

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.*