

Portfolios



As educational reform and restructuring have evolved, the portfolio concept has emerged as a cornerstone of that movement. Although portfolios have been used for years in the arts and business, schools are now using this concept to help students explore the developmental aspects of their learning and growth. This concept has great potential for showcasing the major results of a developmental school guidance program that integrates career development, an important dimension of human development, as a lifelong learning process.

Career portfolios allow the student to participate in, rather than be the object of, assessment. Most importantly, the portfolio provides a forum that encourages students to develop the abilities to become independent, reflective, self-directed individuals. One of the aims of a career portfolio is to design ways to monitor student progress that will also model personal responsibility in questioning and reflecting on one's work. Well planned portfolios can become a means for staff and students to understand the educational process at the level of the individual learner.

Why is a Career Development Portfolio Needed?

- Educational systems are charged with preparing students for productive employment in a global economy and success in life.
- Career development is an ongoing process, not an isolated event. Schools need to help students with career decisions by facilitating the process and modeling appropriate ways to make sound decisions based on relative, current, and accurate information.

- The personalized portfolio helps students take responsibility for and have ownership of their career decisions.
- Many large companies are now requesting transcripts and portfolios for documentation of work-based learning skills when hiring.
- The portfolio serves to educate students about the many facets of career decision making.
- The comprehensiveness of the portfolio requires that students use higher-level analysis, synthesis, and evaluation skills.
- Students often need a tangible means of seeing their progress and direction.
- The purpose of the portfolio's sequential planning activities is to provide better linkage of education to future career plans.
- The portfolio allows for a variety of activities, procedures, products, and opportunities, which contribute to a better understanding of the big picture.
- All students deserve the opportunity to develop individualized career plans.

Examples of Portfolios and Career-Planning Tools

Georgia Career Information System (GCIS) My Portfolio

My Portfolio is a web-based resource tool for storing information relating to occupational and educational exploration with GCIS. The portfolio provides users the capability of recording their career research, educational plans, and assessments results, along with other information available in GCIS. Internet availability provides users with on-site access to their portfolios, or remote access with their site's User Name and Password. My Portfolio allows exploration and storage of information for career exploration, educational research, and assessments. A resume management component stores education and work history information and allows students to create and save a resume on My Portfolio. The program also provides resources to create and edit an Individual Career Plan (ICP). For more information about My Portfolio, contact:

Georgia Career Information Center

Georgia State University

University Plaza

Atlanta, GA 30303-3083

Phone: 404.651.3100

Website: <http://www.gcic.peachnet.edu>

GACollege411

The GACollege411, appropriate for students who have selected postsecondary education in Georgia public Board of Regents Institutions or Georgia public Technical and Adult Colleges, provides access to an electronic portfolio, www.GACollege411.org. Currently (5/20/05) the portfolio provides users with limited capabilities to participate in two career assessments, research careers, explore postsecondary education at Board of Regents and DTAE institutions, and apply for financial aid.

Get-A-Life Personal Planning Portfolio Facilitator's Package

The Get-A-Life Personal Planning Portfolio, appropriate for grades 5-12, helps students collect information about themselves that they can use to make personal, educational, and career decisions that will affect their entire lives. For schools, the Get-A-Life program provides an articulated system for documenting career-development activities for all students. This portfolio highlights the message that the type of life one leads depends greatly on the choice of careers and the preparation for them. The rest of the portfolio attempts to illustrate the important facets of career development. It leads students through the process of analyzing and synthesizing information about their lives, which can lead to more purposeful and meaningful careers. To obtain copies of Get a Life Personal Planning Portfolio, contact:

American School Counselor Association
1101 King St., Suite 625
Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: 1.800.347.6647
Website: <http://www.schoolcounselor.org>

Get-A-Life Personal Planning Portfolios for Career Development helps students in grades 10-12 make career decisions and formulate educational plans. It provides a step-by-step guide for finding employment. It contains 25 student portfolios; a facilitator's version is also available. The personal planning portfolio is the student's chronicle of the journey through the career-development process. Upon graduation from high school, students should be able to take the personal planning portfolio with them as a building block for future career development.

The portfolio is provided for students so they may understand the relevance of their career development experience to their learning experiences. Essentially, the portfolio provides a tangible means by which students may collect and use important information to assist with personal, educational, and career decision making.

Planning for Life, My Career Plan

In 1994, the School-to-Work Opportunities Act recognized that students should begin the career planning process as early as elementary school. Students should identify their academic and career goals prior to entering high school and begin to design an actual career plan. This plan could also include a career pathway based on an assessment of the student's aptitudes, skills, interests, and personal preferences. The career plan establishes a focus for achievement and helps students identify the strategies and tasks that are necessary to accomplish their goal. It serves to guide students to make decisions about academic preparation, work experience, and the education and training necessary after high school to make successful transitions to the career path of their choice. The career plan should include the results of the assessments of the skills, attitudes, and interests achieved by students by the time they are entering 8th or 9th grade. Students should be exposed to career awareness in grades K-6 and have participated in career investigations in grades 7-8 and participate in experiences that are in support of each student's educational plan in grades 9-12.

The career plan also helps school and career counselors monitor students' achievement of the goals of the National Standards for School Counseling Programs and the National Career Development Guidelines. Students and counselors should review this plan annually and make adjustments to it as knowledge and skills are attained and/or interests change. To download a

reproducible copy of My Career Plan, go to [American School Counselor Association, My Career Plan](http://www.schoolcounselor.org/) (<http://www.schoolcounselor.org/>).

Career Options Planner and Career Options Portfolio

The Career Options Planner and Career Options Portfolio are integrated materials designed to help middle and high school students develop realistic career plans. In developing their plans, students first assess their interests, skills, and values. They then link their self-assessment with the other tests and inventories in order to set realistic career goals for themselves. After setting their career goals, students develop educational plans for completion of high school and beyond to achieve those goals.

The Career Options Portfolio provides a systematic way for students to record their career development progress and make an educational plan. It is a vehicle that can be used to record and update information in each of the remaining high school years. To obtain copies of the Career Options Planner and Career Options Portfolio, contact:

Center on Education and Work Publications Unit

1025 W. Johnson Street

Madison, WI 53706

Phone: 1.800.446.0399

Website: <http://www.cew.wisc.edu>.