accomplished  
Portfolio = SHOWS what you've accomplished

A portfolio is a promotional tool that can display a student's skills and accomplishments. Resumes used to be the standard, but portfolios are becoming the way of the future for cutting-edge college students. Just like art students have used portfolios to show off their abilities, every academic major has the advantage of using portfolios. One of the biggest advantages is that it gives you more confidence during the interview process. Start your portfolio today and continually look for accomplishments to add!

## Portfolio Items

A portfolio takes time to build. Start collecting the materials you want to put in your portfolio. Include anything that demonstrates your abilities, adds value to you as a candidate, or is going to elicit additional conversation. If you don't already have an item that highlights something that you want to show, write a description of it. The following are possible materials to include:

### Application Materials:

- Resume
- Cover letter
- Reference list or letters of reference
- Personal mission statement
- Answers to relevant interview questions

## Portfolio Items (cont.)

### Educational Items:

- Honors/Awards/Certificates
- Articles you have written
- Scholarships
- Transcripts
- Recognitions (attendance, performance, etc.)
- Special skills and knowledge
- Workshops
- Degree program or course descriptions
- Evaluations from teachers
- Study Abroad descriptions
- Class samples (papers, projects, etc.)
- Relevant test results
- Research experience

### Involvement Items:

- Volunteer experience
- Community involvement
- Group membership
- Leadership activities
- Campus activities

### Work Related Items:

- Job descriptions
- Internship experiences
- Level of effort (hours, sales, case loads, etc.)
- Promotion notices
- Evaluations
- List of skill sets or competencies
- Awards or achievements
- Customer satisfaction (thank you letters, emails, etc.)
- Work samples/results (documents you have developed, PowerPoint presentations, Web pages, etc.)

## Building Your Portfolio

### Obtain the Following Supplies:

- Leather three-ring binder
- Good quality sheet protectors
- Dividers with labels
- Sheets to display items that won't fit securely in the sheet protectors
- Professional paper

### Organize your Portfolio:

- Your portfolio is a professional document; don't put it together like a scrapbook.
- Group together items that are related. For example, put all school presentations together, work related items together, or letters of reference together.
- Categorize sections and create labels to divide them. Don't handwrite labels; type everything.
- Create a Table of Contents.
- Put all items into sheet protectors.
- Don't fold or punch holes into your documents unless absolutely necessary.
- Make sure items don't move around or fall out. Smaller items can be pasted to a full sheet of paper (used as a border).
- If there is a pouch on the portfolio for a label, indicate "Professional Portfolio of..."
- Is each item easily understood? If not, include an explanation.
- Ensure that the interviewer can review all items easily.
- Ask someone to give feedback about your portfolio. Chances are, if they notice something wrong, an employer will notice something wrong as well.