How to create an e-portfolio flowchart

The content and purpose of portfolios can vary widely. Student portfolios typically contain examples of work, with text descriptions and reflections on each piece. Whereas traditional portfolios move in one direction—start to finish—you can use Adobe Acrobat to create a PDF with an interactive table of contents and clickable links. To plan for your e-portfolio, you should make a flowchart like one of the flowcharts at the end of this guide.

Planning e-portfolios

Adding files to a PDF Portfolio is so easy that you may be tempted to jump right in. Take the time to consider these questions and create a flowchart before you begin:

What is the purpose of the e-portfolio? The answer to this question will determine what documents and media to put into the e-portfolio and help identify gaps in the available content.

Who will view the portfolio? This bears on the visual layout selected (see “How to create and personalize a PDF Portfolio”) and, again, on the content to be included.

Does the e-portfolio have a narrative? What story is this collection of documents and media trying to tell? Should documents be presented in a particular order?

What variety can be provided in the types of media included? With an e-portfolio, you can provide visual documentation and sound recordings. A wider range of media provides more ways for viewers to engage with the story the e-portfolio is telling.

Where will the e-portfolio live? If the e-portfolio will be posted to a website that can be accessed publicly by anyone, take into account government regulations, school policies, and best practices with regard to student identification. It’s appropriate to consider what personal information to include or exclude, since an e-portfolio may be forwarded by e-mail to unknown individuals.

What’s the best way to navigate through this content? If you have just a few large documents, take advantage of one of the visual layouts. If there are many documents, consider organizing these files into folders. If many documents have the same kind of content, the e-portfolio may be easier for viewers to navigate if you rely more heavily on list view (see “How to create and personalize a PDF Portfolio” to find out more about choosing a view).

How are the files named? The filenames of documents are exposed to viewers. Even a particularly efficient naming system may be difficult for viewers to figure out. Make sure the filenames of documents clearly indicate their contents.

Because an e-portfolio constantly evolves, be sure you plan the portfolio structure to allow for easy changes and additions. Identify your audiences and consider how you expect an e-portfolio to change over time or how you might create several versions of the e-portfolio to accommodate different audiences.

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Showcase e-portfolio

A *showcase* e-portfolio highlights its owner's expertise by showing examples of best work. A student showcase would include a selection of finished images and designs. The showcase might also provide a reflection or document describing the process you followed to create it. Following is a sample category outline with associated files:

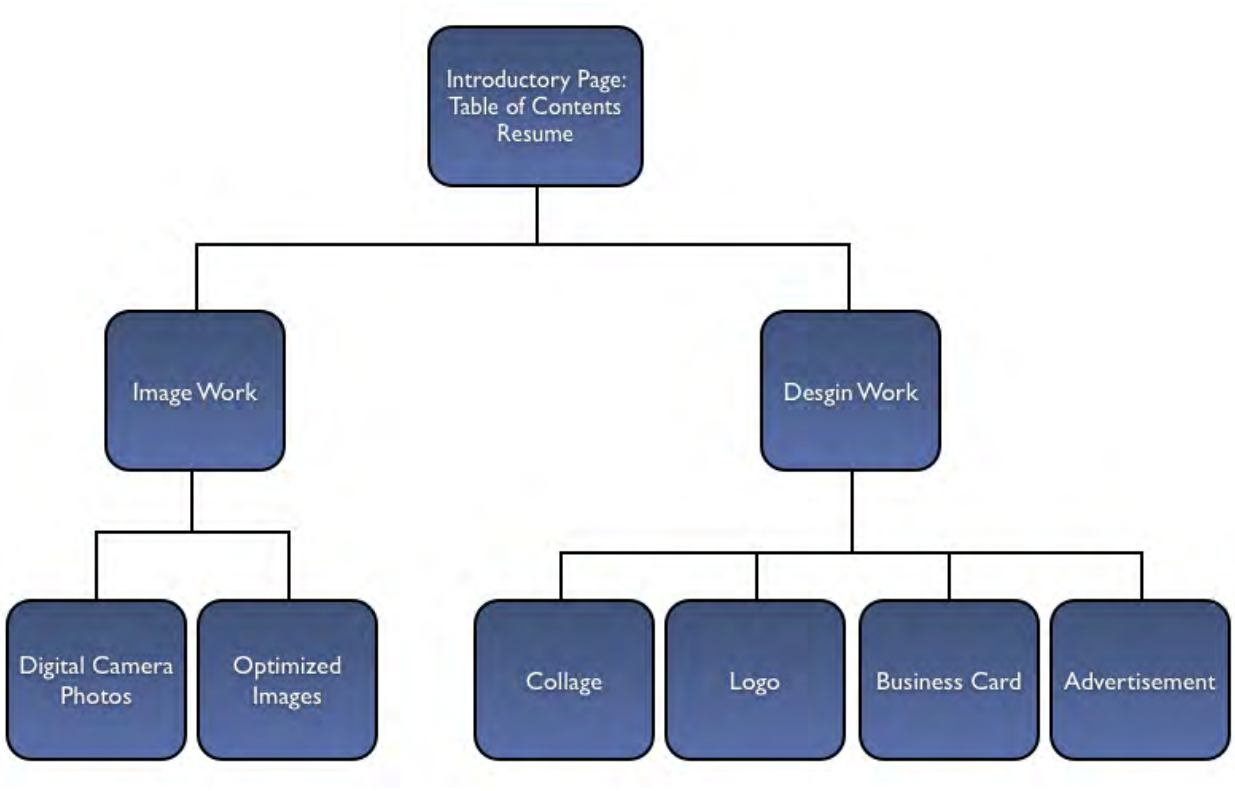
Image work

- Digital camera photographs
- Optimized images

Design work

- Collage
- Logo
- Business card
- Advertisement

This is a sample flowchart for a showcase e-portfolio:



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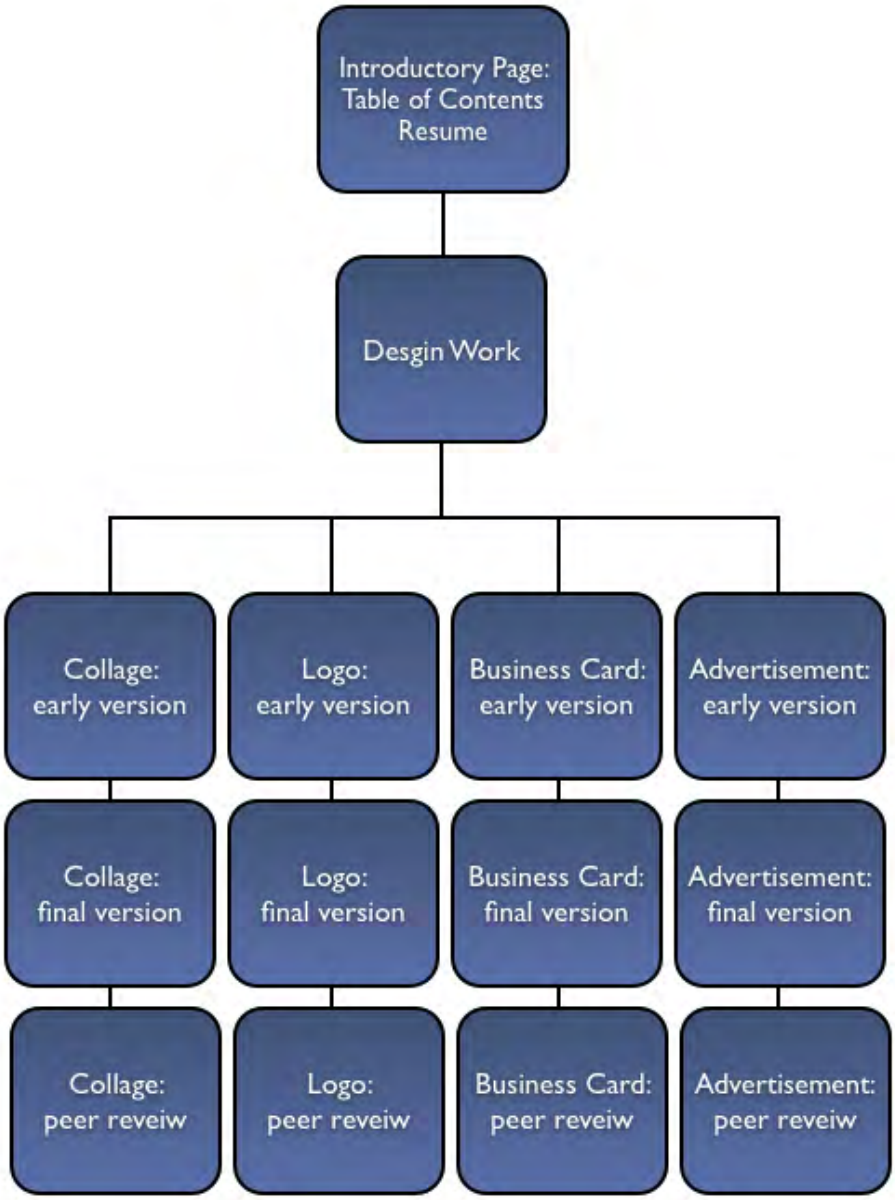
Skill-growth e-portfolio

A *skill-growth* e-portfolio shows multiple samples of work from the same project to demonstrate increasing skill. For example, you could include several versions of your advertisements to show how the design evolved. This e-portfolio can also include reflection and discussion of redesigns. Following is a sample flowchart for a skill-growth e-portfolio:



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