Creating a Professional Portfolio

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Today’s Presentation

- Why do I need a portfolio?
- What is a portfolio?
- What formats can I choose from?
- What does a portfolio include?
- How do I create a portfolio?
- When should I use a portfolio?
- Sounds great… but it won’t work for me
Why do I need a portfolio?

- Proof
- An edge
- You can gain something from the process
- Why not??
What is a portfolio?

- A dynamic, long-term tool:
  - to organize information about yourself
  - to communicate with potential employers

- Designed to help you present the best version of yourself to others
What formats can I choose from?

- “Hard copy”
  - 3-ring binder
  - Paper copies of all materials
  - Controlled distribution
  - Reference during interviews
  - Faster to make changes

- Electronic
  - Good for follow-up
  - Password protection optional
  - Extended review time
  - Demonstrates technological literacy
What does a portfolio include?

- Any combination of the following tabbed sections:
  - (Table of Contents)
  - Work philosophy
  - Career Goals
  - Resume
  - Work Samples
  - Awards and Achievements
  - Community Service
  - References
  - Statement of Originality
Work Philosophy

■ Your beliefs about:
  - Yourself
  - The people that you work with
  - Appropriate professional conduct

■ Tips:
  - Think about it
  - Place your most important belief first
  - Have someone review it for clarity
Your Turn: Work Philosophy

- “Long-term, sustainable change can only be achieved when clients are given the opportunity to participate in the decisions that affect their lives.”

- “The organization’s mission should be a part of the overall organizational culture and should guide the decision-making process.”
Career Goals

- Set a direction for your career

- Professional achievements, skills, and knowledge you want to acquire

Tips:
- Two and five year goals
- Make your goals measurable
Your Turn: Career Goals

- **Two-Year Goal**
  - To enhance my computer skills by attending at least one training course on professional financial software by May 2009
Resume

- Resume Writing Workshop:
  Monday, September 29th
  12:15-1:30 pm
  Rm. 300

- Online resume-building tool available from University Career Services:
**Work Samples**

- **Major portion of the portfolio and most powerful part of your pitch**

- **Common sources of work samples:**
  - Classroom projects and papers
  - Materials from an internship or previous job
  - Materials completed in community service projects

- **Tips:**
  - Start saving your work TODAY
  - Customize the work samples to match the job description and interview
  - Include a sample, offer the full project
Sample: Work Samples

- Flyer for facilitated HAVEN Training
- DV Family Support Program Budget – Course Assignment from Nonprofit Financial Management
- Policy Analysis of NC House Bill 879 – Comprehensive Sexual Education in NC Public Schools
Awards and Achievements

- Provide proof of the things that you have accomplished

Tips
- Include copies of certificates
- Include information about certifying organizations
- Place most recent items first
- Be selective
Sample: Awards and Achievements

- “Top Paper Award” at the 27th Annual Communication Evaluation Conference, April 2005

- Member, National Association of Social Workers

- Training Certifications
  - Parents as Teachers, 0-K Parent Educator
  - Adult Learning Styles
  - Overcoming Resistance to Change

- Conferences Attended
  - 2007 Annual NASW Fall Conference
  - 2006 Women’s Voices Forum
Community Service

- Volunteering sends a message!

- **Tips:**
  - Choose causes you are proud of
  - Keep your samples up to date
  - Don’t underestimate this section of your portfolio
Your Turn: Community Service

- UNC SSW Caucuses
- UNC SSW Habitat for Humanity trip
- On-campus groups
- Community organizations
References

- Provide additional insight into your skills and professional demeanor

Tip:
- Guide their letter writing

Who will your letters come from?
States that your portfolio is your work and indicates if certain portions of the portfolio should not be copied.

My Statement of Originality:

“This portfolio is the work of Sarah Axelson. Please do not copy without permission. Some of the exhibits, work samples, and/or service samples are the proprietary property of the organization whose name appears on the document. Each has granted permission for this product to be used as a demonstration of my work.”
How do I create a portfolio?

- A little planning goes a long way!
- Save everything that you create.
- Collect and organize your work samples.
- Draft what you don’t have.
- Pull it all together.
When should I use a portfolio?

- Tips for Interviewing:
  - First 15 minutes
  - Overview your work philosophy and professional goals
  - Point out your resume
  - Describe briefly what each section entails

- Follow-up

- Performance Review
“Well, that’s highlighted in my portfolio…”

- What are your five-year career goals?
- What do you do for recreation? (community service)
- What was your most difficult project? (work samples)
- What certifications do you hold? (awards and achievements)
Sounds great... but that won’t work for me
Help!

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