



# Portfolio?

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While attending college, I had always heard the word “portfolio” used; however, I never exactly knew what it was. I knew it contained samples of my professional work, but I’m a college student—what professional work do I have? I first encountered the making of a portfolio when I applied for several internships. Some companies require that applicants have a portfolio and will request one in their job description. The following is a sample of an internship description from the LDS Church Magazines sent by Melissa Merrill, Internship Coordinator:

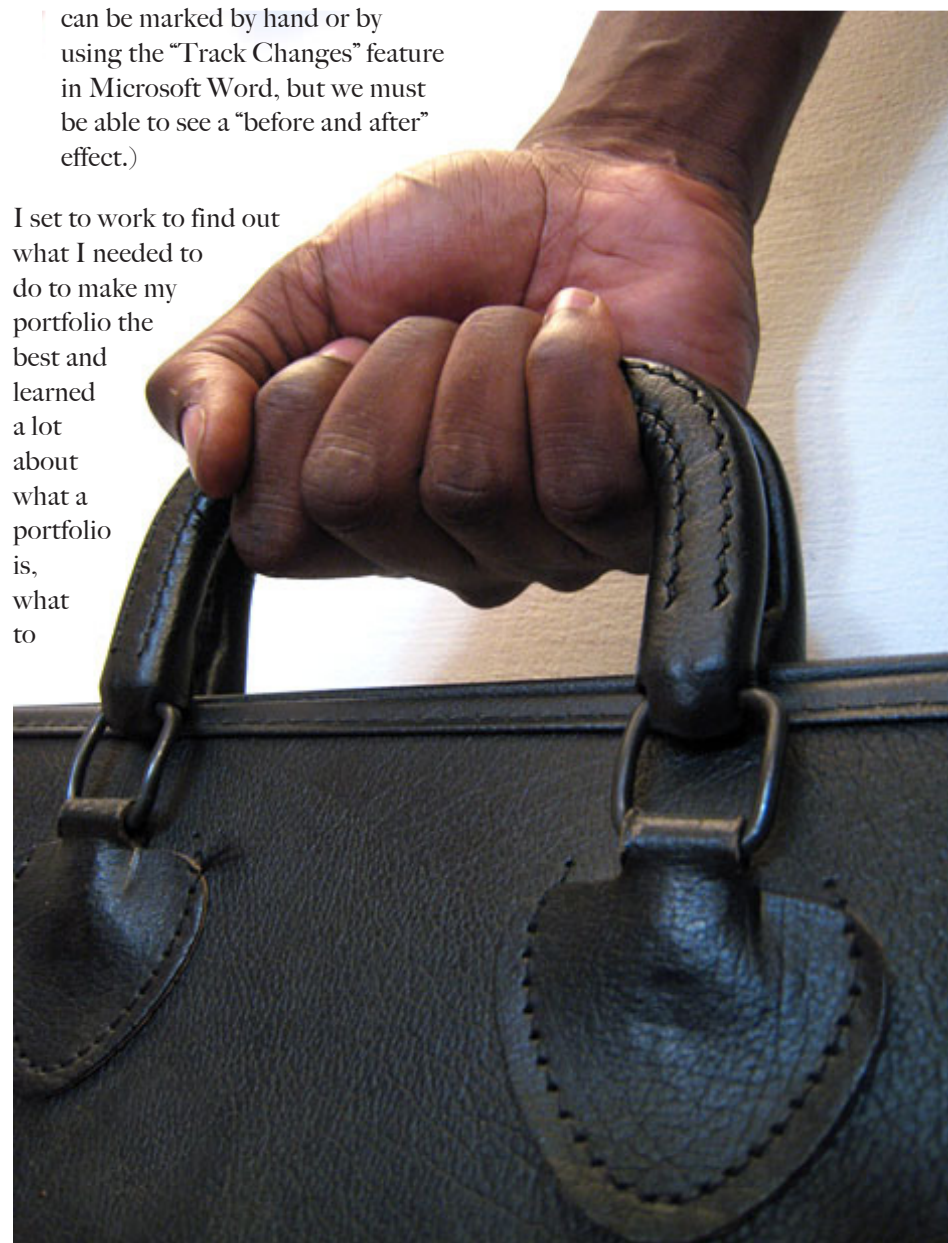
Qualifications include excellent writing and editing skills, dependability, and undergraduate or graduate student-status. Editorial experience (such as with a newspaper, magazine or literary journal) is preferred. (Students may fulfill an internship the semester immediately after graduation if they cannot complete it before graduation.)

If you are interested in applying for the internship and wish to start either in January or May 2009, please prepare a portfolio containing the following items:

- Your resume
- A letter of application and introduction indicating which semester and magazine you prefer
- A list of references
- 8 to 10 writing samples (Published work is preferred.)
- 4 to 6 editing samples (Samples

can be marked by hand or by using the “Track Changes” feature in Microsoft Word, but we must be able to see a “before and after” effect.)

I set to work to find out what I needed to do to make my portfolio the best and learned a lot about what a portfolio is, what to



include, and how it should look. This is the advice I received.

## What is a portfolio?

There are two different purposes for making a portfolio. The first

would be to represent your best work to a potential employer. The second would be to represent your journey as works have improved through performance; this can be an academic or professional portfolio.

## What is Included in a portfolio?

Sometimes a certain number of samples are requested to be included in the portfolio. In the internship listing above, 12-16 samples are requested; however a portfolio can range anywhere from 8-16 samples. Stu Constantine states, “There is no single ‘right’ way to prepare a portfolio. A different presentation is appropriate for each person, each situation and each interview. You need to understand what kind of portfolio you are creating. Is it to get into school, to get an internship, to get a first job, a second job? Each of these will require a different selection of projects.”

Samples can be divided into different sections. For example, an English major may include writing



and editing samples, creating two sections. Samples are organized by a table of contents located at the beginning of the portfolio. This will allow those looking at the portfolio to easily maneuver through the different samples.

The portfolio should also include abstracts, or short summaries of the samples. These abstracts describe

what you learned from your sample and how you learned. Abstracts can also be simple short explanations on what the sample actually is and describe the process of producing it.

## How should a portfolio look?

It is important for the portfolio to look as professional as possible. It should not be hand written—all typed. However, a portfolio is also the opportunity to allow a potential, future employer to see personality and character. “Marketing managers and decision makers look at portfolios all the time so yours needs to stand out. So many portfolios follow the same format you need to make sure yours makes an impact” (“10 Tips On Creating A Design Portfolio”).

A portfolio is made out of many different projects and papers that may have nothing to do with each other besides having been produced by you. Creating a theme that runs through the entire portfolio is a great way to make it unified with common elements; this can be as simple as creating a color scheme.

Spiral and other professional binding looks good, but using a high-quality binder and page protectors is best. According to Elaine Hawker, an English professor at BYU—Idaho, using a binder gives the illusion that the portfolio is a working portfolio and that your work is not finished and will continue to improve in time; thus, showing that you will want to upgrade your portfolio later.

A portfolio allows an employer to see the quality of work you can

produce. It not only shows that you are capable of doing the job, but allows the employer to see things you can only quickly describe on your resume.



Even Superman had to work out somewhere.



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