

PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO

Purpose:

If you want to convince an employer you are a professional qualified for a job, a portfolio can present strong physical evidence of your claims to be a qualified professional. A portfolio helps give an employer a good impression of you¹, and can demonstrate you have the knowledge and skills required for the job². Even after you have been hired, a portfolio can give employers a clearer picture of your work during a performance assessment². Besides being a tool for job interviews, a portfolio can help you gauge your own growth as a professional. In other words, your portfolio becomes a reflection of where you currently stand in your professional career². A portfolio can help you gain a better understanding of who you want to be as a professional².

To help you and your employer gain a better understanding of where you stand as a professional, a portfolio should be presented as an organized collection of your past works. These works are categorized by your goals as a developing professional, and can indicate which areas are your strengths and weaknesses. Essentially, your portfolio becomes a picture of you that others can use to better understand your level of knowledge, skill, and abilities as a professional.

This quarter-long laboratory exercise focuses on the creation of your own professional portfolio and will guide you through the steps to develop and finally utilize your portfolio in a job interview. The exercise consists of five milestones:

I. Organize Your Past Work

- Determine your goals as a professional and collect past works that demonstrate you have met your goals.

II. Write a Resume

- Write a resume showing your up-to-date personal information, education, and job experience.

III. Obtain Letters of Recommendation

- Acquire two letters of recommendation: one from a professor in the computer science department and one from a professor outside the college of engineering.

IV. Develop a Plan for Future Education

- Based on your goals and current portfolio, develop a plan outlining the rest of your education at Cal Poly.

V. Participate in a Mock Interview

- Participate in a mock job interview using your completed portfolio to “sell” yourself.

All five milestones will be due at the end of the quarter, specifically at the time you are scheduled to meet with your “employer” for your mock interview. By the end of the quarter, you will have a professional grade portfolio that can continue to help you for the rest of your professional career.

Objectives:

1. Devise the goals you want to accomplish as a professional.
2. Develop a professional grade portfolio.
3. Develop skills for preparing and organizing for a job interview.

Final Deliverables:

1. A complete portfolio which contains:
 1. An organized collection of your past works
 2. A resume
 3. Two letters of recommendation
 4. A plan for future education
2. A signed confirmation you attended your job interview

Sources:

1. Anonymous. [Http://www.biz.colostate.edu/career/portfolio.htm](http://www.biz.colostate.edu/career/portfolio.htm). Updated 05/09/2003.
2. Campbell, Cignetti, Melenyzer, Nettles, and Wyman. How to Develop a Professional Portfolio A Manual for Teachers Second Edition. Allyn and Bacon, Boston, 2001.