Online Career Portfolios: Connecting Scholarship and Practice

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Goals of the FSU Career Portfolio

- Educate students about workforce skills
- Connect students with opportunities to develop skills
- Provide a mechanism for students to document their skills and market themselves to employers or graduate schools
Student Feedback

• Focused on user interface design issues
  – Is it user-friendly?
  – Does it make sense?
  – Would you use it?

• Many changes were made to the design as a result of the testing

• Results were overwhelmingly positive
Employer Validation of Portfolio

• Did we identify skills important to employers?
• Would employers use an on-line portfolio?
• What are employer reactions to a completed Career Portfolio?
Employer Feedback
“Skills”

**FSU Questionnaire**
- Fall 1999 Career Expo
- 246 Returns
- Importance/Frequency of Use

**NACE Survey**
- Summer 2000
- 482 Responses
- Importance
Importance of Skill to be Successful in Your Organization

(On a scale of 1 to 5; 1 being least useful and 5 being most useful)

Communication 4.94
Teamwork 4.72
Leadership 4.60
Critical Thinking 4.57
Personal Management 4.52
Creativity 4.08
Technical/Scientific 4.02
Social Responsibility 4.01
## Frequency of Skill Use in Your Organization

(On a scale of 1 to 5; 1 being least useful and 5 being most useful)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>4.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>4.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Management</td>
<td>4.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>4.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>4.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>3.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical/Scientific</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Responsibility</td>
<td>3.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Employers Rate the Importance of Candidate Qualities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication skills (verbal and written)</td>
<td>4.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty/integrity</td>
<td>4.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork skills (works well w/ others)</td>
<td>4.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skills (relates well to others)</td>
<td>4.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong work ethic</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical skills</td>
<td>4.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility/adaptability</td>
<td>4.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer skills</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-confidence</td>
<td>4.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership skills</td>
<td>4.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organized</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detail oriented</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly/outgoing personality</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tactfulness</td>
<td>3.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-mannered/polite</td>
<td>3.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>3.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurial skills/risk taker</td>
<td>3.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of humor</td>
<td>3.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Employer Questionnaire
“Usefulness”

• Fall 2000 Career Expo
• 87 Responses
• 5 Questions
  • Interest
  • Use
  • Type
  • Significance
  • Importance of Skill Identification
"Would you be interested in an online portfolio system?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNSURE</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Would you use an on-line portfolio to screen candidates?”

YES  87%
NO   8%
UNSURE  5%

“Would you use an on-line portfolio to supplement a candidate’s interview?”

YES  71%
NO   16%
UNSURE  13%
“Would you prefer a paper portfolio rather than an on-line portfolio?”

YES 17%
NO 64%
UNSURE 16%

“Would access to candidates’ self-reported employability skills be useful in screening potential applicants?”

YES 87%
NO 4%
UNSURE 9%
Employer Reaction to Student’s Career Portfolio

- Electronic survey, January 2002
- 21 employer responses
- 100% strongly agreed or agreed that the Career Portfolio was useful in providing evidence of a candidate’s skills
- 95% strongly agreed or agreed that the Career Portfolio was beneficial in assessing candidates
Implications

• Employers validated importance and usefulness of skills

• Employers endorsed an “On-line Portfolio System”

• Employers found the FSU Career Portfolio useful
Demonstration

http://www.career.fsu.edu/portfolio
FSU Career Portfolio History

- President’s initiative, Fall 1997
- Concept paper, Fall 1997
- Commission on the Future, Spring 1998
- Class project, Spring 1998
- Internal & external proposals, 1998-1999
History (cont.)

• Dedicated staff position, 1999
• Expanded university support, 2000
• Prototype developed, 1999-2000
• Prototype testing, 2000
• Live system testing & implementation, 2001-2002
University Wide Effort

- Career Center
- Administrative Information Systems
- Collaborators & enablers
Career Center

- Project director
- Professional staff task force
- Technology coordinator
- Web designers
Administrative Information Systems

• Project managers
• Web designers
• Programmers
• Database administrators
Collaborators & Enablers

• Academic administrators
• Student affairs administrators
• Academic advisors
• Employers
• State of Florida (FACTS.org)
• Vendor-partners
CIP Perspective: What’s Involved in Career Choice?

Thinking about my decision making

Knowing how I make decisions

Knowing about myself
Knowing about my options
Gaps Addressed with Career Portfolio

- Students develop strategic career plans
- University prepares workforce participants
- Increased employer hiring confidence
- Public sees benefit of higher education
Systems Perspective: Some Key Aspects

- Compatible with liberal arts mission
- Generic workforce skills have consensus
- Comprehensive Career Center
- Integrating student and academic affairs
- Boundary-spanning career services
Some Key Aspects (cont.)

• Career preparation supported & integrated
• Multiple intervention points in time & place
• System intervention – self-help mode
• Career Portfolio focal point of intervention
Integration & Implementation

• Students
• University Faculty & Staff
• Employers
• Parents
Students

- FYE
- Career Planning class
- Career Center materials/publicity
- Outreach presentations
- One-on-one career advising
Students

• FYE--55 sections
  – all sections required to have a session on the Career Center;
  – FYE instructors will have option of including career portfolio development as part of the credit-based assignments
Students

• Career Planning class
  – currently a 3 credit course
  – skills/portfolio concept introduced during lecture in Unit 1; group activity to identify ways to develop skills
  – extra credit option
Students

• Career Center (CC) materials/publicity
  – CC brochure
  – Web site
  – Career Guide
  – Multimedia Power Point presentation
Students

• Outreach Presentations
  – New Student Preview
  – Summer Orientation
  – Student Groups/ Organizations
  – Classes
  – Career Portfolio Development workshop
Students

• One-on-one advising
  – description/promotion of the portfolio
  – assistance in the computer lab with career portfolio development
  – critiquing
University Faculty & Staff

- Council of Informed Advisors
- Academic/peer advisor training workshops
- Liaison presentations to departmental faculty & staff
- Council of Deans
- Student affairs departments
- Workshop for new TAs
- Departmental accountability, e.g.,
  - dietetics
  - athletic training
Employers

- Employer handbook
- Employer section of the CC Web site
- Seminole Futures, flyer in employer packets
- Demonstrations/sessions at professional meetings attended by employers (NACE, regional meetings, state conference)
Parents

• New Student Preview
• Parents Orientation
• Parents Weekend-includes CC tour/presentation
• Parents Association
Questions & Discussion

For more information, please visit:
http://www.career.fsu.edu/portfolio/info.html