

Feature Article: Your Job Skills Portfolio: Giving You an Edge in the Marketplace

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Practical Tools & Strategies for Job Search Success

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Our newsletter is published every second and fourth Thursday. You are on our list because you are a Ticket to Work client of Human Solutions LLC.

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Note from Human Solutions LLC

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Greetings! I am up near Fresno, California for a couple of days facilitating training for service providers on how to better serve customers with disabilities. Facilitating training is something I really enjoy, especially when I see the "light bulb" go on when someone learns something new. It should be a great two days!

I've been doing quite a bit of research for a project the past few weeks and ran across some interesting information on "virtual" job search tools. Today's article and resource focuses on alternative

ways you can get your resume and qualifications out to employers without leaving your home. I'll be interested in hearing feedback from any of you that actually set up an online career portfolio.

I also received some excellent feedback from one of our Ticket holders related to the article in our last issue on setting up a job search strategy. I will include his strategy in our next issue.

To your success,

Lisa Jordan

President

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Your Job Skills Portfolio: Giving You an Edge in the Marketplace

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by Randall S. Hansen, Ph.D.

An old job-hunting tool is making a big comeback. For years, graphic artists, journalists, teachers, and other creative types have used career portfolios while job-hunting, but it is only recently that the idea has caught on for all types of job-seekers.

What is a job skills, job-search, or career portfolio? It is a job-hunting tool that you develop that gives employers a complete picture

of who you are - your experience, your education, your accomplishments, your skill sets - and what you have the potential to become - much more than just a cover letter and resume can provide. You can use your career portfolio in job interviews to showcase a point, to illustrate the depth of your skills and experience, or to use as a tool to get a second interview.

This article will show you how to develop your job-search portfolio, key elements to consider in developing your job-search portfolio, and the best resources to explore job-search portfolios in more depth.

Your biggest time commitment will be the initial development of your portfolio, but once you've developed it, keeping it current and up-to-date should be fairly easy. Your two biggest decisions in developing your portfolio are determining the format of the portfolio and the organization of the portfolio.

Most experts agree that the portfolio should be kept in a professional three-ring binder (zipper closure optional). You should include a table of contents and use some kind of system - such as tabs or dividers - to separate the various parts of the portfolio.

Besides the traditional portfolio, if you have access to space on a Web site, you should also consider developing an online Web-based portfolio.

Once the development is complete, you then have to gather, write, copy, and assemble the material that goes in the portfolio. This process will not only result in a professional portfolio, but should help you be better prepared for your job search.

So, what types of things go in a portfolio? Here are the basic categories. Don't feel you need to use these exact ones for your portfolio. The key to remember as you contemplate these items is that you want to give reasons for the employer to hire you -- you want to showcase your education and work experience by showing examples and evidence of your work, skills, and accomplishments.

Career Summary and Goals: A description of what you stand for (such as work ethic, organizational interests, management philosophy, etc.) and where you see yourself in two to five years.

Professional Philosophy/Mission Statement: A short description of the guiding principles that drive you and give you purpose.

Traditional Resume: A summary of your education, achievements, and work experience, using a chronological or functional format.

Scannable/Text-Based Resume: A text-only version of your resume should also be included.

Skills, Abilities and Marketable Qualities: A detailed examination of your skills and experience. This section should include the name of the skill area; the performance or behavior, knowledge, or personal traits that contribute to your success in that skill area; your background and specific experiences that demonstrate your application of the skill.

List of Accomplishments: A detailed listing that highlights the major accomplishments in your career to date. Accomplishments are one of the most important elements of any good job-search.

Samples of Your Work: A sampling of your best work, including reports, papers, studies, brochures, projects, presentations, etc. Besides print samples, you can also include CD-ROMs, videos, and other multimedia formats.

Research, Publications, Reports: A way to showcase multiple skills, including your written communications abilities. Include any published papers and conference proceedings.

Testimonials and Letters of Recommendations: A collection of any kudos you have received - from customers, clients, colleagues, past employers, professors, etc. Some experts even suggest including copies of favorable employer evaluations and reviews.

Awards and Honors: A collection of any certificates of awards, honors, and scholarships.

Conference and Workshops: A list of conferences, seminars, and workshops you've participated in and/or attended.

Transcripts, Degrees, Licenses, and Certifications: A description of relevant courses, degrees, licenses, and certifications.

Professional Development Activities: A listing of professional associations and conferences attended -- and any other professional development activities.

Military records, awards, and badges: A listing of your military service, if applicable.

Volunteering/Community Service: A description of any community service activities, volunteer or pro bono work you have completed, especially as it relates to your career.

References List: A list of three to five people (including full names, titles, addresses, and phone/email) who are willing to speak about your strengths, abilities, and experience. At least one reference should be a former manager.

And remember...once you've created your job search portfolio, be sure to take it with you to all interviews and use it as a tool to getting job offers.

Quint Careers is an excellent resource for all aspects of job search.

You can visit the main QuintCareers website at:

<http://www.quintcareers.com>

Article Source: http://www.quintcareers.com/job_search_portfolio.html

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Employment Resources: Online Career Portfolios

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To keep with the theme of the article, we've included several websites where you can post an online career portfolio for FREE.

<http://www.resumebucket.com>

<http://www.visualcv.com>

<http://www.opresume.com>

If you misplace any of our resources, they are also posted on our Back

to Work Zone Forum at: <http://youremploymentnetwork.com/community/>

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