



HOW TO PUT A PORTFOLIO TOGETHER

As a creative you need to show your work and ideas. Putting a portfolio together is the only way to do this. One size doesn't necessarily fit all though, so be prepared to tailor it to suit your audience and reflect your experience. Here are our golden rules:

Size

1. Offline folios should never be bigger than A3 and many find that A4 is a better size; it's not off-putting at all.
2. Always be aware of PDF file sizes. Any more than 4MB and you risk bounce backs and filling up inboxes. You can always create an online portfolio to display additional pieces.

Content

3. Don't present everything you've ever done. Five beautifully executed campaign thoughts have far more impact than 25 mediocre, executions.
4. Write an introduction for each piece. Ensure that you've outlined any brief, demonstrated your solution and highlighted the results it achieved.
5. Present a good cross section of work.
6. Don't be afraid to show your progression. Your folio should tell the story about how you got to where you are today.
7. Show campaign thinking, not just specific executions. Your folio should demonstrate big strategic thoughts that stand out in whatever media channel was used. In today's advertising marketplace, creative ideas need to be executed in different ways across different media.
8. Include recent work. Nobody wants to be going through a folio that solely consists of work that ran five years ago.
9. Creative Directors like originality and they particularly like seeing work and ideas that they wish they'd have come up with. Because of that, don't just rely on work that's run, show how you have evolved an idea or campaign even if the client didn't.
10. Think about whether your folio will speak for itself if you aren't present. If it can't, annotate it so that you get across what you would say, if you were presenting in person.

Display

11. Show that you care about your work by the way you display it. Make sure that you print your work to a size where it can be read.
12. Put the same attention and flow into a web or PDF portfolio. Don't be in a meeting scrabbling through individual PDFs on your desktop to demonstrate what you've done.



You run a huge risk of seeming disorganized and unprepared, and never assume that you'll be able to access the internet in any meeting. Also, it is very important to keep file sizes small in order to minimize load times.

13. Copywriters, please, please, please ensure your work is grammatically correct and contains no typos whatsoever.
14. Art Directors and Designers, please ensure your work is beautifully crafted and watch your typography, kerning, widows etc.

Display

15. Present your work enthusiastically and certainly don't wait for the interviewer to begin flicking through your book. You are just as much on show as your work, so own the time and present proudly. Practice how you present with someone not connected to you and add some theatrics into the presentation Show some tangible samples - a piece of DM for instance.
16. Think about presenting an 'ideas' only folio - one that shows your passions, your influences, how your mind works. This folio can be scamps, line drawings, influences, sketches - any thing. By putting one together, you're highlighting your highly finished 'run' work in the best possible light and presenting another side of your creativity, which may not always be apparent in a commercial environment. And the great thing about an ideas folio is that it travels with you and it's never completed, so it can look as tatty as you like. The tattier, the better.
17. Creative Directors, like anyone, are unique, and subjective. What one likes, another will hate, so take comments on board and always use the experience to learn from. As the saying goes: "There's more than one way to skin a cat."
18. As silly as it sounds, don't criticize your work - your audience assume you're presenting your best pieces, so never apologise for them.