



a self-managed

career portfolio guide





acknowledgements

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The information presented in **A Self-Managed Career Portfolio Guide** was selected by teachers working directly with students developing portfolios.

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before getting started

what is a portfolio?

A portfolio is a collection of documents, such as reference letters, certificates, photographs and report cards. It offers proof of what you know, what you can do, how you conduct yourself, your skills, attitudes and other qualities. The portfolio supports your resumé and cover letter.

what's in it for me?

Why should you bother making a portfolio? There are at least four reasons.

personal development

Putting together a portfolio gives you a chance to look closely at yourself and assess your knowledge, skills, attitudes and conduct. It helps you look at your strengths and weaknesses, your successes and places where improvements are needed. Creating a portfolio is the beginning of a lifelong process honouring your individuality and life experiences.

job search skills and tools

You have been looking for a part-time job and now you have a job interview. How can your portfolio help? Reviewing your portfolio lets you focus on the skills and knowledge you want to highlight in the creation of your resumé and cover letter. Taking select pages with you helps a potential employer learn more about you than through traditional questions and answers.

career exploration

How much time will you spend working, volunteering and on leisure activities? You will likely spend 35 hours or more at your job every week, so choose something you'll enjoy. Your portfolio can help you determine your career pathways.

further studies and training

You have chosen an occupation and now need to plan for further studies, perhaps on-the-job training, apprenticeship or a program at a vocational school, college or university. Your portfolio can help you plan the credits you need to meet entrance requirements and prepare for an entrance interview if one is needed.



what is... a self-managed **career** portfolio guide?

We call this a self-managed guide because you're the one in charge. You decide what goes into your portfolio and how you want to present information. You may use all text or also include visuals, such as photos or drawings.

You are a unique individual who will move ahead making choices about life and work. Your portfolio will be as unique as you are. Sure, there will be similarities with other students' portfolios on the outside, but not on the inside.

**You know yourself better than anyone else does,
or you will by the time you've finished your portfolio.
Remember, only you can:**

- **document your skills and strengths**
- **add to your skills and knowledge**
- **improve your attitudes and conduct**
- **market yourself effectively**





what should i do

first?

1. Skim through this guide.
2. Gather your supplies:
 - loose leaf paper
 - highlighter
 - computer disk/CD ROM
 - pen/pencil
 - folder (to keep everything together as you collect your information)
 - portfolio binder (one inch)
 - plastic page protectors (clear, inexpensive ones)
3. Find documents such as certificates, awards, reference letters or photos of achievements.
4. Get access to a computer, printer and the Internet in your school or community library/resource centre. See the resources listed in the appendix, including websites, and the text *Success in the Workplace* and the kit *Destination 2020*.
5. Begin Part I.

Remember, keep all your notes and research as you work through this portfolio guide.

WORK CAREFULLY...
you are worth the investment of time.

***This guide** will help you create your portfolio. We hope you will continue the process of keeping track of changes in your life as you grow in knowledge, skills and abilities. We recommend you keep it up to date as you learn and move ahead in your life.*

part 1 gathering data and support

in this section you will:

Use a variety of resources to:

- ➔ reflect
- ➔ gather information
- ➔ establish a support system
- ➔ describe your personality, interests, strengths and skills
- ➔ chart all of your skills and abilities
- ➔ write statements to support your claims



before you move on

...pause and reflect

You look backwards at what you have done so you can move forward with confidence!

reflect

Put your mind to it – give your life serious thought. Contemplate its shape and direction.

positives

Feel really good about what you have accomplished. Recognize where you need to improve.

make a plan

Learn new skills that are lifelong and apply to every part of your life.

caution

Reflection isn't always easy. Sometimes, it can turn up troublesome thoughts. Talking to someone you trust can help.

what does reflection mean?

practice exercise

It really means you can learn about yourself by looking at the results of things you do. For example, taking your driver's licence test.

Think about what you did.

Look at the results you got. Check to see if they were what you really wanted.

Analyze the results. Figure out why you got those results.

Do a behaviour check. Decide what you did to get either positive or negative results. (Pat yourself on the back for a job well done or make the necessary changes to get the results you want next time.)



Writing down what you think enables you to look at your thoughts. It's a little like talking to yourself and gives you a chance to remember and reflect.

think about you



reflection

Reflection is a lifelong process. It helps you look at what you have done, analyze your results, measure your successes and adjust your conduct in the future. You did this naturally when you were a small child discovering how the world worked.



Here are some **big picture** questions you will find useful while gathering information. You will work through most of these later in this section.

What do you like doing?
What are you good at?
What don't you like to do?

What activities do you take part in at school and/or in the community?
Can you identify the skills you use or develop?

Do you have any work experience (paid or unpaid)?
What specific work did you do?

What are your interests and abilities?

What can you do today?
What do you want to do this year?
What do you want to do in the future?

Do you have career goals?
Have you taken courses related to career goals?

Try the **REFLECTION PRACTICE EXERCISE** on page 51. You just might like it. Practice is not always fun, but it is useful and will help you frame your thoughts.

the gathering process

PART ONE GATHERING DATA & SUPPORT

research • record and analyze • summarize

- ➔ **FIND** a mentor and portfolio buddy.
- ➔ **IDENTIFY** resources necessary for your research.
- ➔ **IDENTIFY** your personality characteristics, interests, strengths and skills.
- ➔ **DOCUMENT** how you developed the skills and strengths you've gained through life and work experiences.
- ➔ **DEMONSTRATE** your ability to research, reflect and record information.
- ➔ **ASSEMBLE** the data necessary for your portfolio.
- ➔ **PLAN** your next steps.

RESEARCH

by completing questionnaires and reflecting on your life.

RECORD and **ANALYZE** your findings.

SUMMARIZE

the information you gather.

This process takes time but is definitely worth it. Taking time will help build a strong foundation for your portfolio and ensure the information you gather is useful and accurate.

IMPORTANT

Research is very important in developing a portfolio. The information you gather will become your portfolio pages.

Gathering a variety of information about your knowledge, skills, attitudes and conduct will help you develop a more accurate and useful portfolio.

ASK FOR HELP!
Find a mentor and a portfolio buddy.



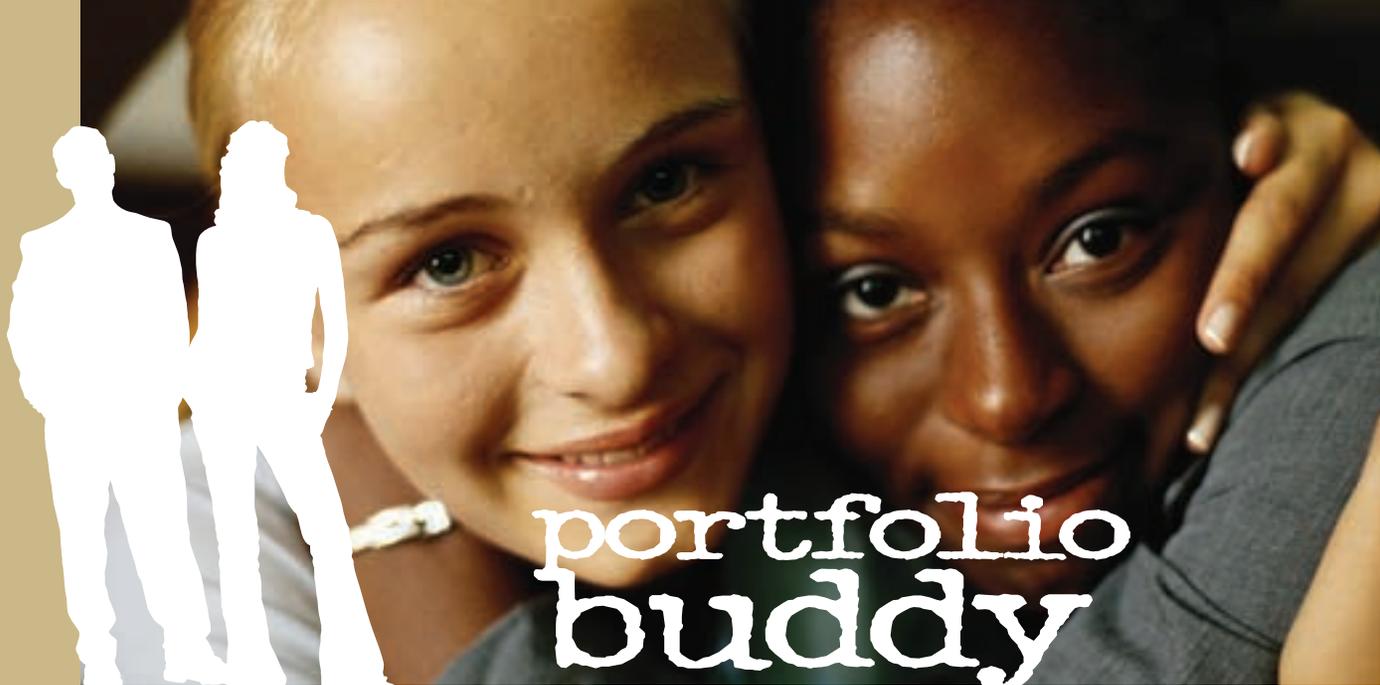
find someone

who can help you

portfolio mentor

Someone who is

- **willing to help** with the portfolio project
- a teacher, a supervisor, a colleague, a coach, a neighbour or anyone **who cares about you**
- interested in your growth and development
- a **good** listener
- a wise, **loyal** adviser
- trustworthy
- **resourceful** and informed
- able to spend time with you
- able to **establish networks** and find resources in the community



portfolio buddy

Someone

- who actually **listens**
- who is a **true buddy**
- who is trustworthy and honest
- **who is positive**
- who is also building a portfolio

- who is **willing to work** with you as a teammate toward a common goal
- who is **dependable** and can meet with you regularly

trustworthy

someone

you can talk to

why should I have a mentor and a buddy?

they

will:

- help keep you **focused** and on track
- coach you into **thinking** about the skills you have developed
- help you **identify** ways to apply these skills
- be able to **see things** you have missed

Two heads are better than one!

There are other people you know who will be happy to help. Don't be afraid to ask.

how to work with my mentor and buddy

- ➡ Set up mutually agreeable meeting times.
- ➡ Provide each other with contact numbers.
- ➡ Talk and communicate openly and honestly.
- ➡ Set a timeline for completing the project.

NOTE:

There is a sample letter of explanation in the appendix that you can give your mentor.

Make this commitment a priority.

My Portfolio Mentor: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

My Portfolio Buddy: _____

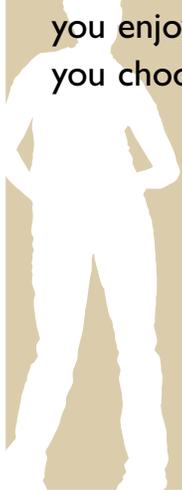
Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

personality everyone has one!

This is where you actually begin gathering information that defines you.
Personality + Interests + Strengths + Skills = YOU

PERSONALITY IS:

- ➔ often the first thing people notice about you and leaves a lasting impression
- ➔ visible because of the decisions you make, the way you react, your approach to learning and your appearance
- ➔ a determining factor in the work you like, the activities you enjoy and the friends you choose



HAVING TROUBLE?
Talk to your mentor and buddy for help.



this is not a time to be modest, but it is a time to **be honest.**

Don't be afraid to ask for help. People are often flattered when you do.

step 1: research

- ➔ **Review** as many of the resource suggestions as you can.
- ➔ Carefully **read** all of the adjectives used to describe personality characteristics found on pages 15-18. (Yes, there are a lot of them, but personality is a complicated mix of characteristics.)

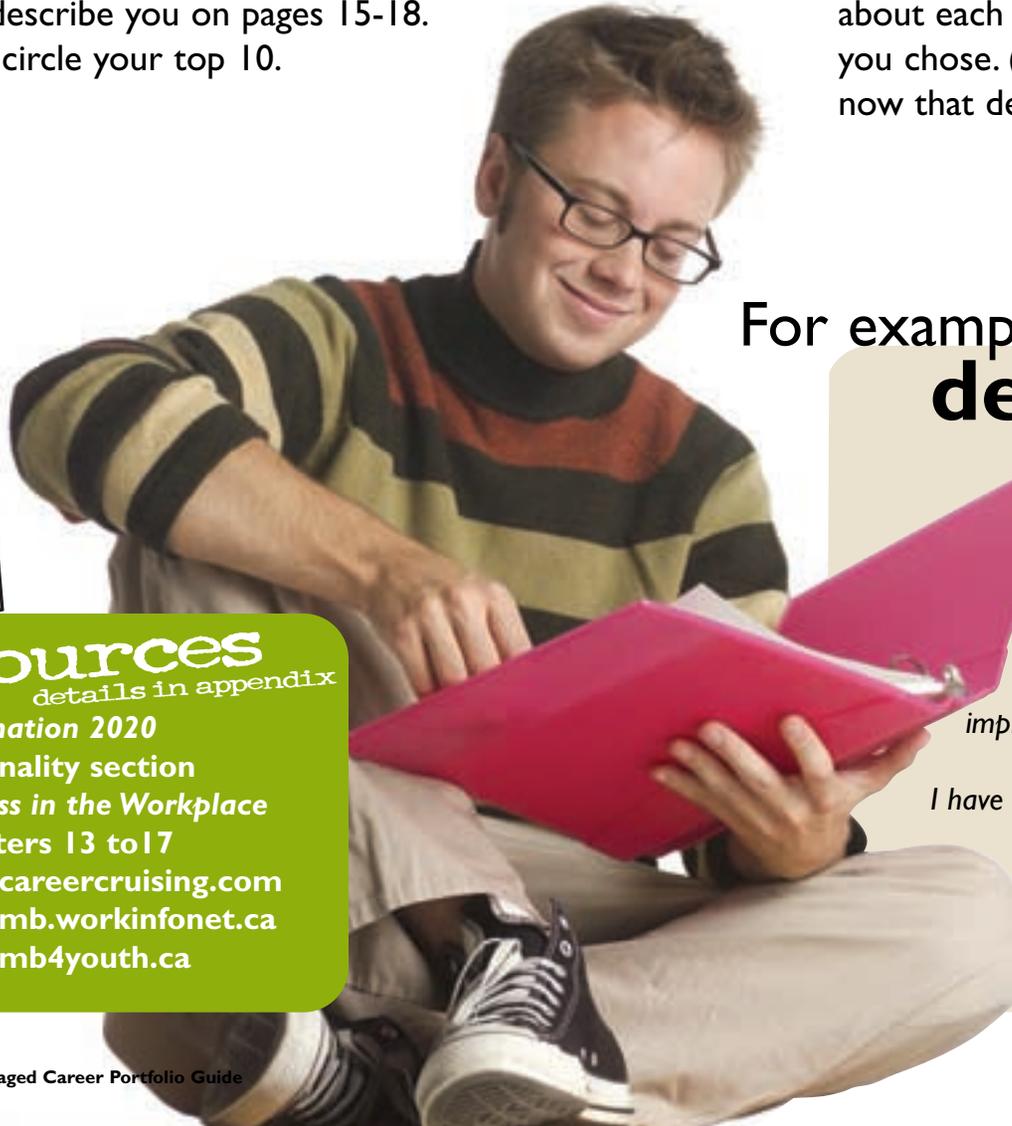
personality everyone has one!

step 2: record & analyze

- ➔ Check off the adjectives you feel best describe you on pages 15-18. Then circle your top 10.

step 3: summarize

- ➔ Summarize by writing a proof statement about each one of the top 10 characteristics you chose. (In other words, what do you do now that demonstrates this trait?)



For example,

dependable:

I have had a babysitting job for the same family for three years. We have regular set dates, and they can count on me to be there. If I can't, I always give them lots of notice so they can make alternate arrangements.

I have played hockey for the same team for five years. I attend all practices and games. As a result, I have improved my skills and get a lot of ice time.

I have been working at the same company for three years. I always arrive 10 minutes before my shift starts and rarely miss a day at work.

Save your work in the back pocket of this guide.

resources

details in appendix

- *Destination 2020* Personality section
- *Success in the Workplace* Chapters 13 to 17
- www.careercruising.com
- www.mb.workinfont.ca
- www.mb4youth.ca

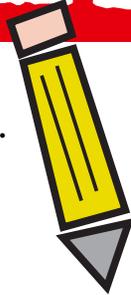
Power words to choose from... pick the ones that describe you.

personality everyone has one!

i am powering up

Check off the adjectives you feel best describe you.
Then circle your top 10.

- Accurate:** I am precise. I don't make mistakes.
- Active:** I like to keep myself busy.
- Adaptable:** I can easily fit into new routines and situations.
- Adventurous:** I like to try new things.
- Affectionate:** I am warm toward others and prefer personal contact.
- Ambitious:** I want to succeed at everything I do. I want to do well.
- Artistic:** I am creative and like to use my imagination.
- Assertive:** I stand up for myself.
- Attentive:** I am never daydreaming when I need to pay attention.
- Calm:** I don't feel out of control even when I am under stress. I stay cool.
- Capable:** I am able to do my job.
- Careful:** I take good care of my work and try not to make mistakes.



my personality characteristics

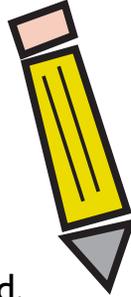
- Caring:** I care about people and many things.
- Cautious:** I am aware of dangerous situations and try to avoid them.
- Charming:** My outgoing manner makes people like me and want to be near me.
- Cheerful:** I am usually in a good mood and see things in a positive way.
- Clever:** I approach things in new and interesting ways.
- Competent:** I get the job done well and on time.
- Competitive:** I like to be challenged by others to do my best in whatever I do.
- Confident:** I believe in myself and in what I can do.
- Conscientious:** I know and do what's right.
- Consistent:** I always do things the same way.
- Constructive:** I am able to build and put things together. I am positive.
- Co-operative:** I am able to work and get along with others.
- Courageous:** I am brave.

personality

i am **powering up** my personality characteristics

- Creative:** I like to create things.
- Curious:** I am interested in learning and discovering new things.
- Dependable:** Others can rely on me.
- Detailed:** I pay attention to the small things.
- Determined:** When I decide to do something, I do it, no matter how hard it is.
- Disciplined:** I am focused and can make myself stay doing a task even if something more interesting comes along.
- Discreet:** I can keep secrets and don't gossip.
- Dynamic:** I have a lot of energy, enthusiasm and new ideas.
- Eager:** I'm always willing and ready to get started on things.
- Efficient:** I do things quickly, usually in the fastest, simplest way.
- Empathetic:** I can feel other people's pain and understand what they are feeling.
- Energetic:** I have a lot of energy.
- Enterprising:** I am someone who is likely to start my own business. I motivate myself.
- Enthusiastic:** I get excited and motivated.
- Expressive:** I get my message across to others clearly.
- Forgiving:** I don't hold grudges.
- Friendly:** I make an effort to include and talk to others.
- Generous:** I am giving to others, either of emotional support or gifts.
- Gentle:** I handle things and people with care.
- Good-natured:** I'm easygoing and don't get angry often.
- Helpful:** I like to help others.
- Honest:** I always tell the truth.
- Humorous:** I am funny and make others laugh.
- Imaginative:** I am full of thoughts and ideas.
- Independent:** I do not rely or depend on other people. I work well on my own.
- Industrious:** I put effort into my work.
- Innovative:** I always have new ideas.
- Inspiring:** I motivate others to act, behave or do something positive.
- Integrity:** I understand and act upon my morals – what is right and wrong.
- Intuitive:** I can sense how others feel or what they're thinking; I can sense how to solve a problem.

everyone has one!



- [] **Kind:** I am good to other people.
- [] **Likable:** I am easy to like.
- [] **Logical:** I am able to think step by step.
- [] **Loyal:** I am true and faithful to others.
- [] **Mature:** I am mentally and physically developed.
I am responsible for my age.
- [] **Meticulous:** I am into the details of things and may be a bit of a perfectionist.
- [] **Modest:** I don't brag about myself and my accomplishments.
- [] **Open-minded:** I am open to new and different ideas.
- [] **Optimistic:** I look on the bright side of things and always try to find the good side.
- [] **Orderly:** I like to follow step-by-step processes and do things in an organized and logical manner.
- [] **Organized:** Everything has a place and an order.
- [] **Outgoing:** I am friendly and feel comfortable and excited by new situations. I am not afraid of crowds.
- [] **Patient:** I don't lose my temper quickly and am good at teaching people things.
- [] **Perceptive:** I notice what's going on around me and how people get along.
- [] **Persevering:** Even though a job may be hard, I'll keep at it until it's done.
- [] **Playful:** I have a joking and teasing personality.
- [] **Polite:** I always remember my manners and am tactful.
- [] **Positive:** I think there is a good side to everything.
- [] **Practical:** I think before I act and look for the simplest way to do things.
- [] **Productive:** I am focused and use my time wisely.
- [] **Progressive:** I am forward-thinking and don't cling to the old way of doing things.
- [] **Punctual:** I make a point of being on time.
- [] **Rational:** I don't go into a panic in crisis time.
I calmly try to think things through for a solution.
- [] **Realistic:** I see things as they really are.
- [] **Reasonable:** I make fair decisions.
- [] **Reflective:** I like to think about things I've done after they're finished, and see how I might do them better next time.
- [] **Relaxed:** Stress and tension don't get to me.
- [] **Reliable:** People know they can always count on me to be there when they need me.
- [] **Resourceful:** I can find things and may be good at doing research.

personality everyone has one!

i am **powering up** my personality characteristics

- [] **Respectful:** I treat everyone with respect.
- [] **Self-reliant:** I do things for myself and don't count on others to do them for me.
- [] **Sensitive:** I am in tune with others' feelings as well as my own. I care about what others think of me.
- [] **Sincere:** When I give compliments, I mean them. I am not a fake.
- [] **Sociable:** I like to be around people a lot. I might prefer working in groups.
- [] **Spontaneous:** I do things when I feel like it. I don't need a plan.
- [] **Sympathetic:** I feel for others when they are sad or when something bad happens to them.
- [] **Tactful:** I don't just blurt out criticisms. I try to think of a nice way to say things politely.
- [] **Tenacious:** When I've got a good idea, I hold onto it and fight for my cause until others listen.
- [] **Thorough:** I don't miss things. I do a job completely and think of all sides of the problem.
- [] **Thoughtful:** I think of others, not just myself. For instance, I remember birthdays, names and important dates.

- [] **Thrifty:** I am good at saving money.
- [] **Tolerant:** I don't lose my cool easily and try to get along with everyone.
- [] **Understanding:** I forgive people for making mistakes and don't hold grudges because of them.
- [] **Versatile:** I know how to do and learn to do many different things.

[] _____

[] _____

[] _____



Used with permission from Destination 2020.

interests

...things I really enjoy doing



We do things we enjoy because:

- We learn them naturally and easily.

Multiple Intelligences

- They are important to us.

Personal Values

- Our family and friends also enjoy them.

Personal Environment

step 1: research

- ▶ Complete one or more of the interest questionnaires in the list of resources.

step 2: record & analyze

- ▶ Write down your strongest interests revealed by these questionnaires.

EXAMPLE

- I enjoy designing, inventing and creating things.
- I like finding out how things work by taking them apart.

- ▶ Think about each interest you recorded and about what you currently enjoy doing.

step 3: summarize

- ▶ Beside each interest, write an example of how your interest is reflected in what you do. The two statements in the example above indicate a strong interest in “things.” Ask yourself, is this true? If so, give an example of what you do that reflects that interest.

EXAMPLE

- Things – I have always been able to fix things and keep them in working order.
- My best marks are in courses where I get to do hands-on activities.

resources

(see Appendix D)

- *Destination 2020*, Occupations section
- *Success in the Workplace*, Pages 24 to 27
- www.careercruising.com, click on Matchmaker

There are many ways to check interests.
Use more than one resource.



Now...what
strengths
do you have?

strengths

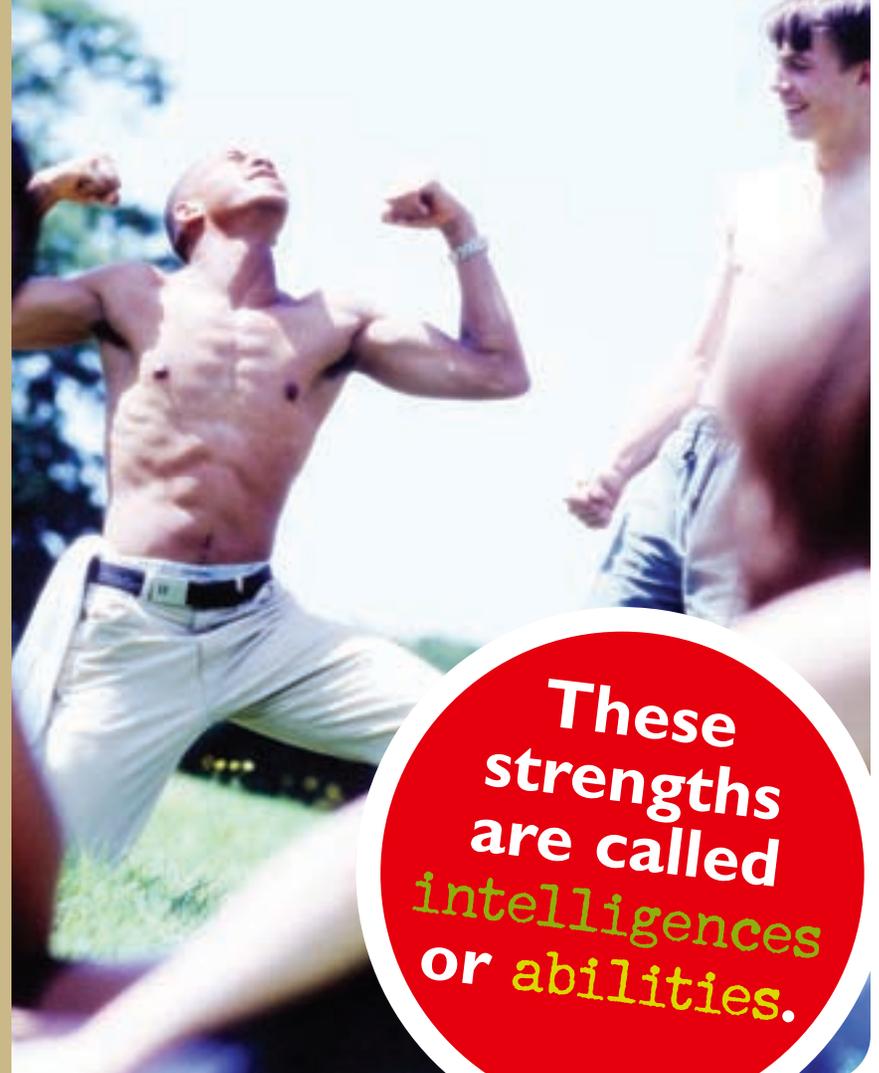
PART ONE GATHERING DATA & SUPPORT

yes! we all have strengths

You may be:

- ▶ very physically **co-ordinated**
- ▶ a good **musician** or just love listening to music
- ▶ appreciate colour, shapes and art in general and have a room full of **visual attractions**
- ▶ skilled at **solving problems** and puzzles
- ▶ especially good at working with people and have lots of **friends**
- ▶ skilled or interested in **literature** and **languages**
- ▶ someone who loves the outdoors and **appreciates nature**
- ▶ able to understand yourself, your capabilities and emotions and **set personal goals**

You may have several of these strengths.



These strengths are called intelligences or abilities.

strengths

Be proud
of your
strengths...
be confident
of your
ability.

step 1: research

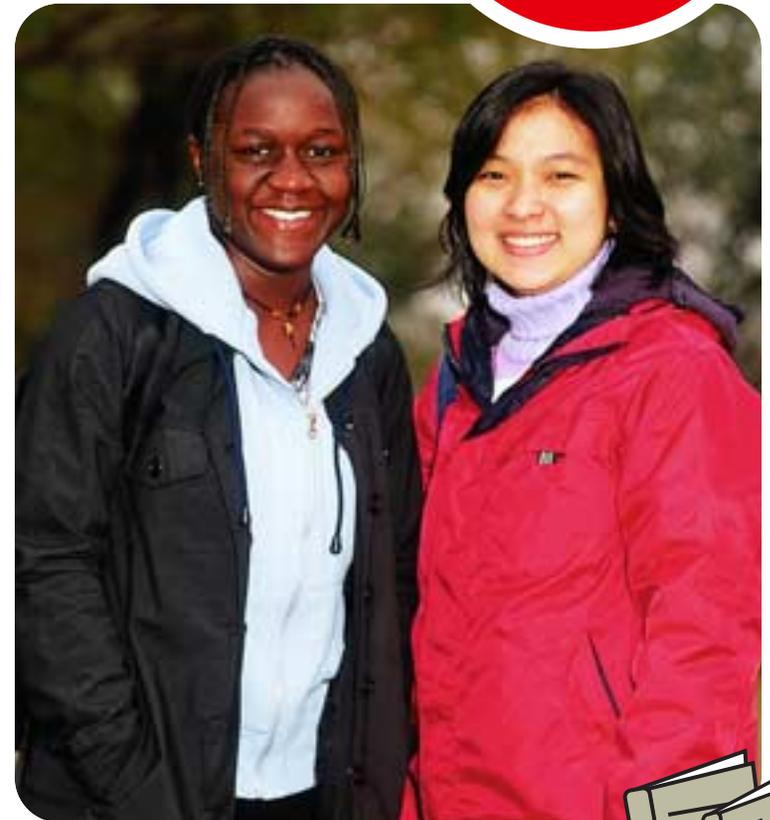
- Complete the activities in the *Smart Options, Student's Resource Book* or complete pages 22 & 23, "A Quick Check of my Strengths."

step 2: record & analyze

- Complete page 24, "A Summary of my Strengths."
- **LOOK** at the results of your research.
- **THINK** about your strengths and list them in order, starting with your strongest.
 - You may have several areas of strength. Only you can decide which is your strongest or if they are all equal.

step 3: summarize

- Organize your thoughts and find proof of your strengths.
- **DESCRIBE**, beside each strength, the schoolwork, extracurricular activities, work, hobbies and community involvement showing the strength in action.
 - To help your thinking, review school report cards, clubs you have joined, hobbies and activities with your family. Talk to your parents, your mentor and your buddy.



resource

• *Smart Options, Student's Resource Book*



strengths

a quick check of my strengths

Check off all statements that apply to you.

I have **body or kinesthetic** strengths if I:

- like to play sports
- am very co-ordinated
- learn a new sport or dance step easily
- like to play video games
- use my hands when I am talking
- like fixing things
- find myself moving a lot or find it hard to sit still

I have **language or verbal** strengths if I:

- like to read
- like to write in a journal, stories, poetry or other writings
- like word puzzles or games
- learn the words to songs I hear
- like to listen to stories or plays
- like to listen to jokes or comedians
- like to talk

I have **logic** strengths if I:

- like math
- like to figure out how things work
- like to solve puzzles
- like to organize things
- like games that require strategy
- like to use computers
- like science courses

I have **visual** strengths if I:

- like watching the images in music videos, movies or advertisements
- like to doodle or draw
- like to see how websites and programs on the computer look
- can use maps, graphs and charts easily
- like to plan how to decorate a room or put together unique fashion looks
- like photographs or taking photographs
- like colour

strengths

a quick check of my strengths

Check off all statements that apply to you.

I have **music** strengths if I:

- like listening to music
- like playing a musical instrument or singing
- find myself humming
- like to listen to music when I study
- notice sounds all around me
- remember melodies and notice if something doesn't sound right
- keep rhythm or the beat when I listen to music

I have **people** strengths if I:

- help friends with problems or talk about my problems
- would rather be with people than alone
- like team sports
- like being with a group or even a crowd of people
- have lots of friends
- get along with people easily
- like watching people

I have **personal** strength if I:

- like to spend time alone doing sports, hobbies or just thinking
- know what I like to do
- make my plans and set my own goals
- have self-confidence to try new things
- want to learn new things
- find that some of my ideas are different from those of my parents or friends
- believe I am a spiritual person or want to learn more about different religions

Look back on all the categories. Your strengths lie in those categories with many checkmarks. You may have one great strength or you may have many.

reflect

- Do you agree that your strengths really fall into these particular categories?
- How does what you do today support or prove that these are your strengths?

strengths

a summary of my strengths

Record your strengths and examples from your life in this chart. An example is included.

Strength	Examples in my life that demonstrate this strength
People Strength	When I babysit, I play with the children and help them solve problems.

skills

things I have learned to do

We all learn skills through day-to-day activities **outside of school or work**, such as clubs, lessons, sports, time with family and just being with our friends. We also learn **in school** through the various courses we study, **at work** through our responsibilities, and **through events** in which we choose to take part.

The trick is to figure out your **best skills** and the **skills you want to learn and practice**. By working through the activities on the next few pages and by analyzing your results, you will create your personal **inventory of skills**.

DAILY ACTIVITY CATEGORIES

- **Sports teams** (hockey, soccer, etc.)
- **Lessons** (music, swimming, karate, etc.)
- **Work for pay**
- **Volunteer work**
- **Place of worship**
- **Community club**
- **Social activities** (Do you plan them?)
- **Hobbies or crafts** (Do you operate specific equipment, tools?)
- **Computer competence** (Do you have specific skills here?)
- **Workshops/conferences**



skills

learned through daily activities

step 1: research

- ▶ Think of all of the activities you do or have done.

EXAMPLE

- Take music lessons, play hockey, coach a soccer team, sew my own clothes, read for hours, help my grandpa with construction projects, belong to Scouts, spend hours on the computer, etc.

step 2: record & analyze

- ▶ List these activities.

step 3: summarize

- ▶ Create your own chart like the one the following page. Record your findings.

Use the Employability Skills 2000+ list found on page 30 to help you describe skills.



resources

- *Success in the Workplace* Pages 23 to 24
- *Destination 2020*, Skills section
- www.careercruising.com



skills

learned through daily activities

SAMPLE CHART

ACTIVITIES <i>What specifically did you do?</i>	REASON	SKILLS I USE OR HAVE LEARNED	REFLECTION
Home - mow the lawn and shovel snow - care for younger family members - look after my things	- part of my responsibilities - earn money - help parents - so I'll know where everything is and if it is clean	- be dependable... I get the jobs done when needed. - know how to operate a power lawn mower and snow blower safely - understand the value of consistent care of both things and people - be responsible for the safety of others - manage my money wisely - If I look after my things, they are there when I need them	- like working outdoors - like caring for my brothers and sisters but would not choose child care as a job - feel comfortable when I know where everything is
Family - work with my grandpa and help him build things	- like to work with tools - feel good when I help - I am good at it	- learn continuously... willing to continuously learn and grow - use teamwork... work together with my grandpa to try to complete projects - be adaptable... I learn from my mistakes and accept feedback	- like the physical exercise and being part of a team
Volunteer - coach a soccer team	- like to work with young people - good exercise	- ability to lead a group - teach how to maneuver a soccer ball and the strategy of the game	- like working with the community



skills

learned at school/work

**REMEMBER:
BE SPECIFIC...**
No long
paragraphs
here.

STEP 1: RESEARCH

- ▶ Walk backwards through your mind and think of all of the courses you have taken in the past three years. Include extra-curricular in-school activities.

STEP 2: RECORD & ANALYZE

- ▶ List each course and activity (current and last two years).

STEP 3: SUMMARIZE

- ▶ Create your own chart like the one on the next page and write down your reflections.
- ▶ Refer to the Employability Skills 2000+ list on page 30 for the correct words to describe your skills.

resources

- www.careercruising.com
- Go to Matchmaker
- Destination 2020
- Success in the Workplace



skills

learned at school/work

SAMPLE CHART

Course Activity	What specifically did I do?	What did I learn by doing?	Success/Proof
Geography Senior 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- used maps for research- used data and maps to form conclusions- examined environmental issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- to find data/research- to locate places in North America- to predict possible environmental solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- planned a successful family vacation.- became involved in a recycling program
Intro to Power Mechanics Senior 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- studied safety procedures required when working in a shop- became aware of the specific vocabulary needed when talking about tools and equipment- examined the various ways tools are used- studied various types of engines	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- to be aware of personal and group health-and-safety practices and procedures and the need to act in accordance with these- to select and use appropriate tools and technology for a task- to work to agreed standards and specifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- tuned my lawnmower
Family Studies Senior 1 and 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- learned how humans develop through stages- planned a nursery school experience for three and four-year-old children- learned how children learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- to plan and carry out a project from start to finish- to recognize and respect people's individual differences- to work within a group	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- volunteered at our local daycare- received good marks



While you are taking courses, accurately record what you are doing and learning while the information is still fresh in your mind. As you progress in your education and in jobs, this will be valuable. It can also be used as proof in the Prior Learning and Assessment and Recognition process. (See page 50 for details.)

Employability Skills 2000+

The skills you need to enter, stay in, and progress in the world of work—whether you work on your own or as a part of a team.

These skills can also be applied and used beyond the workplace in a range of daily activities.

Fundamental Skills The skills needed as a base for further development	Personal Management Skills The personal skills, attitudes and behaviours that drive one's potential for growth	Teamwork Skills The skills and attributes needed to contribute productively
<p><i>You will be better prepared to progress in the world of work when you can:</i></p> <p>Communicate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read and understand information presented in a variety of forms (e.g., words, graphs, charts, diagrams) and write and speak so others pay attention and understand • listen and ask questions to understand and appreciate the points of view of others • share information using a range of information and communications technologies (e.g., voice, e-mail, computers) • use relevant scientific, technological and mathematical knowledge and skills to explain or clarify ideas <p>Manage Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • locate, gather and organize information using appropriate technology and information systems • access, analyze and apply knowledge and skills from various disciplines (e.g., the arts, languages, science, technology, mathematics, social sciences, and the humanities) <p>Use Numbers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decide what needs to be measured or calculated • observe and record data using appropriate methods, tools and technology • make estimates and verify calculations <p>Think & Solve Problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assess situations and identify problems • seek different points of view and evaluate them based on facts • recognize the human, interpersonal, technical, scientific and mathematical dimensions of a problem • identify the root cause of a problem • be creative and innovative in exploring possible solutions • readily use science, technology and mathematics as ways to think, gain and share knowledge, solve problems and make decisions • evaluate solutions to make recommendations or decisions • implement solutions • check to see if a solution works, and act on opportunities for improvement 	<p><i>You will be able to offer yourself greater possibilities for achievement when you can:</i></p> <p>Demonstrate Positive Attitudes & Behaviours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feel good about yourself and be confident • deal with people, problems and situations with honesty, integrity and personal ethics • recognize your own and other people's good efforts • take care of your personal health • show interest, initiative and effort <p>Be Responsible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set goals and priorities balancing work and personal life • plan and manage time, money and other resources to achieve goals • assess, weigh and manage risk • be accountable for your actions and the actions of your group • be socially responsible and contribute to your community <p>Be Adaptable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work independently or as a part of a team • carry out multiple tasks or projects • be innovative and resourceful: identify and suggest alternative ways to achieve goals and get the job done • be open and respond constructively to change • learn from your mistakes and accept feedback • cope with uncertainty <p>Learn Continuously</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be willing to continuously learn and grow • assess personal strengths and areas for development • set your own learning goals • identify and access learning sources and opportunities • plan for and achieve your learning goals <p>Work Safely</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be aware of personal and group health and safety practices and procedures, and act in accordance with these 	<p><i>You will be better prepared to add value to the outcomes of a task, project or team when you can:</i></p> <p>Work with Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand and work within the dynamics of a group • ensure that a team's purpose and objectives are clear • be flexible: respect, be open to and supportive of the thoughts, opinions and contributions of others in a group • recognize and respect people's diversity, individual differences and perspectives • accept and provide feedback in a constructive and considerate manner • contribute to a team by sharing information and expertise • lead or support when appropriate, motivating a group for high performance • understand the role of conflict in a group to reach solutions • manage and resolve conflict when appropriate <p>Participate in Projects & Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plan, design or carry out a project or task from start to finish with well-defined objectives and outcomes • develop a plan, seek feedback, test, revise and implement • work to agreed quality standards and specifications • select and use appropriate tools and technology for a task or project • adapt to changing requirements and information • continuously monitor the success of a project or task and identify ways to improve



The Conference Board of Canada

255 Smyth Road, Ottawa
 ON K1H 8M7 Canada
 Tel. (613) 526-3280
 Fax (613) 526-4857

checklist

PART ONE GATHERING DATA & SUPPORT

of information gathered

- 
- 
- Personality
 - Interests
 - Strengths
 - Daily Activity Skills
 - School/Work Skills
 - My Conference Board of Canada's Employability Skills 2000+
 - Proof (letters, certificates, etc.)

You will need this information for Part 2,
"Assembling the Portfolio."

great job!

Now it is finally
time to assemble
your portfolio!

part 2 assembling the portfolio

getting started



YOU HAVE:

researched,
recorded and **reflected,**
gathered proof

of your personality characteristics,
interests, strengths and skills.

NOW!

It is time to **be creative**
and **build** your portfolio.

You are unique

and your portfolio should be too.

how to start

...how do i want
the world to see me



remember

A PORTFOLIO IS:?

- a support package for your resume and cover letter (*be sure to include these*)
- a collection of samples that demonstrate your skills to an employer or an educator
- a collection of documents showcasing your accomplishments and/or personal development
- a self-marketing tool
- challenging and time consuming to create and is part of a lifelong process

A PORTFOLIO MUST:

- be **consistent**
- use **professional** language
- be **accurate**
- be **honest**
- be something you are **proud** of
- be presented in a **logical** and **useful** order

Open your
folder...
time to **START!**

sample

of portfolio format

who i am

Patient
hAppy
Trustworthy

Sincere
iMaginative
Intelligent
Tolerant
Honest



my interests

**I am realistic,
which means:**

- I like to build and repair things.
- I am practical and find the most logical way to fix a problem.
- My best subject is Power Mechanics, which proves this area of interest.

In Part One, Gathering Data, you learned about who you are by researching four topics – personality, interests, strengths and skills. In this format, you will present the data you collected using each of these topics as a heading for each page. These are examples only. You can create other headings that suit you.

personality page

- You can try a number of things.
- Write your first and last names in a vertical column in the centre of a page. Use these letters in words that describe your personality. Be thoughtful, you may be asked to explain your use of words.
- Create an autobiography. It could be an essay, a photo collage with captions or a timeline with highlights of your accomplishments. It can be either a history of your life or who you are today.
- You could also create a mind map that shows traits and experiences you are proud of.

interests page

- Often your best traits are found in your interests.
- List your interests and explain why these activities and experiences are important to you.
- Include photos of your proudest moments.



sample

of portfolio format



strengths page

- On this page, you will want to highlight your best strengths or multiple intelligences, as they are also known. You may wish to explain briefly what that strength means to you and give examples from your life supporting your claim to these strengths.
- You may also wish to show how your interests have influenced these strengths and how they have helped you develop skills in the area of your interest.

MUSICAL STRENGTHS

I have always enjoyed music and play both piano and guitar. I hope to find a job in music one day.

INTERPERSONAL STRENGTHS

I babysit two children daily after school, which means I need to have a good relationship with the children and their parents.

In my restaurant job, I'm part of a team that serves customers. The good relationships within the team enable us to do our jobs.

sample

of portfolio format



skills page

- These can be listed according to the Employability Skills 2000+ categories. Be sure to write a proof statement to go along with each skill.
- If you have specialized skills – vocational, computer, arts, music, athletics – create a feature page focusing on your specialty. They can also indicate your strengths (also known as multiple intelligences).
- Skills can also be gained through volunteer work. Identify your volunteer position or role. Comment on the experiences or opportunities that have helped you grow as a person.
- Identify the specialized tools you have learned to use in your volunteer experience. Ask for letters of recommendation from your volunteer placements so that you can include them in your portfolio. For example:

Personal Management Skills

- **Punctual** - I am always on time for both school and my job.
- **Honest** - I am trusted to cash out at the end of the work day.

Teamwork Skills

- **Friendly** - It is easy for me to meet and help customers in a professional way.
- **Problem solving** - I can work with others to find practical solutions.

Fundamental Skills

- **Learn easily** - I believe learning continues throughout life and enjoy trying new skills at both school and work.

sample

of portfolio format

No matter which portfolio format you choose,

each requires evidence or proof of your interests, strengths and skills. These documents may include letters of reference, certificates, photos, report cards, awards, newspaper stories.

Attach an explanation to your documents that shows how each relates to your interests, strengths, skills, knowledge, attitude and personal characteristics.



It is absolutely necessary to explain each document.



I have received this type of certificate for nine of my 10 years in school.

Good attendance shows I enjoy good health and am reliable and dependable. This is one of the reasons I get chosen for tasks.

resumes & cover letters

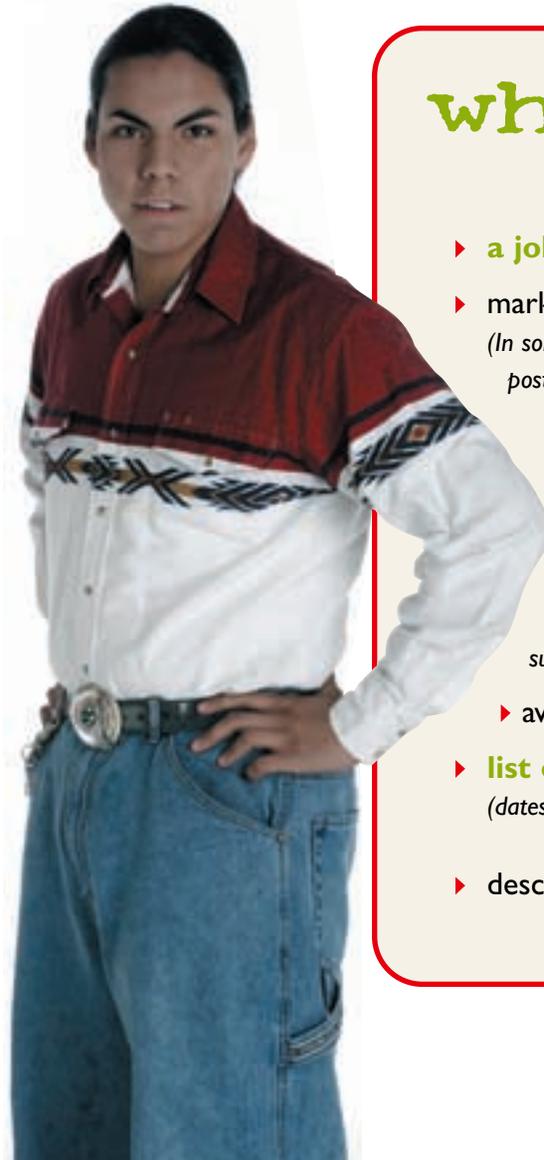
primary function
is to obtain an interview

a resume

- is a personal data sheet
- **establishes qualifications**
- provides essential information about you
- **is specific to each application**
- is pleasing to the eye
- **convinces the employer you have what it takes**

cover letters

- accompany the resume
- **introduce you**
- are specific to each application
(Yes, you must write a separate cover letter for each application.)
- **are concise and error free**
- encourage the employer/reader to read on



what you need before you begin:

- ▶ **a job description of current and former jobs**
- ▶ mark transcripts, but only if they are good
(In some cases, they are required, especially if you are applying for post-secondary education. They are your proof of eligibility.)
- ▶ **evaluations you received from employers or volunteer placements**
- ▶ letters of recommendation
- ▶ **work or volunteer histories**
(dates, placements, company names, up-to-date details of responsibilities, supervisors names, numbers)
- ▶ awards, certificates of recognition and achievement
- ▶ **list of all education/training**
(dates, schools, organizations, description, expected completion dates)
- ▶ description of specialized training

Need some
help writing a
RESUME?

resumes & cover letters

TIPS FOR WRITING

➔ **Present yourself in the best light possible... yes, this is personal publicity but be **honest**.**

➔ Focus on the skills and knowledge the employer or school may want.

➔ **Put yourself in the shoes of the interviewer... would you hire you? Make sure there are absolutely no errors... none at all.**

(Ask you mentor or buddy to check your letter.)

➔ Make it visually crisp so it looks appealing.

➔ **All basic information expected is included... address, work history, etc.**

first impressions count!

resources

- ➔ **Success in the Workplace** Chapters 7 and 8, an excellent resource
- ➔ **Computer programs** Check with the computer people in your school. Individual programs can be purchased.
- ➔ **School library** (check with librarian or counsellor)



There are many types of resumes. See list of resources, talk to your school counsellor or go to an employment office or adult learning centre for samples. The style you choose should reflect:

- ▶ **your age and stage in life**
- ▶ **level of education**
- ▶ **skills development**
- ▶ **its purpose**
(education or career)
- ▶ **the job for which you are applying**

Be sure to work with your mentor.

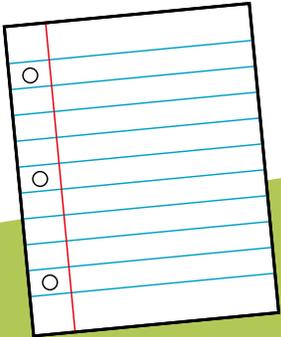


Be cautious using **WEBSITES**

Some have free information, but not all. Research to identify valid information.

resumes & cover letters

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



If you do not have a current resume and cover letter,

it is best to create a generic (general, all-purpose) one for this exercise. Your resume and cover letter will change as you gain education, skills and experience. Your cover letter will change for each job you apply for, depending on the strengths you want to highlight.

1.

Do I still need to fill out an application form?

Yes. If a form is required by the employer, then do it. Sometimes companies have specific questions they want answered. Attach your cover letter and resume to the application.

2.

My friend said the application form is all I need. Is that true?

If you really want the job, go the extra mile. It will be noticed. Keep asking yourself... why should they pick me?

3.

My friend can get me a job. Why do I need to have a resume?

That's great for now, but you will get older and have to find your own jobs some day. Preparing yourself now while you have the people and resources around you is much easier. Then you can build on this knowledge as you move through life.

be honest... be proud...
be accurate...

portfolio checklist



Use the chart below to make sure you have included all the information needed to finish your portfolio. Other items, such as career research, career plan, education plan or business cards may also be included. Just add the items to the checklist below.

Name

School

Mentor

Student Signature

Mentor Signature

Personal data gathered and recorded	Portfolio ready [check]	Reviewed by mentor [initial]
Personality Characteristics		
Interests		
Strengths		
Daily Activity Skills		
School / Work Skills		
Employability 2000+ Skills - Fundamental Skills - Personal Management Skills - Teamwork Skills		
Resume		
Cover Letter		
Evidence, Documentation, Certificates		

assembling

the portfolio

1. Have you included **everything** from the checklist in your portfolio pages?
2. Has your mentor signed **each item** on the checklist as complete?
3. If yes, then **complete** the following:



- Collect all your pages.**
- Place pages in page protectors. This is an option but is highly recommended, especially for important documents you don't want three-hole punched.
 - ➔ (**TIP:** buy the inexpensive clear protectors.)
- Arrange in a binder or folder in the order that best presents your skills, interests, abilities and strengths.**
- Be sure any evidence of your skills and abilities, such as a certificate, has a caption or statement explaining why you included it in your portfolio.

Congratulations!

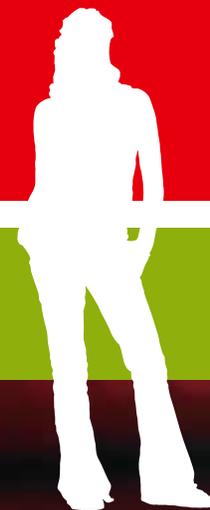
You have **completed** your portfolio.

It **celebrates** the **experiences** and **qualities**
that have made you the **person** you are today.

Your portfolio provides you with the base to plan your career,
your community involvement and your life choices.

Be proud of **who you are**
and your accomplishments!

part 3 **using your portfolio**



You have identified your knowledge and skills and have documented these in a carefully prepared portfolio... it is time to show the world. You are responsible for your own success and cannot rely on others to promote your abilities.

Be confident and begin.

using your portfolio

for personal development



Now you have created and gathered your portfolio pages into a binder, use this information for your own personal development. Answering the reflection questions on this page will help you plan changes to make now and in the future. (Add detail, not just one-word answers.)

reflection

From the qualities listed in:

My Personality (add examples)

I am most proud of...

I would like to be better at...

My Interests

I would like to try the following new activities or experiences...

My Skills

I am proud of my skills in...

I need to develop skills in...

My Strengths

I knew I was good at...

I was surprised to find that I am naturally good at...

I need to work a little harder to learn...

During the next six months, I am going to make the following two changes:

(Provide specific examples.)

1. _____

2. _____



using your portfolio

for a job search

skills & tools

In almost all job searches, you will meet a potential employer in an interview. There are **two key purposes** of the job interview:

1.

to convince the employer you have the skills, attitudes and interests needed to do the job



2.

to ensure that this is the job you want to do each day

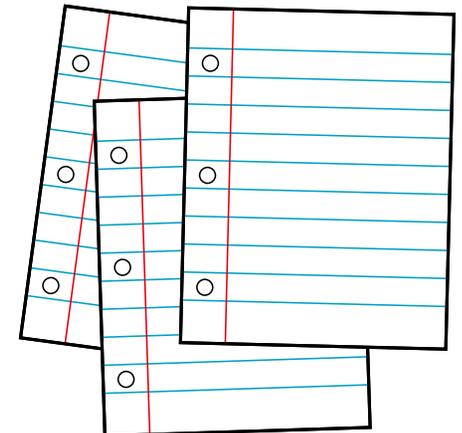


Your portfolio:

- allows you to review your skills and information you wish to share **before** the interview
- gives the employer **visual proof** of your skills and experience

Your portfolio is a collection of what you are about. Every piece will not be appropriate for every interview. Just as you tailor a resume and cover letter for a specific job, you select pieces from your portfolio that best present the information the employer needs in order to make a decision.

- You may need to rework a few pieces to provide specific information.
- At the interview, explain that you brought your portfolio for the employer to view. Allow the employer to conduct the interview, but also bring the portfolio pages supporting your answers to his/her attention.
- At the end of the interview, when asked if there is anything else you wish to add or explain, use your portfolio to discuss any other qualifications the employer may not have asked about in the interview.



using your portfolio

for

career exploration

When you decide on an occupation, you are choosing the work you will do each day.

It is important to choose an occupation that suits your personality and interests and uses your skills and strengths.

Use the information you have gathered in your portfolio to help you make your decision.

- **Review your personality, interests, skills and strengths.**
- Consider your many options.
- **Weigh the pros and cons of each occupation possibility.**
- Make your choice.
- **Create a plan mapping out what you have to do to get a job in your chosen occupation.**

for

further studies and training

It is becoming more common for portfolios of your work to be part of admissions to further studies and training. In these instances, you submit it with your application or at the time of your interview. (See Job Search.)

If you submit your portfolio with your application, be sure you have also met all the requirements requested on the application form.

Send only a copy of the relevant portfolio pages. Rarely are you required to submit your original portfolio. Some employers or admission officers may wish to have your portfolio on a computer disk.

Consider what other pieces from your portfolio could be added to supplement your reasons for applying to the apprenticeship or on-the-job training program, the vocational or technical program, college or university courses of study.



resources

www.canadiancareers.com
Go to *Exploring Careers*

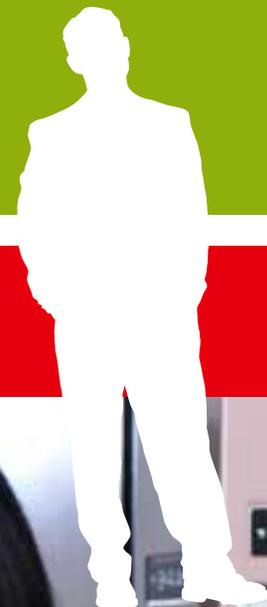
www.careercruising.com
Go to *Career Planning*

www.mb.workinfonet.ca/
Go to *Occupations/ Careers, Planning your Career*

www.youth.gc.ca
Go to *Plan your Career*

part 4

appendices



prior learning

and assessment recognition

what does
this term
mean?

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) is the process of recognizing and giving credit for skills, knowledge and competencies acquired through work experiences, informal education or training, self study, volunteer activities and hobbies.

IN OTHER WORDS...

PLAR looks at what you know and what you can do.

(This means you have to write down what you know specifically and provide proof, like you are doing to create your portfolio.)

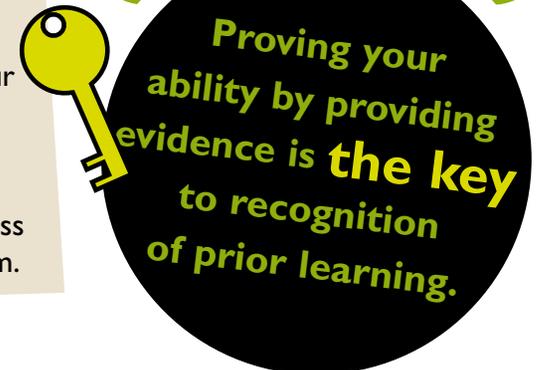
example 1: If you have a good grasp of safety procedures required for a particular workplace (like machine shop or restaurant kitchen), have your employer give you a letter of reference or get a safety certificate from your class. They are the proof you need for your portfolio.

Prior learning can also give you the chance to challenge a test or course.

example 1: If you are almost 16 years old and feel confident in writing the beginners test for your driver's licence, you can challenge the test. Passing the test provides evidence of your knowledge, and getting your beginner's licence gives you recognition for your prior learning.

example 2: If you have studied a foreign language and want an academic credit for your knowledge, you can challenge an exam. This can be arranged through the school. If you succeed in passing, you will receive the appropriate credit.

example 3: If you are entering a college or university and feel you know enough to pass a required course, you can use your portfolio to document your knowledge or challenge the exam. You may be able to move through a program at a faster pace.



self evaluation

reflection practice exercise

Find and examine your last few school report cards. Use the following questions to guide your reflection. **Write down your answers.** It is useful to look over your thoughts later.

- What is the true purpose of a report card?
- Are these reports a true picture of your knowledge, skills and abilities?...**Be honest.**
- If the reports are not a true reflection, why not?
- Are the behaviour comments a true picture of you?
- Are the comments similar to those you received throughout your years in school?
- Record the comments you usually receive.
(*It may be painful but do it... only you will see this work.*)
- Would you be proud to show these comments when applying for further education or a job?
- What did you learn during the last two years that:
 - prepared you for the courses you are taking now or plan to take
 - prepared you for the workforce
 - will benefit you personally in the future?

Be specific...

In basic computer skills, I learned word processing and how to use spread sheets. I can comfortably use the computer for assignments and at work.

Specific Goals and Action Plan

As a result of reflecting on my progress reports, I am going to _____

I will achieve this goal by _____

I will measure my success by _____

Analysis

How do I feel about what I have just recorded??

+ POSITIVE REACTION

Some of you will be feeling great, saying, "Yes! I did really well, and I am proud of my accomplishments." This is an opportunity to analyze the habits and behaviour that have enabled you to do so well and to reinforce that behaviour.

— NEGATIVE REACTION

Some of you will feel angry or sad. You know you are capable of better results. This is an opportunity to correct the habits and behaviour you feel have contributed to poor results.

Self Correction is a powerful process and well worth the energy.

The positive side of this process is that YOU can set **goals** to make sure your future progress is something you would be proud of. Yes it may take time... however, better now than 10 years from now when the opportunities for education and support are more difficult to attain.

mentor page

what are you being asked to do?

SAMPLE

Dear Mentor:

Would you be willing to help me create a portfolio to guide my future education and career choices? It will be a learning process for both of us, requiring trust, commitment and respect for each other's knowledge and honesty.

Accepting this challenge will involve:

- listening
- asking questions to clarify thinking
- being loyal and trustworthy
- respecting confidentiality
- being a positive coach and asking questions that encourage thinking
- being certain you have the time to meet regularly
- doing the preparation you need to be a good mentor
- taking an interest in my development
- looking for resources and suggesting individuals who could be a valuable contact
- checking my portfolio as I work. For instance:
 - 1) Does the information make sense to the reader?
 - 2) Is the information positive?
 - 3) Can the statements be proven?
 - 4) Is there supporting documentation?
 - 5) Is it brief and concise but complete?
 - 6) Is the writing professional? Are spelling and grammar correct?
 - 7) Is it my best work?
- confirming completed work by signing the sheet

I hope you enjoy the
process and feel
privileged to help me get
ready for the future.

contact information

Phone numbers

E-mail

Best days and times for meetings

resources

books

Brand, Margaret and Neufeld, Berne J.,
Success in the Workplace, 2nd ed.
ISBN 0-7730-5552-5



Destination 2020, Canada Career Consortium
www.careerccc.org/

Smart Options, National Life/Work Centre
www.lifework.ca/

websites



CAUTION: Websites change frequently, and every reader must decide what is useful and what is not. Avoid sites requiring you to submit unnecessary personal information or pay for services.

<http://www.cdm.uwaterloo.ca/>

Offers excellent exercises based on Holland's theory of personality and interests, and makes connections between them and personality, values and skills; helps the reader review the many possible careers related to his/her areas of interest.

<http://www.careercruising.com/>

Offers opportunities for you to assess your skills, interests and personality; school password needed to access this site.

<http://vector.cfee.org/>

VECTOR utilizes a search engine that sorts through more than 120 six-minute video vignettes profiling some of Canada's most-needed careers and occupations. The search categories include Industry, Interest/Skills, Income, Education, Keywords and Random.

<http://www.canadiancareers.com/>

Useful for exploring career and occupation options.

<http://www.careerccc.org/destination2020/>

Supports *Destination 2020*

<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/aet/lmi/prospects/index.html>

Manitoba Prospects, a good website for career related articles and Manitoba occupational information.

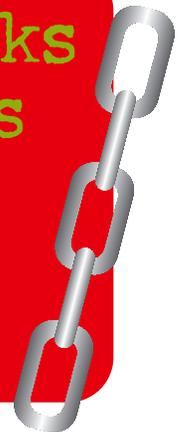
sites offering links to other good sites

<http://www.mb.workinfonet.ca/>

<http://www.youthpath.ca/>

<http://www.mb4youth.ca/>

<http://www.conferenceboard.ca/>



fax us your comments



We would appreciate receiving your comments about this Self-Managed Career Portfolio Guide. We would especially like to know:

Do you feel there are any topics requiring additional information or clarification?

Do you feel there are any topics that should be deleted?

Are there any questions or issues that you feel need to be addressed?

Additional Comments:



FAX YOUR

COMPLETED FORM TO:

204-948-3668

OR MAIL TO:

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