



Portfolios In the Digital Age

How job seekers showcase their capabilities and candidacy in today's tech-driven world.

Interviewing in today's high-tech workplace can have job seekers wondering how to best showcase their work. They want to know which samples are interview appropriate, plus which to send, when to send, and how to present them to a potential employer. Fortunately, portfolios have evolved to meet the needs of job seekers and recruiters alike. In fact, an increasing number of applicants are relying solely on e-portfolios to convey their career credentials, or using them in combination with printed materials. Plus, rising online applications have made it as imperative as ever for creatives and non-creatives alike to have digital career portfolios. See how today's portfolio trends keep you ahead of the pack.

Then: Only art and design job seekers need portfolios.

Now: Job seekers of every discipline can benefit from showcasing their work and credentials. With online portfolios, like your College Central Career Portfolio, you can easily store and organize files, as well as quickly share your qualifications with employers: a nursing student might include sample patient plans, a hospitality applicant can feature event videos, a teacher can present academic assignments, while a journalism major can post published articles, and a business student might share awards and letters of recommendation.

Then: Only bring your résumé to the interview.

Now: For an in-person interview, lead with your résumé, but have a portfolio or work samples ready to supplement your conversation. Bring a tablet (or laptop) with your e-portfolio or a few printed pieces of your work and keep them on the side until the interviewer asks for them. Or, if the interview is nearing an end and you want to leave a strong visual impression, say "I would be happy to provide you with examples of my work."

Then: Leave a printed sample of your work.

Now: It's *still* a good idea to create a "leave-behind." It should include several portfolio samples of your best work, your contact information, and a link to your online portfolio. It's smart marketing. Employers can easily file a postcard or one-page sheet that highlights your capabilities and jogs their memories for future reference.

Then: Include 8 to 10 samples in your printed portfolio.

Now: With digital portfolios, it's easy to store more of your work than you would with a print portfolio. But, remember, less is often more, so 8-10 samples is fine. Also, show only the best that are most relevant to the role. Like its traditional print cousin, your e-portfolio should open with your best work and include other distinctive pieces that are geared toward the specific job. It should be well rounded and present a range of your talents and skills. Also, close with a strong sample for a memorable last impression. Keep your portfolio current with work from the past three to five years, and tailor it to each specific job opening.

Then: Rush to the printer to have new samples ready for your interview.

Now: Plan for technical difficulties. Don't assume that you will have access to a computer, tablet, or the Internet. If you intend to feature a digital portfolio, bring your own tablet or download your samples to your laptop in case you do not have Wi-Fi access. Even then, consider bringing several printed samples (photos, drawings, or written pieces) in case of technical issues.

Then: Email a résumé or job application and attach samples of your work.

Now: Store your best work samples in your online College Central portfolio, then include a link to it in your email application, cover letter, and résumé.

Then: Snail mail packets with your résumé and work samples to multiple employers.

Now: Simply make your online College Central Career Portfolio visible to employers. With your essentials and credentials just a click away, recruiters will be able to easily search, browse, and contact you for interviews!



i n a nutshell:

E-portfolios are versatile, mobile, work for all disciplines, and show you're cued in to technology. To build your brand effectively:

- **Keep your portfolio, résumé, and cover letter consistent in style and feel**
- **Create, tailor, and tweak your portfolio until it is work-relevant to the open position**
- **Use your portfolio in tandem with your résumé for a comprehensive "show and tell"**
- **Have printed samples as backups and leave-behinds**
- **Include a portfolio link in your cover letter, résumé and promo materials; make it easy for employers to assess you**

Digital portfolios are marketing career essentials. They speak for themselves and instantly tell your story to a modern, visual world.