

# SKILLS MODULE 4

## BUILDING AN E-PORTFOLIO

### Student Learning Outcomes

1. Describe the types of electronic résumés and when each is appropriate.
2. Discuss networking strategies you can use during a job search.
3. Explain how self-assessment is valuable to résumé writing.
4. Use the Internet to research career opportunities and potential employers.
5. Develop powerful job search e-portfolio content.
6. Document effective Web site structure and design components.
7. Create a job search e-portfolio Web site and place it on an Internet server.

## Introduction

The Internet is an accepted part of our daily life at work, school, and play. It should come as no surprise that businesses are turning to the Internet to recruit and retain employees. While there are many forms of electronic recruitment, this Module will concentrate on electronic documents that you as a potential employee need to have prepared in order to compete effectively in the electronic job market. The final product is an electronic portfolio designed to help you successfully promote your skills in the electronic job market.

In this Module, we assume that you're familiar with the Internet and research tools, and have at least a little knowledge of HTML. For a review of the Internet, see Extended Learning Module E. For a review of HTML, see Skills Module 3.

## The Electronic Job Market

The **electronic job market** makes use of Internet technologies to recruit employees and is growing by leaps and bounds. The *Industry Standard* ([www.thestandard.com](http://www.thestandard.com)), a leading magazine on the Internet economy, reports that the average cost of online recruiting is \$152 per hire while the cost of more traditional methods is \$1381.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, a much broader worldwide selection of candidates can be screened, significantly increasing the likelihood of finding a good match for the hiring organization. As more and more hiring employers turn to the Internet to recruit employees, it's critical that you learn to capitalize on the technologies that help organizations locate and eval-

Figure M4.1

Sample Electronic Job Search Documents

```

HELEN SULLIVAN
1234 Somewhere Drive
Denver CO, 80283
303-323-4878
hsull1@du.edu
Personal web site: www.du.edu/~hsull1/home.htm

OBJECTIVE
General Sales Representative with a pharmaceutical house
using extensive chemistry background and self-directed personality
to manage a marketing territory. Personal Goal: to increase sales
and improve customer satisfaction. Willing to relocate.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY
April 2001 - Present
SPQ Pharmaceuticals Corp., Denver, CO
Currently working as a General Sales Manager responsible
for sales and distribution of pharmaceutical supplies to doctor's
offices, pharmacies, and clinics in the Midwest Region.
- volume of two million dollars in annual sales
- Salesperson of the month for the past five months
- Increased SPQ customer base by five percent
- Improved customer understanding of SPQ products and their benefits
- Initiated cost saving sales procedures to reduce the overall
expenditures of the sales department by over $30,000 annually
- developed and implemented technical training for the sales force
to improve their understanding of SPQ products and how to effectively
market them
- Analyzed sales trends and improved the focus of the sales force

January 1999 - April 2000
How2.com, Inc., Denver, CO
Managed the sales force for a dynamic and evolving web company.
- Sales force of 8
- Increased overall sales by 28 percent
- Improved sales force morale and productivity using team
management techniques

August 1996 - December 1998
STE Systems, Bloomington, IN
Customer service and office management responsibilities, handled all
customer complaints. Created a functional tracking and filing system
for customer interactions.

EDUCATION
B.S. in Marketing and Chemistry, 1998
Indiana University, Bloomington
- double major in Marketing and Chemistry

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ASCII plain-text résumé

HELEN SULLIVAN	
1234 Somewhere Drive Denver CO, 80283 Personal Web Site: www.du.edu/~hsull1/home.htm	hsull1@du.edu 303-323-4878
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> General Sales Representative with a pharmaceutical house using extensive chemistry background and self-directed personality to manage a marketing territory. Personal Goal: to increase sales and improve customer satisfaction. Willing to relocate.	
<b>EMPLOYMENT HISTORY</b> <b>SPQ Pharmaceuticals Corp., Denver, CO</b> April 2001 - Present Currently working as a General Sales Manager responsible for sales and distribution of pharmaceutical supplies to doctor's offices, pharmacies, and clinics in the Midwest Region. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volume of two million dollars in annual sales</li> <li>Salesperson of the month for the past five months</li> <li>Increased SPQ customer base by five percent</li> <li>Improved customer understanding of SPQ products and their benefits</li> </ul>	
<b>How2.com, Inc., Denver, CO</b> January 1999 - April 2000 Managed the sales force for a dynamic and evolving web company. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sales force of 8</li> <li>Increased overall sales by 28 percent</li> <li>Improved sales force morale and productivity using team management techniques</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiated cost saving sales procedures to reduce the overall expenditures of the sales department by over \$30,000 annually</li> <li>Developed and implemented technical training for the sales force to improve their understanding of SPQ products and how to effectively market them</li> <li>Analyzed sales trends and improved the focus of the sales force</li> </ul>
<b>STE Systems, Bloomington, IN</b> August 1996 - December 1998 Customer service and office management responsibilities. Handled all customer complaints. Created a functional tracking and filing system for customer interactions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a functional tracking and filing system for customer interactions.</li> </ul>
<b>EDUCATION</b> <b>Indiana University, Bloomington</b> B.S. in Marketing and Chemistry, 1998 Double major in Marketing and Chemistry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Major in Pharmaceutical Compounds</li> <li>Completed molecular structure lab</li> <li>Completed interpersonal communication.</li> </ul>	

The same résumé content in a presentation format

uate potential employees. Although the basic parts of your résumé stay the same and the purpose of your résumé is still to present your skills and qualifications, how you do so must change dramatically in the electronic job market.

The Internet provides 24/7 access to information for both the employer and you as a potential employee. During your electronic job search, your effective use of Internet tools is critical to a successful job hunt. Since meeting the needs of employers is the basis for getting hired, your pre-résumé tasks must centre on gathering intelligence about who is hiring, what skills are in demand, how much those skills are worth, and what you need to do to be considered for the available jobs. With this information in hand, you're prepared to create the electronic documents that will put you in a position to be considered for the job of your dreams.

## Preparations Before You Write

In the always-available job market created by the Internet, organizations post and remove jobs on a continuous and instantaneous basis. Businesses have many options for where and how to list positions. Most Internet-savvy organizations have recruiting pages on their Web sites. Others use job database Web sites such as Monster.ca ([www.monster.ca](http://www.monster.ca)) that reach a worldwide audience. You learned about various job database Web sites while completing the Real HOT Electronic Commerce project at the end of Chapter 1. Some organizations even use their intranets to recruit from within.

Even in this all-encompassing electronic job market, some jobs are never posted. Collectively, unposted positions are referred to as the **hidden job market**. It is important to prepare yourself to search for jobs in the traditional (newspaper and magazine), electronic, and hidden job markets to maximize your job opportunities.

### START TO NETWORK

If you read the want ads, send out résumés, and wait for employers to discover you, the odds of finding a satisfying job are not very good. According to JobStar ([www.jobstar.org](http://www.jobstar.org)), a job board and collection of job search information offered in association with the *Wall Street Journal* ([www.careerjournal.com](http://www.careerjournal.com)), “80% of all positions are filled *without* employer advertising. These positions are filled by—or created for—candidates who come to an employer’s attention through employee recommendations, referrals from trusted associates, recruiters, or direct contact with the candidate.”<sup>2</sup> This means that networking and preparing résumé content targeted to a specific job and industry are critical to your success.

Networking involves creating relationships with people who are in a position to further your career search. Networks take time and energy to develop, so it's never too early to begin. Start by making a list of everyone that you call on the phone, e-mail, electronically chat with, or have even had passing conversations with. This list should be quite long. Include even the people that you see and speak to infrequently. The goal here is to get a list of potential contacts. Do not rule anyone out. Unlikely people can often put you in contact with someone else. Remember that each of these people know people who also know people. A third-tier contact may be just the person you need to talk to.

Before contacting anyone on your list, develop a “30-second commercial”—a short description of who you are, what job you're looking for, and the skills that make you suited for the job. (See the On Your Own box here.) Having a short script makes it easier to contact people and avoids wasting their time.

Face-to-face and phone networking are critical to a successful job search, but you should also employ electronic means. No matter how you're contacting people, use

## BUILD YOUR “30-SECOND COMMERCIAL”

Building a quality “30-second commercial” can be tougher than it sounds. The goal is to be able to contact a stranger and let them know who you are, what your skills are, and why you are approaching them.

1. Narrow your focus by selecting one job type (a job type can encompass several job titles but the skills are the same) and one industry. Write your job description. For example:
  - *Online Researcher* for a major law firm specializing in corporate contracts and patents
  - *Java and C++ Programmer* in the Alberta oil and gas industry
2. Start a list of job title synonyms. For example, a Java and C++ Programmer could also be called a Web Applet Developer or simply a Programmer/Analyst. This list will help you research and write your résumé.
3. Create a list of words describing your skills and interests. Begin broadly and then narrow your list to skills related to your current job search.
4. Put together your script. Include who you are, how you came in contact with this person, your

top three skills, and what you would like from this contact. For example,

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am working on an Information Technology degree at McGill University. You are registered as a mentor in the Career Placement Centre and your job title is listed as Java Developer. I am very analytical, have enjoyed all of my programming courses, and am particularly interested in Java programming. Can you give me some advice on how to secure a job?

5. Practise your script before attending face-to-face networking functions. Edit your script as appropriate before using it in electronic communications.
6. Create a list of follow-up questions to use when your contact responds. For example:
  - How did you get your first job in this area?
  - Do you know of any open positions that I should apply for?

the script and include personal information. For example, when contacting Bob Smith, who was referred to you by Jim Jones, include how you know Jim Jones and why he thought Bob Smith could be helpful. And always thank people for their time.

Avoid sending bulk e-mails to everyone in your address book. You’re asking people to take time out of their busy schedules to help you, so the personal touch of sending individual e-mail is more likely to obtain results. Set a goal to contact a specific number of people each week, keep track of who you’ve contacted and the responses you’ve received, and finally don’t be afraid to follow up.

In addition to e-mail, join as many relevant mailing lists as you can keep up with. **Mailing lists** are discussion groups organized by area of interest whose members can send and receive e-mail addressed to the whole list. Mailing lists allow you to gain industry information and make contacts that would not otherwise be available. On occasion, job announcements are also circulated through these lists. You can find mailing lists by topic at [www.topica.com](http://www.topica.com), [www.tile.net/listserv](http://www.tile.net/listserv), or [groups.google.com](http://groups.google.com).

## PERFORM SELF-ASSESSMENT

Remember that the paper and electronic documents you create are your personal marketing tools. Most people want to jump right in and write a résumé, but you must get *employer-focused* first. Employers typically process résumés looking for things that exclude candidates by sorting applicants into three groups: Definitely, Maybe, and No. Ideally, you would like to be in the Definitely group, but the Maybe group can

## Figure M4.2

## Sample Self-Assessment Tool

<b>Transferable Skills</b>		
Transferable skills are those that can be applied to any job or work situation. Everyone has them. Every transferable skill has keywords that can be used to describe your strengths. Select each skill below that applies to you and then write how you effectively exhibit that skill.		
<i>General Keywords</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> critical thinking	<input type="checkbox"/> insight	<input type="checkbox"/> teaching ability
<input type="checkbox"/> research techniques	<input type="checkbox"/> writing	<input type="checkbox"/> self-confidence
<input type="checkbox"/> perseverance	<input type="checkbox"/> general knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> imagination
<input type="checkbox"/> self-discipline	<input type="checkbox"/> cultural perspective	<input type="checkbox"/> leadership
<i>Research Keywords</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> initiating	<input type="checkbox"/> interpreting	<input type="checkbox"/> designing
<input type="checkbox"/> updating	<input type="checkbox"/> planning	<input type="checkbox"/> implementing
<input type="checkbox"/> communicating	<input type="checkbox"/> estimating	<input type="checkbox"/> reviewing
<input type="checkbox"/> performing	<input type="checkbox"/> achieving	<input type="checkbox"/> synthesizing
<input type="checkbox"/> attaining	<input type="checkbox"/> analyzing	
<i>Teaching Keywords</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> organizing	<input type="checkbox"/> assessing	<input type="checkbox"/> coordinating
<input type="checkbox"/> counselling	<input type="checkbox"/> problem solving	<input type="checkbox"/> reporting
<input type="checkbox"/> motivating	<input type="checkbox"/> public speaking	<input type="checkbox"/> administering
<i>Personality Keywords</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> dynamic	<input type="checkbox"/> expert	<input type="checkbox"/> outgoing
<input type="checkbox"/> imaginative	<input type="checkbox"/> astute	<input type="checkbox"/> experienced
<input type="checkbox"/> innovative	<input type="checkbox"/> calm	<input type="checkbox"/> diplomatic
<input type="checkbox"/> perceptive	<input type="checkbox"/> unique	<input type="checkbox"/> creative
<input type="checkbox"/> outstanding	<input type="checkbox"/> versatile	<input type="checkbox"/> adept
<input type="checkbox"/> reliable	<input type="checkbox"/> responsible	<input type="checkbox"/> efficient
<input type="checkbox"/> vigorous	<input type="checkbox"/> easygoing	<input type="checkbox"/> honest
<input type="checkbox"/> sensitive	<input type="checkbox"/> successful	<input type="checkbox"/> self-starter
<input type="checkbox"/> accurate	<input type="checkbox"/> humanistic	<input type="checkbox"/> talented
<i>Object Keywords</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> data	<input type="checkbox"/> methods	<input type="checkbox"/> information
<input type="checkbox"/> recommendations	<input type="checkbox"/> designs	<input type="checkbox"/> theories
<input type="checkbox"/> facts	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> outputs
<input type="checkbox"/> procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> research projects	<input type="checkbox"/> surveys
<input type="checkbox"/> feelings	<input type="checkbox"/> relations	<input type="checkbox"/> strategy
<input type="checkbox"/> techniques	<input type="checkbox"/> events	<input type="checkbox"/> journals
<input type="checkbox"/> reports	<input type="checkbox"/> goals	<input type="checkbox"/> presentations
<input type="checkbox"/> systems	<input type="checkbox"/> statistics	<input type="checkbox"/> human resources
<input type="checkbox"/> programs	<input type="checkbox"/> tools	
<input type="checkbox"/> conclusions	<input type="checkbox"/> charts	

result in a position if you've done your homework and stringently documented what you offer an employer.

Contrary to popular belief and traditional résumé-writing styles, employers are not really interested in what you've already done; they want to know what you will do for them and to have documented evidence of those skills. In order to effectively communicate your skills and how they will benefit a potential employer, you must know what those skills are and that means spending some time evaluating yourself. While it's nice to be a "people person," that doesn't tell an employer that you work well under stress, mediate, negotiate contracts, and follow procedures. Being a "people person" will not get you a job, but detailing your skills in that area may.

There are many good tools for self-assessment. Personality profiles, checklists, strength identification, achievement lists, and any number of writing and projection exercises. You can even ask people what your strengths are. Believe it or not, others are often better at articulating your strengths than you. Most colleges and universities have an array of assessment tools available to their students. There are also many organizations offering testing from the Web. Some (e.g., [www.jobstar.org](http://www.jobstar.org)), are free; others (e.g., [www.careermaze.com](http://www.careermaze.com)), charge a fee. Use the methods that are available and that suit your needs, but don't shortchange this step. Time spent here will pay off when you do begin to write.

The goal of this exercise is to develop a list of evocative words that you can use to describe your objective and experience in a manner that employers can understand. Typically these words are nouns and adjectives called **skill words** that stress your capabilities, and you should definitely weave them into the text of your résumé.

## RESEARCH CAREERS, INDUSTRIES, AND COMPANIES

The Web is an incredible resource for researching topics such as résumé writing, career forecasts, job availability, skills required to be hireable, industry trends, and virtual communities. Although there are other approaches, most Web users find that search tools significantly improve the quality of the material located when browsing.

**SEARCH TOOLS** Most of you have probably used Web search engines with varying degrees of success. There are two main types of search engines—directory search engines and true search engines.

A **directory search engine** organizes listings of Web sites into hierarchical lists. Yahoo! is the most popular and well-known of these. If you want to find information using a directory search engine, you start by selecting a specific category and continually choose subcategories until you arrive at a list of Web sites with the information you want.

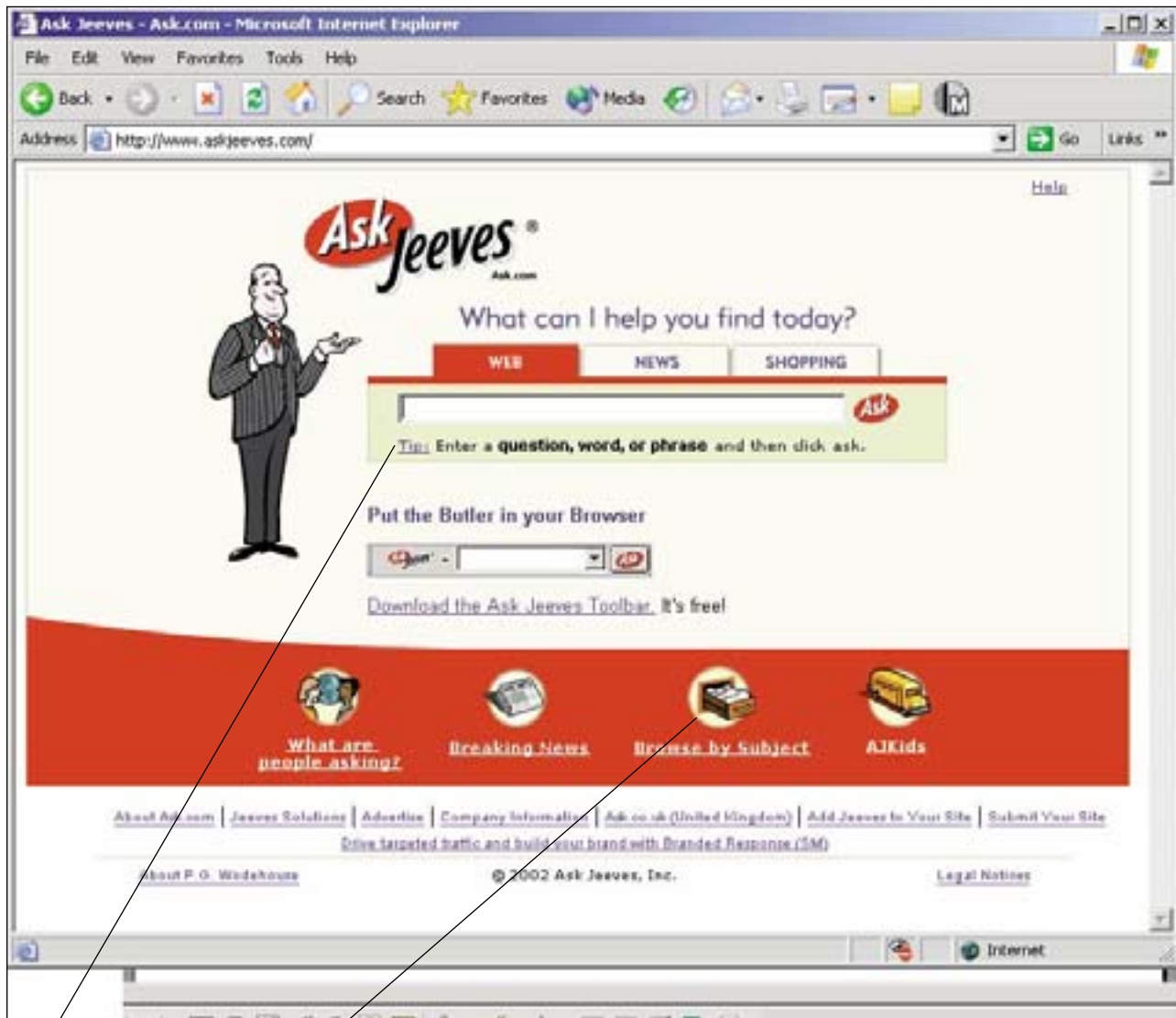
A **true search engine** uses software agent technologies to search the Internet for key words and then places them into indexes. In doing so, true search engines allow you to ask questions as opposed to continually choosing subcategories to arrive at a list of Web sites. Ask Jeeves ([www.ask.com](http://www.ask.com)) is the most popular and well-known true search engine.

All search engines match words or phrases entered in the search box against information in their databases. Most search engines have tips or help that provide instructions on how to create the most effective search for that engine. Once matching values from the database have been located, they're organized by relevance and presented to you. Understanding how relevance is determined will help you reduce your search time. Some of the many methods used to determine ranking include:

- The number of times the search terms appear in the site
- Site design ranking (easy to use, frames, etc.)

Figure M4.3

Ask Jeeves Home Page



Search tips

Topical index

- Link popularity
- Partnerships and subscriptions

**SUCCESSFUL WEB RESEARCH** Many job seekers underestimate the role of research in creating effective documents such as a résumé. A résumé is not simply a history of your education and work, but should be targeted to one position and industry. You can achieve this well-defined targeting by carefully selecting your relevant life experiences and presenting them in a fashion that highlights the qualifications employers want to see. Successful targeting results from understanding the benefits that organizations expect to obtain from employees in your field. It isn't enough to document your skills and wait for people reviewing your résumé to determine the services you could provide; you must tell them exactly what you can do and how you would benefit their organization.

## START YOUR RESEARCH

Research is time-consuming and the sheer volume of information available on the Web is daunting. Target your research and stay focused. When you come upon items of interest that will not further your current goal, copy and paste their URLs into an open word processing document and then proceed with your research.

In a second open word processing document, track career-related data and their sources gathered from your search. Refine your search words as necessary. Remember that you should be gathering as much data as you can about your chosen career, but it may be helpful to search for each type of information separately. For example, salary information may not be available from the sources discussing the projected number of jobs over the next five years or the normal work week in an industry.

Use the following list of Web resources as a starting point.

**Search Engines**

- [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)—The largest Web index
- [www.search.com](http://www.search.com)—Search using several search engines at once
- [www.searchengineguide.com](http://www.searchengineguide.com)—Listing of search engines by topic

- [www.job-search-engine.com](http://www.job-search-engine.com)—A meta job search engine dedicated to employment

**Media**

- [www.eneews.com](http://www.eneews.com)—Online magazines on any topic with online forums
- [www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com)—Online classifieds
- [www.classifieds2000.com](http://www.classifieds2000.com)—Online classifieds

**Job Boards**

- [www.monster.ca](http://www.monster.ca)—Largest job board, consistently listed in the top five
- [www.hotjobs.ca](http://www.hotjobs.ca)—Job postings by location, industry, or company; international postings and salary wizard
- [www.collegegrad.com](http://www.collegegrad.com)—Excellent resource for entry-level job seekers; job search, résumé, and networking strategies

**Other Resources**

- [www.careers.org](http://www.careers.org)—Job search and career resource directory organized by topic and region
- Web sites of some businesses in your chosen industry

Research is the key to creating powerful employer-centred résumé content directed to a specific industry. A vast amount of information is available to help you develop powerful résumé content. There are two approaches that work to narrow the search process. Determining where you are in your preparation for the job market will help you select the best approach.

When looking for careers requiring you to complete education or training, search for industries, career paths, schools, and job titles in your area of interest. When looking for careers that will call for your existing skills, search for jobs, industries, and organizations matching your qualifications. Either way you should visit an array of general Web resources, government sites, job database sites, and business sites before you write.

To make the most of the available information, develop a list of search terms based on your goals and then visit media sites, job database Web sites, search engines, government sites, and business Web pages. You should be able to find information on planning your career, the education or training needed to be successful, expected earnings by geographic location, the work environment, attire, normal career path, projected number of openings, and current job postings. Additionally you should find specific organizations, contacts, and communities that will help you fine-tune your target.

## Writing Targeted Résumé Content

Through beginning to network, assessing your skills, and researching, you'll gain the knowledge critical for creating targeted résumé content. Use the job titles, skills, and jargon from one industry to describe yourself and your experience. If you're job-seeking in multiple industries or a variety of position titles, you may need to develop a separate résumé for each.

When you begin writing, concentrate on creating solid content that is targeted, is grammatically correct, and convincingly outlines your skills. And don't worry about formatting your content right now—you'll do that later. Since we're concentrating on electronic documents, old rules governing the writing style, length, and content of paper résumés do not apply. For example, creating a résumé that will print on one page (or two at most) is not relevant in this arena.

### POWERFUL OBJECTIVE STATEMENTS

A well-developed objective statement is a potent tool for getting employers to look more deeply into your potential. Although some résumé styles omit this statement, it can be a critical component when it provides an executive summary of your qualifications. Typical objective statements are short—between one and three sentences and appear below the contact information.

For first-time job seekers or those changing careers, an objective should include a job title, an industry, the top three to five skills that qualify you for the job, and the benefit you will bring to the hiring organization. This is a tall order, but using a decisive writing style lets employers know that you understand their business and helps them better determine that your skills can benefit their organization.

Experienced job seekers can break this content into two sections, a single-line objective with a job title and industry followed by a summary of qualifications section. The summary of qualifications should highlight your skills and accomplishments that

Entry-Level Objective Statement	
<b>Objective</b>	Public accounting auditor position in Ontario capitalizing on internal and external audit experience gained in a four-month PricewaterhouseCoopers internship. Familiar with payroll, tax, and general ledger processing. Multilingual and willing to travel.
Entry-Level Objective Statement with Summary	
<b>Objective Summary</b>	<p>Public accounting auditor position in Ontario. Accounting coursework and internships.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PricewaterhouseCoopers auditor internship with four months of experience in both internal and external general ledger audit techniques</li> <li>• Bookkeeping and coursework experience with payroll, cost, and tax accounting</li> <li>• Spanish fluency gained through extensive travel in Mexico and South America</li> <li>• Willing to travel and relocate</li> </ul>

Figure M4.4

Objective and Summary Examples

## ON YOUR OWN

### WRITE YOUR OBJECTIVE

Strong objective statements clearly state the position and industry of interest along with your strongest skills. Do not use “I,” “my,” or “me.” Focus on the benefit to the employer.

- *Pharmaceutical sales representative.* Capitalizing on extensive chemistry background and self-directed personality to manage a marketing territory.
- *Researcher in investment and analysis.* Interests and skills include securities analysis, financial

planning, and portfolio management. Long-range goal is to become a Chartered Financial Analyst. Willing to travel and relocate.

Rewrite the following weak objective statement: “A position in marketing with a progressive firm.”

Create a strong objective statement for your planned career. Start with “I would like a job where I can use my ability to \_\_\_\_\_ which will result in \_\_\_\_\_.” Rewrite the statement to be employer-centred, contain industry jargon, and use skills keywords.

benefited previous employers. We recommend that you present this content in the form of a bulleted list.

Most recruiters visually scan the objectives and summary of qualifications in a résumé to determine whether to review the remaining content. If you catch their interest, they will read further; otherwise your résumé lands immediately in the do-not-consider pile.

Regardless of whether you’re writing a standalone objective statement or including a summary of qualifications, write for your audience, or, in other words, from the hiring organization’s perspective. Use the industry jargon and skills keywords uncovered through networking, self assessment, and research to describe yourself and what you offer an organization.

Avoid statements that appear self-centred or self-serving. For instance, don’t mention money or promotions. Instead, state that you’re willing to accept increasing levels of responsibility. Money and promotions benefit you, while increasing your responsibility benefits the organization. Don’t include statements with “I,” “my,” or “me,” since these personal pronouns focus on you rather than the organization.

Avoid using canned or hyped phrases normally associated with résumé writing. For example, *a position with a progressive company* and *opportunity for advancement* are commonly seen in résumés but don’t communicate anything important about the applicant. Write honestly about your abilities and skills in a way that demonstrates your value to employers.

### IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

After your objective statement, you should dedicate the first section of your résumé to your name and how you can be contacted. Although this seems obvious, there are a couple of important contact issues to mention. Contact information must be complete, correct, and permanent. Depending on the policies of the company receiving your résumé, it could remain on file for months or even years. If your résumé is pulled for consideration six months from now, the contact information should still be valid.

Since we're focusing on electronic documents, it's important to note that privacy is a concern. While paper documents are typically routed to a person or department within an organization who has the responsibility of protecting your privacy, electronic documents can be generally distributed with no party directly responsible for privacy. Especially for documents posted to the Internet, it may be preferable to omit your address and phone numbers, instead using an e-mail account devoted to job hunting. If you elect to use an e-mail address, be sure to check your e-mail regularly and then provide the remaining contact information to legitimate organizations who contact you.

## OTHER VALUABLE RÉSUMÉ SECTIONS

The other sections included in your résumé are determined by what you need to communicate. Ideally all other content would directly support your objectives and skills. This does not mean that work experience and education in other fields should never be mentioned. Remember that general skills such as critical thinking, analysis, writing, communication, and so on are relevant to almost any position. Include jobs and education that demonstrate these skills. It's also important in many instances to show increasing job responsibility even though the positions are not directly relevant to your current job search.

Most résumés should include sections outlining your education and work experience. Place the section most important to your marketable skills first. Within each section organize the information to best present your skills. In general, hiring organizations prefer chronological presentations because they are traditional and easy to follow, but other styles can be effective as long as it does not appear that you're trying to hide or omit anything.

Use the same writing techniques outlined for creating a powerful objective statement to describe and demonstrate your relevant coursework and job skills. It isn't enough to list course and job titles. Include descriptions documenting relevant skills and their organizational benefit using jargon relevant to your position and industry. For example, "responsible for coding and testing Visual Basic applications" is an adequate job description for a programmer but "coded Visual Basic applications consisting of thousands of executable lines to solve complex business problems, manage system throughput, and improve end-user satisfaction" demonstrates both the level of skill being offered and how the organization benefited from them.

On most résumés, the last section should present information on references. Commonly this section contains a single statement: "References available upon request." There are several reasons not to include actual references in this section. First, they are not needed until you're actually being considered for a position. Second, going through the interview process and learning more about the organization will help you to select more effective references. Third, it saves space. Finally, especially in the electronic arena, your references should not have to worry about their personal contact information being distributed without their permission.

Other sections to consider are "Awards," "Publications," "Personal Information," and anything specific to the particular job being applied for. For example, a "Statement of Belief" could be important when applying for a job with a religious organization, but probably shouldn't be included otherwise. Personal information can be troublesome. When applying for a position with a formal organization, too much personal information can make you look informal. However, the same information can make you look like a good fit in a less formal institution. Use your research to determine what to include and omit.

## TEAM WORK

### FEEDBACK, FEEDBACK, FEEDBACK!

As you probably learned in your composition courses, it is important to proofread and obtain feedback before submitting written work. This is even more essential for projects as important as your job search e-portfolio. Either formally or informally, create a group of two to three people who will provide constructive feedback throughout the remainder of your e-portfolio development.

1. Begin by each discussing your overall career goals and your work to date on this Module.
2. Test your “30-second commercial” on the group and solicit feedback.
3. Text your statement of objective on the group and solicit feedback.
4. Discuss the other sections needed for your résumé and how to make your content employer-centred.
5. Repeat steps 2 through 4 for the other group members.

## Developing e-Portfolio Content

An **electronic portfolio (e-portfolio)** is a collection of Web documents used to support a stated purpose such as demonstrating writing or photography skills. You should design your job search e-portfolios to provide everything that a prospective employer needs to evaluate your employment potential. That means that it should include several résumé formats, permanent contact information, and a gallery designed to demonstrate your skills.

### ELECTRONIC FILE FORMATS

To be effective in every situation, you should prepare your résumés in a variety of electronic file formats, but this isn’t necessarily a time-consuming task. Each format should be incorporated into your e-portfolio. Begin by building an unformatted résumé with solid content and then add formatting to create the other required formats.

**SCANNABLE RÉSUMÉ** Scannable résumés (also called **ASCII résumés** or **plain-text résumés**) are designed to be evaluated by skills-extraction software and typically contain all résumé content without any formatting.

Scannable résumés can be delivered for evaluation in an electronic format (file) or printed. When potential employers receive printed scannable résumé, they use optical character recognition (OCR) software to create a file. To improve OCR performance, submit original copies printed on white bond paper using a high-quality printer. When printed, scannable résumés should not be folded, stapled, or paper-clipped, since the quality of the document can significantly impact scan accuracy.

Skills-extraction software is designed to create an applicant profile from your résumé. This electronic version of your résumé is then submitted to an **extraction engine**, smart software with a vocabulary of job-related skills that allows it to recognize and catalogue similar terms in your résumé. The engine’s vocabulary can be updated with industry-specific jargon and emerging skills. Terms and phrases are associated with a context to improve the recognition of synonyms and antonyms. Additionally, the software understands the typical résumé sections such as “Education” and “Work History,” allowing it to create a complete profile. The profile is then categorized by

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KEELY ROBINSON
1234 Somewhere Drive
Guelph, ON A1A 1A1
(519)555-1212
krobin@uoguelph.ca
Personal web Site: www.keelyrobinson.ca

OBJECTIVE
General Sales Representative with a pharmaceutical house
using extensive chemistry background and self-directed personality
to manage a marketing territory. Personal Goal: to increase sales
and improve customer satisfaction. willing to relocate.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY
April 2001 - Present
HMS Pharmaceuticals Corp., Cambridge, ON
Currently working as a General Sales Manager responsible
for sales and distribution of pharmaceutical supplies to doctor's
offices, pharmacies, and clinics in the Midwest Region.
- volume of two million dollars in annual sales
- Salesperson of the month for the past five months
- Increased SPQ customer base by five percent
- Improved customer understanding of SPQ products and their benefits
- Initiated cost saving sales procedures to reduce the overall
expenditures of the sales department by over $50,000 annually
- Developed and implemented technical training for the sales force
to improve their understanding of SPQ products and how to effectively
market them
- Analyzed sales trends and improved the focus of the sales force

January 1999 - April 2000
UntraceablePoison.com, Kitchener, ON
Managed the sales force for a dynamic and evolving web company.
- Sales force of 8
- Increased overall sales by 28 percent
- Improved sales force morale and productivity using team
management techniques

August 1996 - December 1998
Horticulture Systems, Guelph, ON
Customer service and office management responsibilities. Handled all
customer complaints. Created a functional tracking and filing system
for customer interactions.

EDUCATION
B.S. in Chemistry and Biology, 1998
McMaster University, Hamilton ON
- Double major in Chemistry and Biology

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Figure M4.5

Sample Scannable Résumé

Double-space before headings.

Use all caps for section headings.

Use separate lines for dates, titles, and locations.

Bulleted list

broad vocational category (Accounting, Marketing, Engineering, and so on). The result of extracting skills from all résumés submitted to an organization is a hierarchical index of job applicants based on vocational category.

When a position for a new employee opens in an organization that has implemented skills extraction, a list of specific job skills is developed that is then matched to the database extracted from applicants ASCII résumés. This process is similar to the techniques you use to search for Web sites with specific topics. A list of applicants with the desired skills is returned. Reviewers have access to the applicant profiles as well as the full résumé text.

To serve you well in this mechanized environment, your résumé must follow fairly standard section naming conventions, and contain the skill words most likely to be used by prospective employers. You should have uncovered these skill words during your research and woven them into your text as you created your résumé.

General guidelines for creating scannable résumés include:

- Create a text-only file.
- In Microsoft Word, select File from the menu, click Save As, and then set the Save As Type to “Plain Text (\*.txt)” or use Notepad to create your document.

- Use only Courier or Times New Roman 10- or 12-point fonts.
- Do not include character formatting such as bold, underlining, italics, or text colour.
- Do not centre or tab-indent text (every line should be left-justified)
- Press Enter at the end of each line. Line length should be between 65 and 70 characters for optimal skills extraction.
- Do not include tables or graphics.
- Leave two blank lines between sections.
- Capitalize all letters in section headings.
- Use asterisks (\*), hyphens (-), or other standard keyboard characters for bullets (do not use automatic bulleted or numbered lists).

A properly created scannable résumé should be visually *unappealing* and long; this format is designed for machines. But do not skimp on content quality, because a person is likely to try to read it at some point. The ASCII plain-text format should be used for most electronically submitted résumés. Use this format to copy and paste résumé content for job database Web sites and Internet-based résumé builders and to deliver your résumé in the body of an e-mail message.

**PRESENTATION RÉSUMÉ** A **presentation résumé** is the nicely formatted paper résumé most people are familiar with; it is designed for visual impact. It should be well laid out on the page and is most often between one and two printed pages long. Pre-

Figure M4.6

Undesirable Presentation Résumé Print

**KEELY ROBINSON**

1234 Somewhere Drive  
Guelph, ON A1A 1A1  
Personal Web Site: [www.keelyrobinson.ca](http://www.keelyrobinson.ca)

(519)555-1212  
[krubin@uoguelph.ca](mailto:krubin@uoguelph.ca)

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O

**OBJECTIVE**  
General Sales Representative with a pharmaceutical house using extensive chemistry background and self-directed personality to manage a marketing territory. Personal Goal: to increase sales and improve customer satisfaction. Willing to relocate.

E

**EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**  
*HMS Pharmaceuticals Corp., Cambridge, ON* April 2001 - Present

<p>Currently working as a General Sales Manager responsible for sales and distribution of pharmaceutical supplies to doctor's offices, pharmacies, and clinics in the Central Region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volume of two million dollars in annual sales</li> <li>• Salesperson of the month for the past five months</li> <li>• Increased SPQ customer base by five percent</li> <li>• Improved customer understanding of SPQ products and their benefits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiated cost saving sales procedures to reduce the overall expenditures of the sales department by over \$30,000 annually</li> <li>• Developed and implemented technical training for the sales force to improve their understanding of SPQ products and how to effectively market them</li> <li>• Analyzed sales trends and improved the focus of the sales force</li> </ul>
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Margin altered by new printer

sensation résumés are sent to potential employers who do not use skills-extraction software, and carried with you to any face-to-face interviews. Although existing résumé content can be edited to improve this presentation format, be careful not to make significant changes since the same people are likely to review both a scannable and a presentation copy of your résumé.

Microsoft Word and other word processing applications contain templates that will help you with presentation résumé formatting. Typically, copying from your original document and pasting into the template is effective. Additional templates and formatting suggestions are widely available on the Internet. You should also have someone from your school's career resource centre review your presentation résumé.

We don't advise that you electronically submit a heavily formatted presentation résumé. The page layout is typically specific to the printer and the computer on which you created the document. When formatted documents are printed on another printer, the results are haphazard at best. For example, information can be dropped from a table, text misaligned, and page breaks altered.

**PDF RÉSUMÉ** **Portable document format (PDF)** is the standard electronic distribution file format. The benefit of PDF is that documents created in any application can be shared across platforms and still look exactly as designed. All fonts, indentions, graphics, links, tables, and alignment are retained. This format is widely used to electronically distribute books and forms. For example, most tax forms are available as PDF downloads from a Web site. You can download Adobe Acrobat Reader from Adobe ([www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com)) at no cost to view PDF documents.

Once you convert your presentation résumé to PDF format, anyone can view and print it exactly as you designed it. You can easily distribute a PDF résumé as e-mail attachment or Web download. The process of creating a PDF file is simple, but it requires access to Adobe Acrobat software which is available in several versions. Currently, a "Create Adobe PDF Online" link is available from Adobe that will allow you to subscribe and create up to five free PDF files.

**HTML** As you create and deliver Web content, you create files with either .HTM or .HTML as the extension. Within these files (called HTML documents), you use hypertext markup language (HTML) tags to provide document formatting instructions to Web browsers such as Microsoft Internet Explorer or Netscape Communicator.

A good e-portfolio Web site should include (1) a home page that acts as a site overview and menu, (2) all of your résumé text, and (3) supporting materials using HTML (hypertext markup language) tags to format attractive pages. Résumés and supporting content already formatted (.TXT, .PDF, .DOC, .PPT, .XLS, and so on) for other purposes are usually not converted to HTML. You can refer back to Skills Module 3 for using HTML to create a Web site and provide links to downloadable files. In the remainder of this Module, we'll specifically address designing and building the pages of your e-portfolio.

## GALLERY

Besides the ability to deliver your résumé in multiple formats, an e-portfolio provides you with the opportunity to demonstrate your skills through a gallery of works. Because the Web allows viewers to click on links to view materials that are of interest to them, there is no absolute limit to the number of supporting pages that you can develop.

Figure M4.7

Sample Job Search e-Portfolio Gallery



The simplest way to compose a gallery is to make use of materials that you already have in hand. Remember that the gallery should display your skills, so consider including:

- Writing samples
- Spreadsheets or other applications of business tools
- Demonstrations of analytical, tracking, planning, or management skills
- Presentations that you've developed

Existing documents may need to be edited to remove confidential materials or to shorten the content. For example, you might include the introduction, problem analysis, and summary sections of a 30-page report since it's unlikely that anyone would read the entire report and those sections sufficiently demonstrate your talent. Don't include proprietary employer information or group projects without giving appropriate credit and obtaining permission.

If you don't have existing documents that sufficiently demonstrate your job skills, create them from scratch. This can be time-consuming, but it is a much stronger statement about your talent and dedication than just saying you can do the job. Start small and spend the time to do an excellent job. One of the biggest benefits of a Web-based gallery is that you can add and remove components at any time.

There are no hard-and-fast rules about what to include in your gallery, but remember to keep it focused on your goal of obtaining a job. Label and organize your gallery content so that viewers can click on only what they want to see. For example, provide links from your job and education descriptions to documents demonstrating related skills. Alternatively, a gallery link can lead to a page outlining your skills with links to specific documents.

## Web Design Considerations

Web design is a complex art requiring technical knowledge, research, skill, and an understanding of your audience. The good news is that you don't have to become a Web designer to have an effective e-portfolio. There are a few basic rules that will help you organize your content.

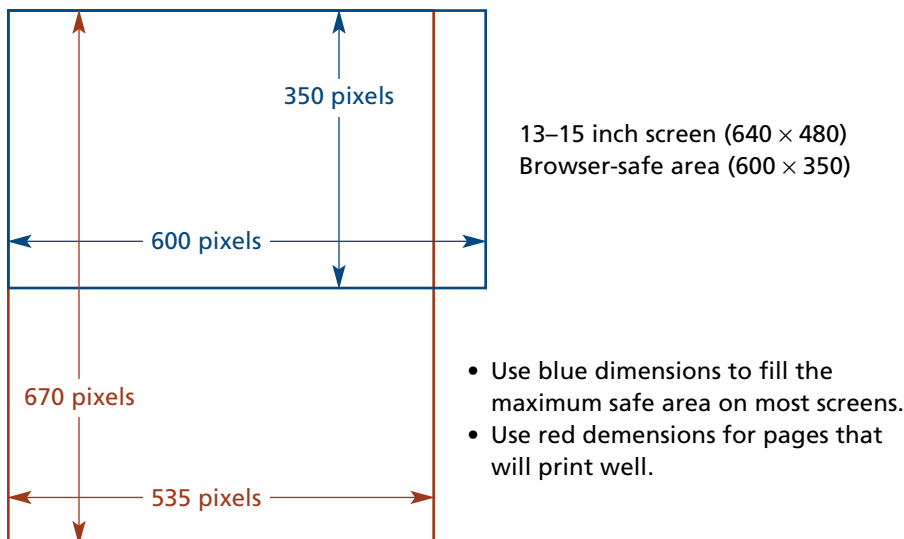
### BASIC WEB DESIGN PRINCIPLES

If you search the Web for Web design principles, you'll find many lists of suggestions that have only a few elements in common. Every Web design expert has an opinion about what makes a good site, and so does everyone browsing the Web. Can they all be right? Probably yes, depending on the context. Here, we'll cover effective Web design principles for creating a job search e-portfolio, which is definitely different than those for creating a B2C Web site.

**DEFINE THE SITE'S AUDIENCE AND PURPOSE** You create and use a job search e-portfolio to market yourself for a job or ranges of related jobs to the hiring organizations of a particular industry. To make this clear, add the industry and job title(s) to your job search e-portfolio. In doing so, you've defined both your audience and your purpose. The key to developing a Web site that will appeal to your audience is to build what they like, not what you like. Again, your research should pay off. Think about the industry and business sites that you visited while researching your chosen career.

Some of the questions you can ask yourself to help gain insight into your target audience are:

- What is the average age of managers (the people who do the hiring)? Employees (the people you would work with)?
- How conservative is this industry?
- Are employees expected to be artistic?
- How do employees dress?



U.S. letter-size page = 535 × 670 pixels safe area

Figure M4.8

Printer-Friendly Web Page Dimensions

- What do the backgrounds, colours, graphics, and navigation of business sites in the industry look like?
- How does this industry promote itself?

There are no absolutes in e-portfolio design. A site that works well for an artist, while beautiful, would probably be inappropriate for an accountant. Remember that this is not a personal site. It should demonstrate your business personality without being too personal.

**WEB LAYOUT** The difference between content designed for printed viewing and content designed for electronic viewing on the Web is dramatic to say the least. You should keep in mind that good printed layout does not translate effectively to the Web. There are many reasons for this, but mainly:

- Printed pages are designed to be read, while Web pages are designed to be browsed.
- All printed pages are the same size, while Web pages are not. The viewable area of a Web page is also much smaller than that of a printed page.
- Printed pages stay visually the same, while Web page layout varies depending on the Web browser, operating system, and monitor being used.

Even with the improved resolution of today's monitors, it's more difficult to read from a computer screen than it is from a printed document. Few readers will actually read long passages online; they most often print it or skip it altogether. Consider breaking long text (three or more screens) up so that the user is presented with an overview and can then link to the details. If you need to present long text as a single unit, be sure that it's printer-friendly.

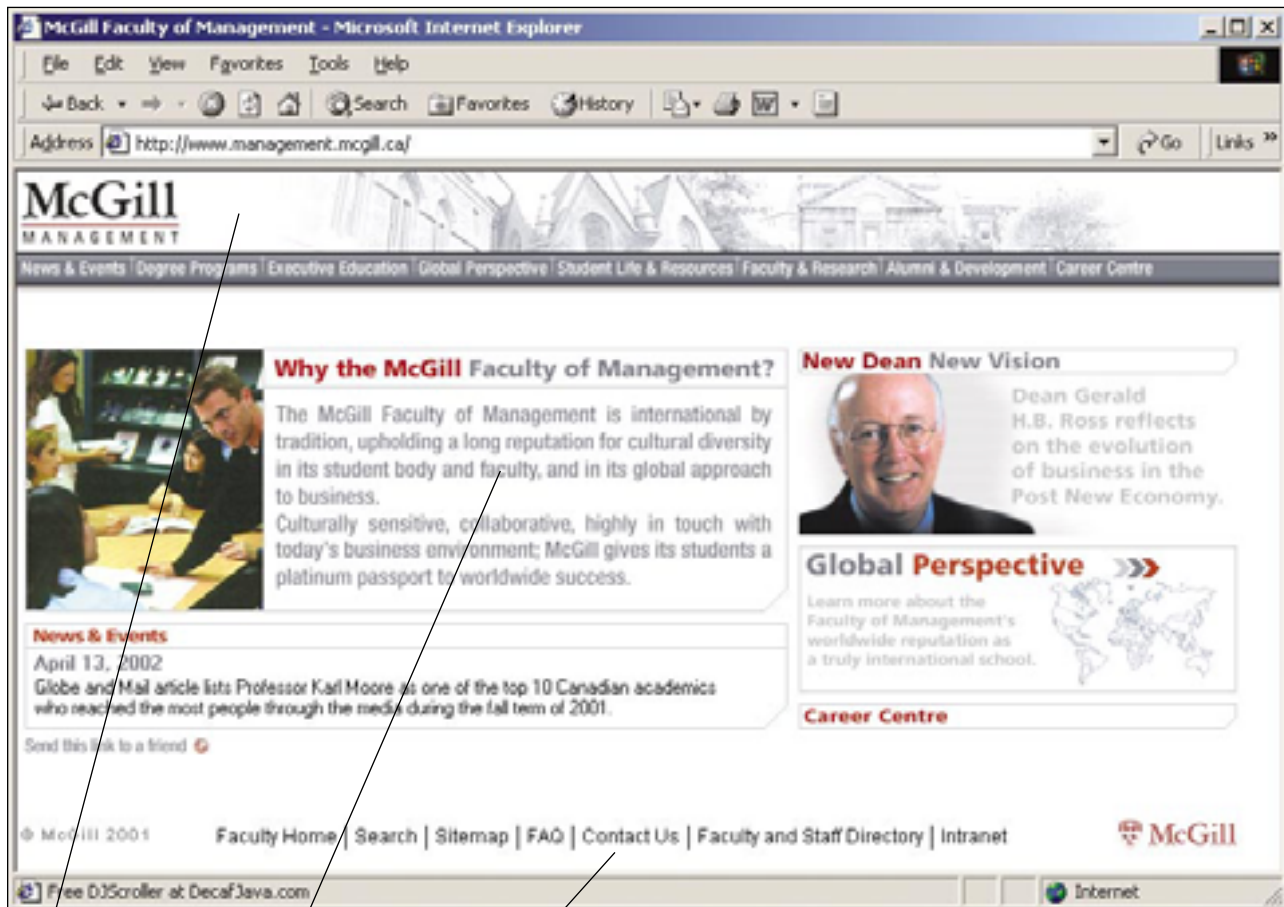
Web content must be concise, well labelled, and formatted for browsing. Every page needs to contain information about who, what, when, and where, so that a person who just pops into that page has a point of reference. Although Web pages look very different when graphics and colours are applied, most Web designers employ a common zone-based layout. The top of each page contains a header that holds the organization name, logo, and other identifying information. Many sites also include navigational links in the header. The bottom of each page contains a footer outlining the origin (author and institution), contact point, and age of the page. Many sites also include navigation in the footer. The middle of each page contains the content which should be displayed in a manner that helps viewers find topics of interest.

Often the left-hand side of the content zone contains a menu of links. This is particularly important in large sites with long pages. Whether or not you add a menu column to the left of your content, white space to left and right of your text will make it easier to read. Also make sure to leave white space between headings and other page elements to avoid a cluttered look.

**SITE STRUCTURE** The structure of a Web site is how the various pages of the site are linked together. There are two main schools of thought when it comes to Web page length, *scrolling* and *clicking*. Long pages of content require the viewer to scroll to see everything while short pages contain clickable links that provide the full content. Overall, Web users prefer small, fast-loading pages that allow them to click directly to the desired content. In other words, most people prefer to click rather than scroll. It isn't possible to avoid scrolling altogether, but try *not* to annoy your users by having them scroll too much.

Figure M4.9

Web Page Zones



Header

Content

Footer

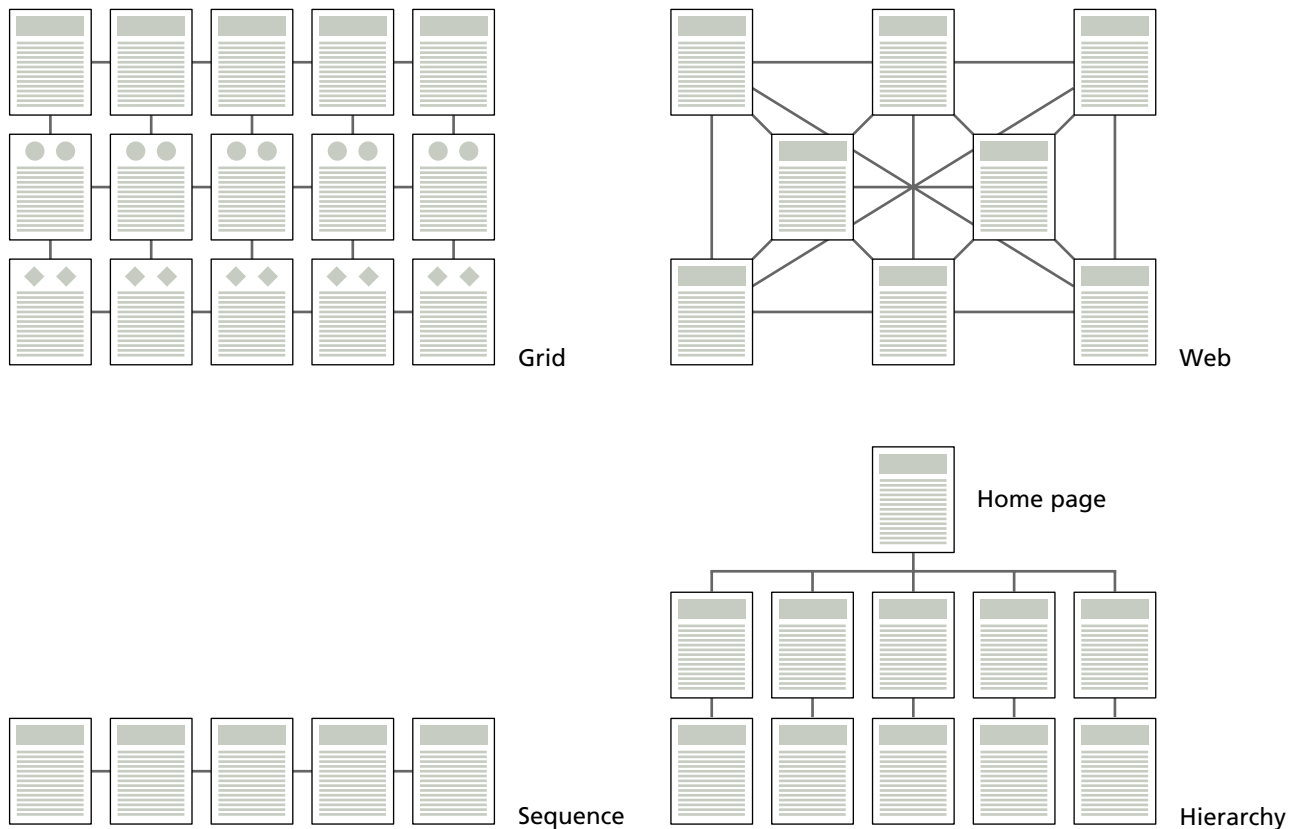
To create a site of linked pages, you must segment or break your content into usable units. Each segment becomes a separate Web page in your site. Try to think of screens of text rather than pages of text. At a screen resolution of  $800 \times 600$ , the average Web browser screen displays the equivalent of about a half-page of printed text when there is nothing else on the screen. The page title, navigation, and footer information can cut that down to one-third of a page. So, to view one printed page of text, the person reading your e-portfolio would have to scroll down at least two screens. More than three screens of scrolling is beyond the tolerance of the average user unless the text is very interesting or must logically be presented as a unit.

Once you've determined your Web site segments, your next step is to determine how they will be linked together. The home page is the preferred entry point to your site, and should start the navigation. Web sites can contain linear, hierarchical, and networked navigation. Simple sites can be just two levels deep while more complex sites will need three levels. We don't recommend that your job search e-portfolio include more than three levels.

With few exceptions, every HTML page of a site should contain links to the home page and other site topics. Non-HTML pages such as Word or Excel documents don't

Figure M4.10

## Documenting Web Page Links



usually contain links. It's important to create a Web site navigation chart to have a checklist of pages and links to build and test.

## DESIGN YOUR HOME PAGE

When designing a group of Web pages that are structured to work together, it's critical that they contain common design elements such as colour, font, and layout. It should be obvious to a user who has clicked on a link to another site page that he or she is still in your e-portfolio site. Similarly, someone who has clicked into a subpage of your site should be able to easily navigate to content matching their interests. Design your opening or home page and then apply those layout, font, and colour elements throughout the remaining site pages.

**COLOUR** Colour impacts the look and feel of your site. We speak of colours as being warm, cool, muted, light, dark, and garish. Decide what type of colour description is appropriate for your audience and then select colours within that description. For example, mocha is a warm colour while cyan is a cool colour.

There are four colours to select for your Web site, text, link, visited link, and background. These colours interact to create the canvas for site content. It's important that the colours match your audience preferences and work well together. The default link colour is blue while links that have already been visited are usually purple or red.

## BUILD YOUR RÉSUMÉS AND VISIT E-PORTFOLIO SITES

Although documents created in Microsoft Windows have filenames that are not case-sensitive and handle spaces well (My Résumé.doc), more than likely your e-portfolio will be posted on a UNIX server. UNIX is the most common operating system for Web servers. Make your files UNIX-friendly by using consistent capitalization and no spaces in the file names (MyRésumé.doc).

Open a Notepad or Microsoft Word document to create an ASCII résumé. Enter all of your résumé content without any formatting. Be sure to follow the guidelines outlined in the Module text. If you use Microsoft Word, be sure to change the Save As Type to "Plain Text (\*.txt)."

To create a presentation résumé, open your ASCII résumé in Microsoft Word and save it with a Save As Type of "Word Document (\*.doc)." Remove all of the extra hard returns (where you pressed Enter) in the document and then select Theme from the Format menu. Click the Style Gallery button and select one of the résumé templates. Update the text and formatting to create a résumé that can be printed in one or two pages.

Visit Adobe ([www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com)) and register to create free PDF files. Use this service to create a PDF version of your presentation résumé. Create a folder for your Web site development and place copies of all of your résumés there.

To enhance your understanding of job search e-portfolio content, segmenting, navigation, layout, and design, visit the Web site that accompanies this text ([www.mcgrawhill.ca/college/haag](http://www.mcgrawhill.ca/college/haag)) and select the Skills Module 4 link. Look through the available portfolios, paying attention to the content, use of colour, fonts, navigation, page layout, and graphics.

1. How important was colour in your initial assessment of a site?
2. What attributes made it easy to move through a site?
3. What was your favourite site? Why? Evaluate the way that site content was segmented. Sketch out the navigation structure of this site.
4. What was your least favourite site? Why?

Both visited and unvisited links should be easily seen on your selected background and effortlessly distinguished from each other. High contrast between background and foreground colours improves readability. Typically light backgrounds and dark text work best. Pick a site that you want to emulate and use the View menu to take a look at the colour settings in the HTML code.

In Web page design, browser-safe colours are important. **Browser-safe colours** are 216 different colours that can be displayed by a computer using an 8-bit representation scheme. When a Web browser encounters a colour it cannot interpret, it substitutes a colour that it knows, resulting in unpredictable Web page displays. For that reason, we recommend that you use browser-safe colours that can be displayed by all monitors and Web browsers. You can easily find a chart of browser-safe colours by searching the Web.

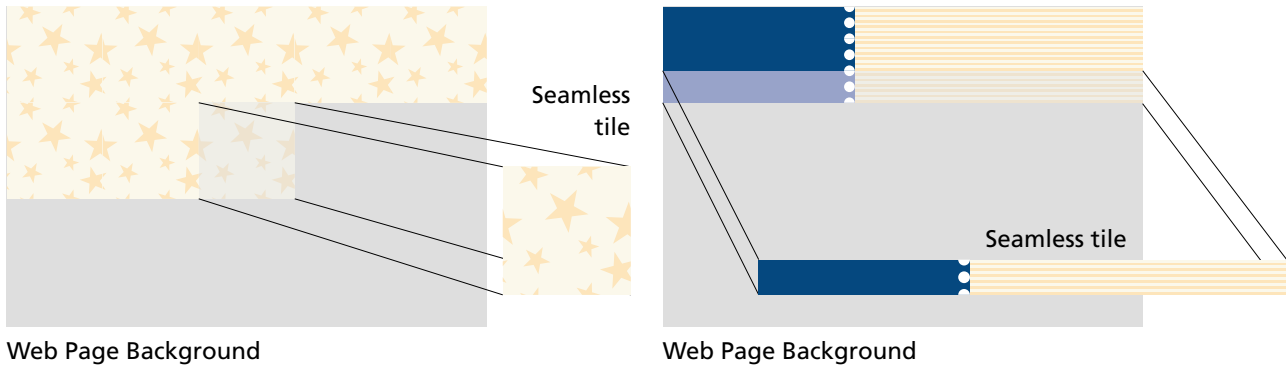
Current Web design is moving away from browser-safe colours. More than 90 percent of Web users are using 16-, 24-, or 32-bit colour settings.<sup>3</sup> These settings make 8-bit browser-safe colours obsolete. Still, it's wise to be cautious with colour, because there is a significant variation in how the same colour displays from monitor to monitor and browser to browser. Test your colour selections on as many systems as possible. Visit professionally designed Web sites and study their uses of colour to improve your understanding.

**BACKGROUND COLOUR** A page background can be set to a colour or to an image (what we called a textured background in Skills Module 3). Inappropriate background images can slow download time and decrease the readability of your text. Images must

## Figure M4.11

### Backgrounds and Titles

#### TILING



#### TITLES

Initial Caps Cause Pointless Bumps

Start cap with bold omits pointless bumps

be either .JPG or .GIF format, but compressed .JPG files often provide a higher-quality graphic look for your site.

Figure M4.11 shows the two styles of tiling backgrounds. The square tile repeats to fill the Web browser window, providing a seamless background. The wide, rectangular tile also repeats, but if it is sufficiently wide it only tiles downward. The image in the example could be used to provide a graphic differentiation for a menu down the left-hand side of the browser window.

**FONTS AND FORMATTING** The Web is a widely used marketing forum and it's important to remember that you're using it to market your skills. Fonts and formatting applied to your Web site cannot often match your presentation résumé, but should take full advantage of Web formatting without succumbing to overkill. For example, scrolling text and cute animations rarely have a place in an e-portfolio.

Using different fonts for headings and the body of your document can provide a more professional image, but remember that all computers will not have the same fonts loaded, so your font tags should list alternative fonts. For example, Arial, Helvetica, and sans serif fonts are roughly equivalent. Specialty fonts like Chiller do not have readily accessible alternatives on all computers and should be avoided.

As we've already mentioned, reading is more difficult on a computer monitor than on paper. To simplify reading, headings should be easily identified and use sentence case—not title case as they would in a written document. Title case causes unnecessary bumps in a line of text as we show in Figure M4.11.

Use tables, bulleted lists, and non-breaking spaces to control the layout of your pages. Tables can provide white space, make columns, and control the placement of graphic elements. For both print and screen reading, three-inch lines of text (7 or 8 centimetres) provide the best readability, so columns are an effective design tool. Bulleted lists make items under a heading easy to identify. The “non-breaking space” (written &NBSP in HTML code) adds a space to your page (one that will not break at the ends of lines), and is the most effective way to indent a first line of text. Use the

<BLOCKQUOTE> tag to indent the left (and on some browsers the right) margin of a block of text. Make sure that all of the design elements that you select work well to create the desired visual impact.

**HOME PAGE CONTENT** As we mentioned earlier, the content for your Web site needs to be segmented into logical units that will become the individual pages of your site. Your opening or **home page**—the entrance to your Web site—deserves special attention. If at all possible, this page should all display in one screen at an 800 × 600 screen resolution. The goal is to load fast and provide the viewer with enough information to assess the site and navigate to pages of interest. Remember that each site page should include who, what, when, and where.

Recall that each page of your site should contain the same footer. This is the easiest content to develop. At minimum, your footer should include, your name, institution, e-mail address, and the last update date for the site. It's often a good idea to include links to the other pages of your site above this information.

Each page of your site should also contain a header. The header needs to include your name and contact information. Organizations typically include a logo in the header. If you have a business logo or graphic relevant to your job search, you can incorporate it into your header. Although it's uncommon to include a photograph in a printed résumé, many people include a high-quality business-attire photo in their e-portfolio site. However, don't include your photo in the header that appears on every

Figure M4.12

A Sample e-Portfolio Home Page



600 × 350-pixel 3 × 3 table used for safe browsing

page of the site, since that would appear egotistical. Again, it's a good idea to include links to the other pages of your site in the heading.

Page content is displayed between the header and footer, often with a menu bar down the left-hand side. Since you're developing an e-portfolio site, your objective statement, a description of your dream job, or a summary of skills can be effective home page content. Avoid uninformative text such as "Welcome to My e-Portfolio." Overall, your home page should be both inviting and informative.

**DOCUMENT THE SITE DESIGN** After designing your home page, you should have a good idea of how to segment and link (organize) your remaining e-portfolio content. Ideally, you should create logical groupings of content so that you have no more than eight links on your home page. For example, you could create a résumé page that in turn links to your presentation, PDF, and ASCII résumés. Similarly, you should provide a gallery page with links to your work.

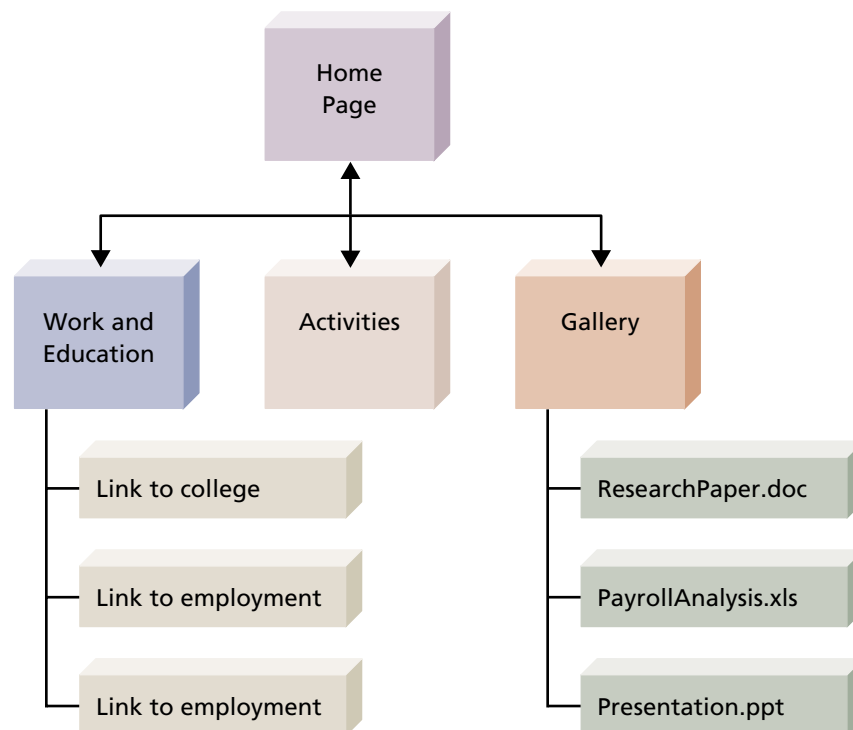
Be sure that your Web site segments account for all of your gallery content and all résumé file formats (including HTML) before developing a navigational or hierarchy chart. The navigational chart will document the content of each page and how it's linked to the other pages of the site. You'll use it to determine the content and links to place on each page during development and then to test each link once you build the site.

The various résumé formats (PDF, presentation, and ASCII) that you've already developed should be placed on the Web as is, so that potential employers have access to all formats. The navigation chart makes this distinction by including the file extension (.TXT, .DOC, and so on) that identifies the file format. You can also place much of the content of your gallery in their native formats, since your goal is to demonstrate your skills.

Links using the anchor `<A HREF="filename">` tag can link to all of these file formats. We don't recommend that you provide links from these documents back to your e-portfolio site, since your site viewers will most likely save them. The navigation chart shows a link to these non-HTML files, but no return link.

Figure M4.13

Sample e-Portfolio  
Navigation Chart



## Preparing Web Content

Use the navigation chart first to develop and link each page of your site. Begin by placing your existing résumé and gallery files in a site folder and then create an abbreviated HTML document for each HTML Web site page in the same folder. Each abbreviated HTML page should contain a word or two that describes what the page will hold once you fully develop it. You'll use these "dummy" pages to test your links on each page as you finish developing them.

### HTML VERSUS GENERATED CODE

You can develop the HTML for your e-portfolio Web pages with a simple text editor such as Notepad or with Web authoring software such as Microsoft FrontPage or Macromedia Dreamweaver. The biggest advantage of Web authoring software is that it will generally provide a WYSIWYG ("What you see is what you get") interface and speed the coding process.

Although Web authoring software can simplify many tasks, there may be a learning curve to become efficient in their use. Additionally, Web authoring software can generate unnecessary code, making it more difficult for you to make manual modifications and slowing page load time. Sometimes the Web site management portion of this software can introduce errors in Web page links through the default settings and assumptions. In general, we believe it's a good idea to get comfortable with some basic HTML before using Web authoring software so that you're familiar enough with the code to read it and apply simple changes manually.

### FILE TRANSFER PROTOCOL (FTP)

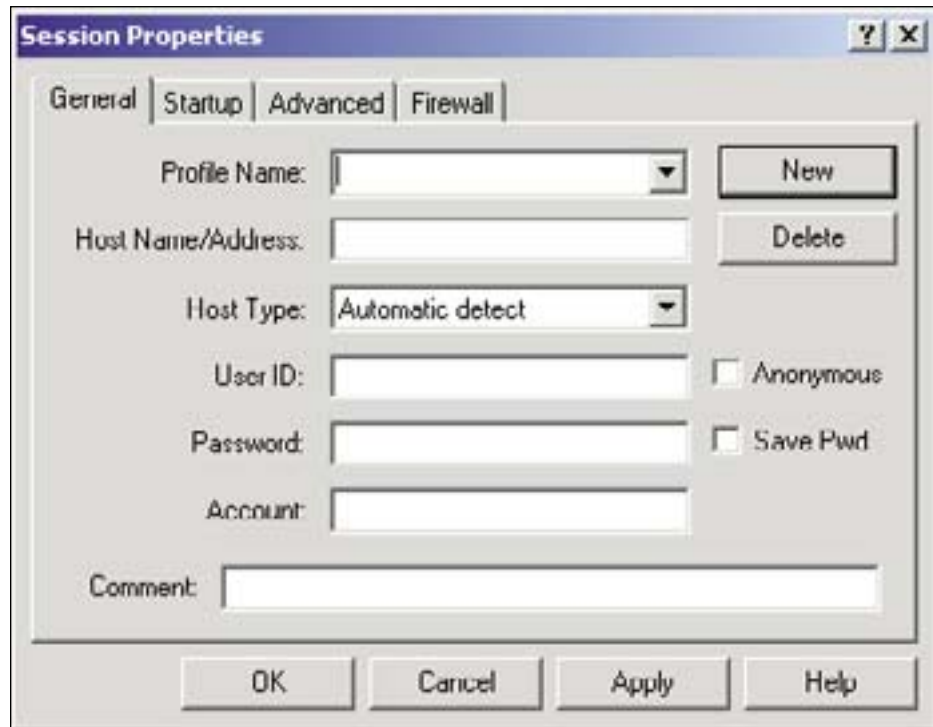
After you've constructed and tested your site, you'll need to move the files to your Web space on a server so that they will be available to anyone on the Internet. The software used to move files between computers is called an FTP (file transfer protocol) client. If you do not already have FTP software, you'll need to download and install it. You can download WS\_FTP LE (Learning Edition) from Download.com ([www.download.com](http://www.download.com)) at no charge for educational use.

In order to FTP the files for your site, you'll need an account on the Web server. Your account information is used to set up the FTP client so that it will connect to the Web server. Most FTP clients require:

- *Profile name.* A name you select to identify this connection
- *Host name/address.* The name of the server that will host your site—for example, "[agora.cair.du.edu](http://agora.cair.du.edu)"
- *Host type.* Whatever your Web host indicates; if you don't know, "Auto Detect" almost always works
- *User ID.* Your user name, in most cases the name you use to log into your normal Web host account to check e-mail and surf the Web
- *Password.* Normally the same password you use to access the Internet

When you've successfully connected to your server, you'll be able to transfer files between your local drive (usually C:) and the server's drive. WS\_FTP and similar products have a Windows-like environment. The left window contains the files on your local computer. You can click to navigate to the folder containing the files to be transferred. The right window displays folders and files in your account on the server.

Figure M4.14  
WS\_FTP Setup



File transfers can be accomplished in ASCII or binary format. If your FTP client has an Auto setting, use it; otherwise, select ASCII for text files such as your HTML pages and ASCII résumé, and binary for graphics and zip files. Most Web server accounts will contain a folder named `public_html`. All files that will be publicly available from the Internet must be placed in this folder. Open `public_html` and then drag and drop files as you would to copy from drive to drive in Microsoft Windows.

After you've placed all your e-portfolio files on the Web server, connect to the Internet and test each link. The URL (uniform resource locator or address) of your site is usually of the form `host address/~accountname/file`, for example [www.du.edu/~mewells/MyPage.htm](http://www.du.edu/~mewells/MyPage.htm). Remember that naming your opening page `index.htm` allows you to omit the filename in the URL and that Web filenames are usually case-sensitive.

Most schools now provide Web space for their students. If this is the case at your school, we recommend that you contact your school's technology support department to learn more about your Web space, file naming conventions, and how to perform the FTP process.

### THINGS TO WATCH FOR

A word of caution: it's critical that you test your Web site multiple times and from multiple platforms. Statistics gathered in April 2002 indicate that 82 percent of people browsing the Web use Microsoft Internet Explorer.<sup>4</sup> That being the case, 18 percent of your audience is using another Web browser. In addition, about five percent of Internet users have a Macintosh. View your site in multiple versions of Internet Explorer and Netscape Communicator to get a feel for how most people will see it.

It's also best to develop your site in its own folder to make it easier to move. The folder should contain all HTML pages and graphics (including backgrounds) from your site.

Move your site (all pages and graphics) to another computer and test it again. Often links that work on your development computer may not work when pages are moved.

These are called broken links and you should definitely repair them before placing your site on a Web server. Testing on multiple computers will also let you see colour and resolution variances that your viewers will experience.

Finally, when you place your site on a Web server, test it again. Most Web servers use the UNIX operating system. UNIX is case-sensitive and prefers filenames without spaces or special characters (such as these: !@#\$%^&\*). Microsoft Windows is not case-sensitive and accepts filenames with spaces. This is an important difference, because Web sites that work on your local computer running a version of Windows may not work in a UNIX environment. The usual cause is the filename. For example, in Windows a link to Page2.htm will work when the file is actually named page2.htm; in UNIX it will not (case-sensitivity being the issue).

That ends our presentation of how to build a job search e-portfolio. If you've been working through the projects in this Module and you complete the assignments and exercises we provide below, you'll be well on your way to developing an effective e-portfolio.

As a final note, we highly recommend that you have several people—including classmates, your instructor, and people from your school's career placement centre—view your Web site before you FTP to the Web for everyone else to see. An effectively designed and well-worded e-portfolio can in fact help you find a really great job. On the other hand, an ineffectively designed and purely worded e-portfolio can be disastrous.

## Summary: Student Learning Outcomes Revisited

- 1. Describe the types of electronic résumés and when each is appropriate.** The four types of electronic résumés are ASCII, presentation, PDF, and HTML. An ASCII résumé, also called a scannable or plain-text résumé, is submitted in print or electronically to organizations using skills-extraction software. A presentation résumé is created using a word processor to create an attractive one-to-two-page summary of your qualifications. This résumé can be mailed to organizations not using skills-extraction software or personally handed to an interviewer. A PDF résumé is a version of your presentation résumé that can be delivered electronically (by e-mail or Web page link) without impacting formatting. An HTML résumé is formatted for Web delivery. This résumé format should be presented as a job search e-portfolio that includes a gallery demonstrating your skills.
- 2. Discuss networking strategies you can use during a job search.** Because up to 80 percent of jobs are never advertised, networking is critical to a successful job search. Unpublished jobs are called the hidden job market. Networking involves contacting people and asking them to help in you to

uncover hidden jobs. Developing a “30-second commercial” eases first-contact stress and avoids wasting your contact's valuable time. Both electronic and face-to-face contacts are necessary to optimize your job opportunities. Strategies involve creating a contact list, setting a weekly contact goal, tracking responses, and following up.

- 3. Explain how self-assessment is valuable to résumé writing.** Employers want to hire employees who are focused. Employees want a job that not only produces an income but is satisfying. Both of these goals require that you take a careful look at yourself before launching a job search or writing a résumé. A good self-assessment will clarify the skills you have to offer an employer, the work environment that best suits you, and employment qualities that lead to your satisfaction.
- 4. Use the Internet to research career opportunities and potential employers.** The World Wide Web offers a wide array of tools that can help you locate potential jobs, be aware of the work environment in your chosen career area, learn what your skills are worth, and understand what

employers want. Effective career research should make use of area-specific search engines, job boards, newsgroups, media sites, government statistics, and employer sites. By combining the information provided by these resources, you should be able to get a complete picture of the employment market you wish to enter and how well your skills are suited to that market.

5. **Develop powerful job search e-portfolio content.** Powerful job search e-portfolio content is employer-centred and documents the skills that will make you an attractive employee. Quality research and self-assessment are critical to developing content centred on the skills employers want and the benefits these skills provide in an easy-to-use Web site. All traditional résumé content should be developed with these requirements in mind in a manner that does not appear self-centred. Additional e-portfolio content to demonstrate your skills is included as a gallery for potential employees to peruse.
6. **Document effective Web site structure and design components.** Documenting effective Web site structure involves segmenting site content

outlining what will be presented on each site page. A navigation chart is developed showing how the various pages of the site will be linked together. Every page of the site should use the same design components outlining the who, what, when, and where of the site. The use of a colour scheme and standard content in the header and footer of each page can help to create a site identity.

7. **Create a job search e-portfolio Web site and place it on an Internet server.** A job search e-portfolio consists of anything that will help a potential employer evaluate your potential as an employee. Use the site navigation chart to develop HTML pages displaying traditional résumé content and linking to your ASCII résumé, PDF résumé, and a gallery of works that demonstrate your skills to allow the evaluator to see how effective you could be in their organization. Once all of your content (HTML pages, supporting documents, résumés, and graphics) has been stored in a folder and tested locally, it can be moved to a Web server. This transfer is accomplished using FTP client software. Once all the files are on the server, the site should be tested again.

## Key Terms and Concepts

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browser-safe colours, 21  
 directory search engine, 6  
 electronic job market, 2  
 electronic portfolio (e-portfolio),  
 12  
 extraction engine, 12

hidden job market, 3  
 home page, 23  
 mailing list, 4  
 portable document format  
 (PDF), 15  
 presentation résumé, 14

scannable résumé (ASCII résumé,  
 plain-text résumé), 12  
 skill words, 6  
 true search engine, 6

## Short-Answer Questions

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1. Use of the electronic job market benefits employers by providing constant access to a worldwide pool of potential employees, reducing search costs, and decreasing search times. Discuss the difficulties this market imposes on potential employees and benefits they can gain by successfully competing here.
2. Visit the job board Monster.ca ([www.monster.ca](http://www.monster.ca)) and describe the site content. Is this a site that you would recommend for first-time job hunters? Why or why not?
3. Outline your plan for tapping into the unpublished job market. Include the methods of contact that you will employ, the number of contacts to be made each week, and how you will follow up.
4. What factors do you believe contribute to 80 percent of available jobs never being publicized? How does this complicate the job search?
5. At first glance résumés are just a list of work and educational experiences. If that were the case, one résumé documenting everything you have

- ever done should be sufficient. Why is this approach ineffective?
6. Identify some of the skills you have to offer an employer by listing your top five lifetime achievements. Next to each achievement list the skills that allowed you to succeed. Write a statement including at least three of these skills demonstrating how they would benefit an employer.
  7. Identify attributes that make organizations attractive to you by listing your hobbies and recreational activities. What attracts you to these activities? What similar aspects would you look for in a work environment?
  8. Identify your goals in seeking a job by completing the following statements using work values. To clarify, "Make lots of money" is not a work value. Work values include work alone, be creative, be recognized, help others, gain new knowledge, compete, and other phrases that describe what you value or enjoy when working.
    - a. I enjoy work that enables me to:
    - b. I least like to work when:
    - c. I am most productive when:
    - d. I am least productive when:
  9. Identify the type of work environment that will best suit you by evaluating your past work and school experiences. What type of people do you most enjoy working with? Do these people bring out the best in you? What types of people annoy you? Are you able to effectively work with people who annoy you?
  10. Why is it important to include job and industry-specific skill words in the content of your résumé? How do you know what skill words to include? Where do you put these skill words?
  11. What arguments can you make to support the following statement? "If you are only going to create one résumé format, it should be ASCII."
  12. When describing your work and educational experience in a résumé, you are asked to use action words, include skill words, focus on benefits and outcomes for the employer, and keep it short. Pick a course that you have or are taking and describe it in a manner appropriate for your résumé.
  13. Discuss the significance of the PDF file format in the Internet and World Wide Web community.
  14. Why is the gallery of a job search e-portfolio as important as a well-written and researched résumé?
  15. Why is a Web page divided into header, content, and footer zones? What content is appropriate for each?
  16. How does the audience and purpose of a Web site impact how it is designed? What important audience preferences should you consider for a job search e-portfolio?
  17. Discuss the differences between a print document and a Web page. How do these differences impact Web page design? How do you determine how much content to put on a single Web page?
  18. What elements of a Web site home page should be carried through in the rest of the site pages? Why?
  19. Provide arguments that support the use of browser-safe colours in all Web page development. Now consider the arguments against using browser-safe colours. How do you determine whether to use browser-safe colours for your site?
  20. Explain the importance of viewing a newly developed Web site on multiple computers using a variety of browsers. Why should a Web site that works on your computer be retested after it is placed on a Web server?

## Assignments and Exercises

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1. **DESCRIBE YOUR CAREER.** Using the research methods we've outlined in this Module, locate information about your career. Document your findings in a paper being sure to include job title synonyms, educational standards, work environment, job forecast statistics, normal work week, and any other pertinent information. Cite your sources.

2. **VISIT INDUSTRY WEB SITES.** Using the research methods we've outlined in the Module, locate and visit at least three business Web sites in the industry you've selected. For each site document the page layout, the colours, and the formality of the site. Did you find press and news releases? If so, what did they tell you about the company? Did you find recruitment pages? If so, what types of positions are available? What skill words did you find on these sites that should be included in your résumé?
3. **ENTRY-LEVEL JOB POSTINGS.** Visit CollegeGrad.com ([www.collegegrad.com](http://www.collegegrad.com)) and search for entry-level job postings in your area of interest. How many postings did you find? Are you qualified, or will you be qualified for the available positions when you complete your current educational goals? Are the listings for a geographic location that you would consider? What skill words should you include in your résumés to be considered for these positions?
4. **RESEARCH RÉSUMÉ FORMATS.** Use a search engine to locate at least two Web sites offering information on how to write and organize a résumé. What are the alternative ways to format the work and educational experience sections of your résumé? Which organization will work best for you? Why?
5. **FIND WEB-FRIENDLY BACKGROUNDS.** Use a search engine to locate at least two Web sites offering free backgrounds. Download three backgrounds that would be appropriate for your e-portfolio. What are the qualities of these backgrounds that make them a good choice? What colours would work best for text, unvisited links, and visited links with each background?
6. **FINALIZE YOUR RÉSUMÉS.** If you have compiled your résumés as you completed this Module, review them for presentation effectiveness and content. If you didn't, do so now. Start by building all of the content in an unformatted document and then create ASCII, presentation, and PDF versions. Unless you have sufficient business experience to use a Summary of Qualifications section, use an Objective statement that includes the job title, industry, your skill words, and the benefit you could provide the hiring organization. In addition to the Objective, include Work, Education, and References sections. Other sections can be included to suit your background and career. Solicit feedback from at least one classmate.
7. **SELECT CONTENT FOR YOUR E-PORTFOLIO GALLERY.** Look through the files on your computer for work that represents your current skills and could be of interest to a potential employer. Create a list of at least three files that would be appropriate for a job search e-portfolio along with a short description of the skills the files exhibit. What other skills should you develop documents to demonstrate? What types of documents would best showcase these skills?
8. **DOCUMENT YOUR E-PORTFOLIO SITE.** Review all of the content that will make up your job search e-portfolio and determine how you want to segment it for Web presentation. Create a navigation chart for your planned site. Use arrows to indicate how the pages will be linked. Be sure to include hyperlinks to each of your résumé formats and all of your gallery content. Include notes next to each box representing an HTML page indicating the content it will contain. Sketch the layout for your home page. Note what content you will include in your header and footer. List the hyperlinks that will provide access to the rest of your site. Document the formatting elements that you will apply including colours, fonts, and graphics.
9. **SEARCH THE WORLD WIDE WEB.** Use search tools to locate e-portfolios that have already been posted on the Web. How many e-portfolios did you locate? How many of these e-portfolios were designed for a job search? Pick the best e-portfolio you located and critique its content and design.
10. **BUILD YOUR E-PORTFOLIO SITE.** Use either a text editor or Web authoring software to build the HTML pages of your job search e-portfolio Web site. Do not use office productivity software such as a word processor. Include a minimum of three HTML pages, your ASCII résumé, your PDF résumé, and three gallery pages using another document format such as Word or PowerPoint.

## Notes

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1. Joseph McCool, "Adventures in Online Recruiting," *Industry Standard*, June 12, 2000, available <[www.thestandard.com/article/display/0,1151,15665-0,00.html](http://www.thestandard.com/article/display/0,1151,15665-0,00.html)>, accessed October 30, 2002.
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