

Portfolio in Special Vocational Qualification training for Rural Developers

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Introduction

The portfolio provides a deeper and wider picture from person than the traditional CV: In working life it has been spread from architecture and fashion models to various sectors, especially to teaching. The portfolio has many purposes and it's possible to make it out depending on the personality, career, hobbies, interests etc.

Above all the portfolio looks like its owner. It is like a fingerprint, during the time it becomes wider and there might appear some scratches, but the basics are the same.

What is portfolio?

The portfolio is like a frame of a picture, in which the persons draws a picture about his/her skills and knowledge. It is his/her collection of different kind of documents which he/she believes are valuable and in which he/she has invested part of him/herself and his/her capabilities. From outside the portfolio may look variable; it may be cardboard box, briefcase, cd-rom, floppy disk etc. The appearance isn't important: the production, selection and evaluation process is.

The skills and knowledge of a person should be seen as a triangle:

- One side is professional skills which are based on education, training and work experience. That's a part usually taken care in the CV.
- Other side is all-round skills which are transferable and flexible for different tasks and workplaces. They are quite easy to prove when you think about them.
- Third side is personality; what kind of person you are, how do you react on things. This is the hard one, and it absolutely demands self evaluation.

The triangle is equilateral, all sides are equally important when it comes to picturing the person as a whole.

Why to make a portfolio?

The portfolio is a tool for self assessment and self description. The portfolio provides a method to describe and analyse your own development process and professional growth. For example in job interviews it's very useful if you have analysed your capabilities and personality beforehand.

Basic portfolio

Basic portfolio can be described as a warehouse where all the documents concerning the triangle of your skills and knowledge are stored. It may include essays, reports, evaluations, notes, figures, photos, diaries etc. It is private document storage from where you collect some samples into your sample portfolio.



Sample portfolio

Sample portfolio is a brochure of yourself in which you have chosen the best documents for some specific purpose. Usually it's collected for job or project application to describe your competence just for the specific purpose. The sample portfolio may be structured as follows:

- Introduction (Why just you are the best for the job)
- Table of contents
- Written description of yourself
- Attachments (evidence)

The sample portfolio has to be revised for every purpose independently. You have to analyse how you can convince the receiver about your skills and knowledge. In this point you have to pay attention to the working process, how do you do your job. The actions you have made are irrelevant, you have to analyse why they are important for that specific purpose. You have to make strategic choices what to include and what to leave out. The most important point is to choose relevant evidence into the sample portfolio and describe those processes which have led you to your current situation.

Some questions to help you to collect the sample portfolio:

- How do you describe yourself as a specific role (for example job)?
- What is important to you in the specific role?
- Why are you excited about the specific job?