PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIOS
Tips for Design Students Seeking Employment

Preparation
+ Be selective in choosing work to showcase your skillset and abilities. *Less is more!* Fewer projects will allow you to showcase your best work.
+ Exhibit your creativity through composition, graphics, and organization.
+ Demonstrate your design training with varied projects, software skills, and conceptual approaches.
+ To get started, think about how magazine layouts keep readers’ attention and bring focus to certain elements.

Organization
+ Open with your best project and close with your second-best or one equally as powerful.
+ Avoid chronological order in a professional portfolio. Tailor the organization of your pages to flow naturally.
+ There is no specific number of pages or projects, but only show your best, and remember - *less is more!*
  Respect the employers’ time and strive to be clear and concise with your presentation.
+ Place your resume at the end to add personal depth to your design work and to reinforce your abilities.

Text
+ Text should not compete with or obscure your images. It exists to identify a project and your design concept.
+ Include the completion date, location, your specific contributions, and the instructor’s name or firm.
+ Credit appropriately. If you include professional work, check with the firm for permission.
+ Be concise, use a font that is legible, and *proofread all of your text.* Typos can cost you a job offer!

Size & Shape
+ Feel free to be innovative in the presentation of your portfolio. Keep in mind the concerns of a potential employer: whether it will be printed or viewed on a screen, ease of handling for hard copies, and legibility.
+ For hard copies, consider size, shape, paper weight/quality, backing, and various binding methods to ensure individuality of your work and presentation.
+ Read application requirements carefully for specific submission guidelines and size restrictions.
+ Understand the *differences between a full portfolio versus work samples* and contact Career Services for clarification and advice.

Tips
+ Employers appreciate your hand sketches, diagrams, and anything that shows the development of a concept.
+ Artwork, photography, and freelance projects can be selectively included to present a holistic view of talents.
+ Create continuity among your resume, cover letter, and portfolio by using the same font, layout, and theme.
+ Be sure to ask for a variety of opinions! *A professional portfolio is only as strong as your weakest piece.*