

Portfolio Life

(Adapted from "The Art of Work: A Proven Path to Discovering What You Were Meant to Do " by Jeff Goins)

A Portfolio Life is a different way to look at your life, especially as it pertains to work. If you're like most people, you see "work" as a single activity, something you do that provides a paycheck or money to live. However, if you treat your life as a series of experiences and events, you'll start to notice a series of patterns that define who you are and what you're here to do. For example, your Portfolio Life may consist of working in retail, salaried positions, starting your own business, exercising, selling stuff on the internet, and/or blogging - all which make up who you are and what you do. And for some, you aren't satisfied unless you're engaged in many, if not all, of these activities in some way.

According to Charles Handy in the book, "The Age of Unreason (1989), "in the future, we will all be portfolio people, thinking of vocation not as a single career but rather as our whole body of work." Instead of focusing your work/career on just one specific job, your work/career is made up of a lot of different experiences that are combined to tell a story about you and what you do. See your portfolio as a series of adventures and experiences that provide details on the direction of your work - and your life.

The Portfolio Life Activity will have you collect information to help you define your life up to now. By identifying your elements, you'll be able to notice a theme around your story, which will be instrumental in identify answers to the questions, "What should I do with my life?" and "What now? What's next?"

Portfolio Life Worksheet

Personal Characteristics (attributes that you have that are consistent in interactions within and outside work)	Education/Knowledge (intentional learning and educational experiences that have contributed your knowledge base)
Talents, Gifts, Skills, and Abilities (things that you do well and/or like to do; may be things that come easy and/or natural for you)	Interests (endeavors that you engage in for fun, to learn more about, that you typically will do in your free time)
Personal/Life Experiences (experiences within and outside the home; may include "home" roles)	Work Experiences (times when you've worked for pay; can be hourly, salary, and/or contractual)
Volunteer Experiences (work that you've done that's intrinsically motivating, typically done for the love or for a specific cause)	Recognition and Achievements (times when recognized and acknowledged for outstanding work; includes professional work and/or personal/outside endeavors.
Portfolio Theme/Story	

Portfolio Life Worksheet

<p>Personal Characteristics (attributes that you have that are consistent in interactions within and outside work)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • autonomy/independence • purpose and values-driven • creative • passionate • authentic • disciplined • action-oriented • future-focused • gratitude • leaving a legacy • energetic • introspective 	<p>Education/Knowledge (intentional learning and educational experiences that have contributed your knowledge base)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • life coach training/certification: dream coach, spiritual group coaching, wellness coaching • webinars on personal development and life planning • webinars on entrepreneurship • webinars on student success • reading: self-help/personal growth, creativity, entrepreneurship, and coaching • common knowledge of most sports (ESPN)
<p>Talents, Gifts, Skills, and Abilities (things that you do well and/or like to do; may be things that come easy and/or natural for you)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improvisation/making changes on the fly • creating life planning tools and activities • facilitating workshops • staying focused on things that matter • developing others • love of learning • planning for a better future • taking people from good to great 	<p>Interests/Play (endeavors that you engage in for fun, to learn more about, that you typically will do in your free time)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sports card collector • reading (self-help/personal growth and development) • writing/blogging • meditation and mindfulness • fitness/exercise • sports: running, walking, tennis, racquetball, bowling, bocce, golf
<p>Personal/Life Experiences (experiences within and outside the home; may include “home” roles)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • father • husband • devoted friend • basic handyman • coach (soccer) • dog walker • cook • house cleaner • laundry guy 	<p>Work Experiences (times when you’ve worked for pay; can be hourly, salary, and/or contractual)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • academic advisor • computer lab coordinator • assistant dean of student services • director of advising, orientation, and placement testing • student success coordinator • life design catalyst coach/trainer • assistant professor/instructor • committee chair • grant writer • summer camp counselor • DJ (home parties) • car carpet cutter/trimmer • house sitter/dog sitter • housekeeping cleaner • photographer • dream big institute (business) • workshop presenter/trainer • professional/keynote speaker • life coach

<p>Volunteer Experiences (work that you've done that's intrinsically motivating, typically done for the love or for a specific cause)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple Sclerosis bike rides • Walks for Make-A-Wish, American Heart Association, and American Cancer Society • Golden Key International Honour Society (UNCG) • Collegiate Entrepreneurship Organization (UNCG) • On Course Ambassador/Committee Member • National Academic Advising Association • First-Year Experience and Students in Transition 	<p>Recognition and Achievements (times when recognized and acknowledged for outstanding work; includes professional work and/or personal/outside endeavors.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best (Presentation) of Region Award (multiple times) • On Course Ambassador of the Year • International Advisor of the Year • Regional Advisor of the Year • Nominated for HHS Teacher of the Year • MBARC Faculty Sponsor of the Year • Academic Advisor of the Year • Excellence in Teaching • Outstanding Faculty Member • Professional Merit Award • "Make College Matter Project" was selected as a Best Advising Practice (an invited to present) at the 2013 Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Convening • "Make College Matter Project" selected as a 2013 Honor Roll of nominees for the Excellence in Teaching First-Year Seminars Award
<p>Portfolio Theme/Story</p>	

Additional Resources

Use the Worksheet on the next page to identify specific activities for each area. You will need to identify at least 20 different items to include for your portfolio. That is, 20 total items, not 20 items for each category. Check out the list of resources below to explore the "portfolio life" in more detail:

- (Article) What Is the Portfolio Life? with Jeff Goins - <https://goinswriter.com/portfolio-life/>
- (Article) The Portfolio Life: A Surprising Route to Job Security - <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/245109>
- (Article) 7 Steps to Launch Your Freelancing Career Full-Time - <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/238968>
- (TED Talk) Redefining work: portfolio careers (Helen Wiles) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12ud0n_Tvro&v1=en
- (TED Talk) How to Future-Proof Your Career (Dorie Clark) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l6leLPN8ipI>
- (Book) Portfolio Life: The New Path to Work, Purpose, and Passion After 50 by David D. Corbett
- (Book) The Age of Unreason by Charles Handy
- (Book) The Art of Work: A Proven Path to Discovering What You Were Meant to Do Paperback by Jeff Goins