

Portfolio Briefs

Conceptually The portfolio is a selection of your best work representing specific skills, level of achievement, range of talent, project diversity, design process or progress in developing talent and skills.

Uses Self-assessment-documenting the development of talent and skills. For acceptance in academic programs; assessing academic progress. Graduate school admission, scholarships, awards and competitions. A communication tool used in employment searches; seeking gallery exhibition and representation

Content Identification: name, address, telephone number, business card, resume. Be selective; show range of projects, talent and degree of complexity. Do not include all of your work, but include the best examples of work to support your current goal. Tailor content for your audience. Consider the need for flexibility; delete or add items for the occasion. Original artwork is not recommended because of security issues and potential for damage. Arrange items in a high to low priority sequence. Often the viewer is interested in design process; consider including sketches and preliminary design work.

Formats The ideas for presenting your portfolio are endless. Some employers do not expect the typical black binder; others consider it a professional ³must do². You decide what image you are seeking. Recommended sizes-8.5 x11 or 11x14. Alternative portfolio style: table-top easel, videos, CD's, slides, Web site portfolios, hand made boxes, samples of work photocopied on paper for mailing with resume/cover letter, WWW pages.

Narrative Including verbiage can be advantageous; avoid lengthy descriptions. Be consistent with the narrative style presentation throughout the portfolio. Possibilities: mediums/techniques used; design problem and how/why you approached solution; technology used; date completed, length of project completion; group project/your contribution; awards received.

Photographing work When you complete a project, it is best to go ahead and have it photographed ASAP. High quality photography of work is essential in capturing details, shadows, etc. The ISU Photo Service does a professional job. Keep bases and back grounds simple. Slides do not reproduce as well as negatives (become grainy when enlarged). Slides are more inconvenient to show; however, are an excellent method to document your work and are expected in competitions or juried shows. Again, know your audience and provide the preferred portfolio format.

Composition Mount drawings and photos on mat board. Framing is important; delete white

edges of photographs. Mount vertically or horizontally. Use double stick tape-no masking tape Consider gatefold pages to illustrate an entire project. Design the page. Several small photos complemented by a single large photo can be quite effective.

Presentation Be prepared; know what you will say; hit the highlights. Do not go over every little detail of a project or work. A major complaint of portfolio viewers is in the presentation. Use intuition to ³feel out² the environment-determine whether or not to let the portfolio viewer flip pages. Take a leading role in the presentation, narrating as you go. Pictures do not tell the complete story. Be sensitive to time constraints during presentation. Be sure to know the allotted time for the interview or portfolio review prior to the visit. Consider having a sampling of work (1-2 pages) to leave behind (color Xeroxes are nice).