

Portfolio Tips

- **Contact information.** Having a business card gives the whole presentation a very professional touch. The card could have your name and an email address (preferably not a hotmail account. Hotmail is riddled with problems and seems so common. Consider using a Gmail account, as this appears more professional while remaining a free alternative).
- **Practice.** Go over the presentation before hand. Do not let a poor presentation hinder your chances for success. Represent yourself in the best way possible as no one else will sell your skills and talents like you can. Practice the delivery of your presentation until the whole presentation flows smoothly. Your presentation skills play such a vital role in the way your hard work, skills, talents, and passion are delivered to people now and in your future careers.
- **Interests/Inspiration.** Telling your audience where your interests lie and how they are represented in the work you have created, e.g. your drawings, music, animation, designs, etc., is an excellent way of bringing the whole presentation to life. More importantly, if a student says that they want to explore X in their future career they demonstrate to future employers that they have given their futures some thought. This shows initiative and vision - something many employers look for. Discussing what you use for inspiration provides a great personal touch and highlights that you interact with the world around you.
- **Demonstrate your abilities.** Demonstrate the practical applications of your theoretical knowledge in your work/portfolio. Show your audience that you can successfully apply the theory you have learnt in a practical application. Try to make this connexion for your audience if your presentation allows for it. For example, you need to be able to demonstrate to your audience that you know what you are talking about (theory) and that you know how to perform the necessary tasks based on that theory (practical application).
- **Physical presentation.** Posture and physical presence make a huge impact on presentation skills. By rehearsing the presentation, you will reduce nervousness and can concentrate on your posture and physical presence. Swaying, leaning on a chair, chewing gum, etc. distracts the audience from the excellent work and talents that you are demonstrating.
- **Setup visual flows.** Students who have their work set up in a systematic/thematic manner allow the audience to follow the flow of theme/concept. Other students who have everything mixed together inhibit their presentation's clarity and quality. Ideally, your presentation/portfolio allows your audience to enjoy your work effortlessly.

- **Questions.** Anticipate some questions that the audience may ask. This will allow you to engage with your audience and reduce the possibility of an 'on the spot question' that stumps you. Work with your classmates and friends on questions that might come up.
- **Voice.** Use your voice in a positive manner to market yourself. Avoid talking too loudly or aggressively. Similarly, avoid sounding disinterested. Aim for a relaxed, friendly, and informed tone. Communicate your passion for your work through your voice.
- **Practical display.** Be sure that your presentation is sturdy and functional. The display should be practical and easy to use. If you are fumbling with props the focus and emphasis of your work and presentation is lost while you fuss with mechanics. Test the setup before you have people viewing your hard work.
- **Firm handshake.** A great deal is revealed about your character and strength through your handshake. Should you offer or receive a handshake be sure to deliver a firm and confident handshake.

Please see your instructor, Academic Director, or the library if you would like help with any of these tips to ensure the best presentation of your work and for your future success. The Art Institute of Vancouver Library has many books on business card design, portfolio creation and design, presentation skills, public speaking, and more.