Preparing for a Web Development Career

Prepared for a husky web developer aspirant

Prepared by Ishaan Shete

Date: November 25th, 2024

Table of Contents

A web development career requires lots of knowledge and experience. Preparing early on ensures a smooth transition into the industry. This work covers the best practices to prepare for a web development career.

Building your skills

This section goes over the best practices to acquire industry-level skills in web development.

Building technical skills

In a web development career, you are expected to be an expert with fundamental data structures, OOP, front end programming, and API integration. These are the basis for impromptu problem solving. AI tools like ChatGPT can help but only with pre-solved problems fed to its algorithm.

Learn and regularly practice the essential skills for web development, like languages and frameworks. This helps you become an expert and make programs that fit all user specifications. You can learn these skills in courses offered by your college and through external sources like Coursera. [2]

Building practical skills

Knowing technical skills is one thing and being able to utilize them in the workplace is another. Even if you know how to code in Python, it is not useful if you cannot deploy solutions.

Learn how to apply technical skills for real-world scenarios. For example, after learning programming languages, learn technologies like AWS to make your solution more accessible. You can learn these skills in clubs and organizations such as the Software Engineers Club.
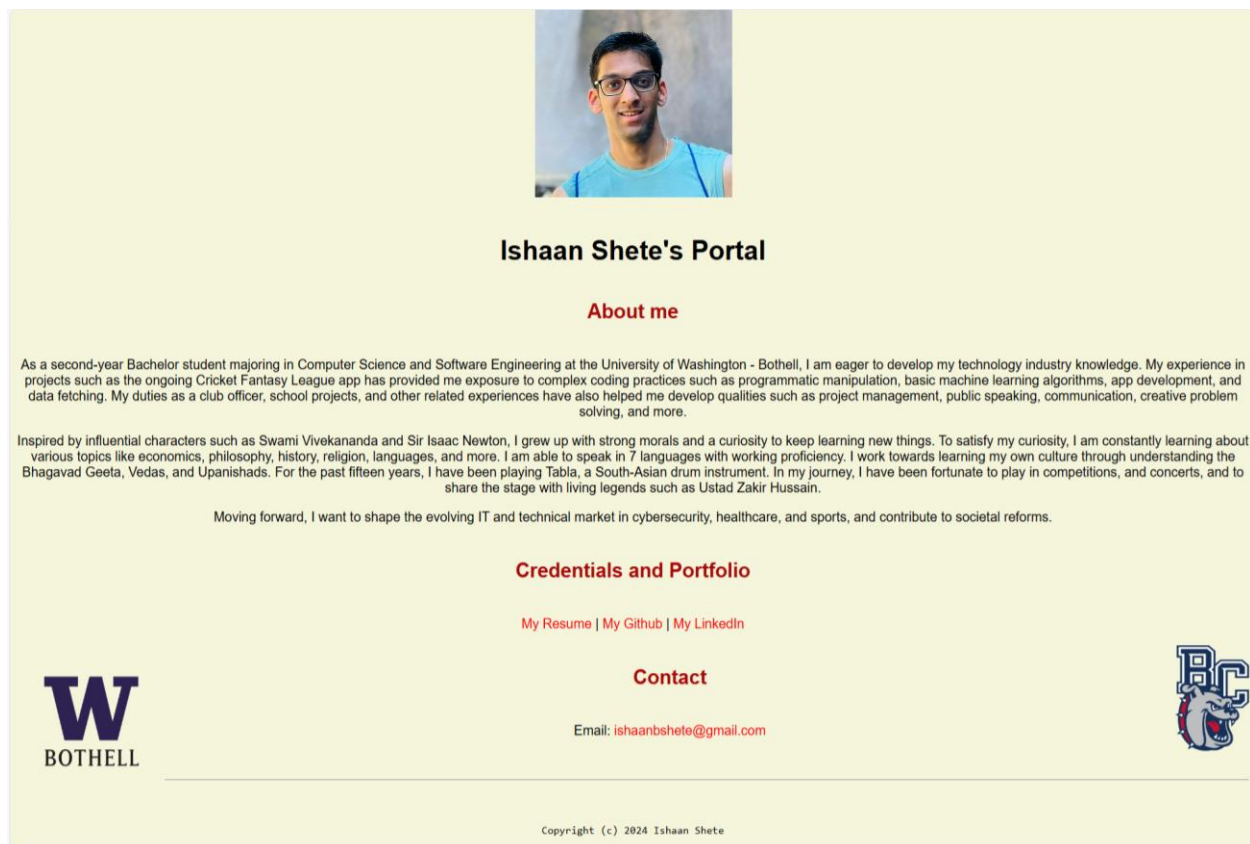
Building professional skills

With your foundations of web development solid, learn how to communicate thoughts and ideas professionally and effectively (i.e. emails and presentations) because that improves job performance and helps climb the corporate ladder.

Communicating professionally adds credibility to your work and ensures proper conflict resolution [3]. You can learn and practice professional skills during hackathons, through internships, by talking to LinkedIn connections, and by attending or hosting professional events.

Crafting your portfolio

This section covers the best practices to create your portfolio, where all your experience and interests are showcased.

Figure 1: Example of a Portfolio Website

© Image by Ishaan Shete

Creating advanced projects

Employers look for candidates who exceed the minimum requirements. Candidates with dynamic portfolios show a broad understanding of technologies and can easily adapt to any work environment.

Apart from coursework, work on personal or professional projects to practice applying your skills. Challenge yourself by working on difficult projects that require multiple technologies. Make sure the projects are purpose-driven, otherwise they have no use.

Compiling your experience

Recruiters look for a candidate's skills and interests. Apart from your LinkedIn and GitHub account, this information is generally showcased in a personal portfolio website. A portfolio website proves your development skills and triggers great conversation in interviews. [4]

Compile your projects, resume, interests, and more in your portfolio website. It can be hosted for free on GitHub or using a paid service. Add creative UI and a surprise functional element to portray expertise in web development. To meet its purpose of "sharing your story", have as much information as you would like to share with the public. See Figure 1 for an example.

Applying for a job

This section contains the best practices to follow in preparation for your job application process.

Understanding the company values

Before applying to a company, understanding your responsibilities and being familiar with the work environment helps you know what is expected from you. Getting used to the work expectations beforehand makes transitioning in the workplace smoother.

The last thing you want is for the workplace to feel like a prison. To avoid that, know your workplace expectations before applying for it. Talk to employees and check for insights on websites such as Indeed.

Getting a referral

Referrals play a big role in getting your job application sent to the second round. It also gives you an opportunity to make or strengthen connections with existing employees who can guide you in your career.

Reach out to family, friends, and other connections in the company for a referral when applying there. If you do not know anyone, don't hesitate to approach new LinkedIn connections with a simple "Could you please refer me for (this) position?" message, says a software engineer at Microsoft. Most people are nice and refer you right away. [5]

References

[1] Enterprix.us, 2024. https://enterprix.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/web-design-element1-51-1536x1289.png (accessed Nov. 22, 2024).

[2] Geeks, "What is full stack development ?," *GeeksforGeeks*, Jun. 26, 2019. https://www.geeksforgeeks.org/what-is-full-stack-development/. (accessed Oct. 16, 2024).

[3] UW, "UW Human Resources," *Washington.edu*, 2024. https://uwhires.admin.washington.edu/ENG/Candidates/default.cfm?szCategory=jobprofile&szOrderID=235761 (accessed Oct. 16, 2024).

[4] "How can you prepare for a web development career after completing a learning path?," Linkedin.com, 2023. https://www.linkedin.com/advice/3/how-can-you-prepare-web-development-career-after (accessed Nov. 22, 2024).

[5] Jasani, Kevin. Personal interview. Nov. 1, 2024

[Word Count 693]
From purpose to the "Getting a referral" subsection