

# INTERVIEW Q & A

*Interview synopsis:* My interview with Kristen Byers made it apparent to me that establishing your professional identity happens with the help of your portfolio and website. Choosing what goes into your portfolio is a mix of personal preference, pride, and careful thought. It also does not have to be strictly professional. Just showcase your talents and something unexpected might come from it. Also, feel free not to share *everything* with everybody. It's fine to keep things like your templates to yourself if you've put a lot of thought into them and do not want people taking them willy nilly.

Q1: What was the hardest part of your website to make/design?

Kristen A1: I actually had a really hard time choosing a color scheme that I felt represented me and my work. I am really finicky about typography too, so it took me forever to select fonts for my header and body text. Also, selecting projects as a student was tough (it's easier now that I have a fairly large body of work to choose from).

Q2: How did you choose what to put in/leave off your website?

Kristen A2: I purposely do not have a PDF copy of my resume available on the web. I created a resume layout that I am particularly proud of and I don't want others "borrowing" it. I think it helps me look unique to employers when I do submit my resume to them as part of a formal job application. Also, if someone is really curious, all of that same information can be found on my LinkedIn profile, so it's not like my job history and experience isn't available somewhere on the web.

Q3: How did you choose what goes in your portfolio? Was there any special criteria?

Kristen A3: Only projects that I am particularly proud of earn a place in my portfolio. I also don't showcase projects that I wouldn't want to create as part of a paid freelance gig. So for example, if I worked on a web design project but I really disliked working with the organization's content management system, I would not put that project in my portfolio if I didn't care to work with that CMS again.

Q4: How did you address your portfolio in interviews? Did your interviewers have any questions that surprised you?

Kristen A4: Usually the interviewers are the first ones to mention my portfolio (not me). Generally if someone has seen my resume or Googled me, they have come across it. Interviewers often ask me what my favorite portfolio piece is (and then follow up by asking why it's my favorite). The only thing that has ever surprised me is when interviewers go out of their way to examine my other web presences and mention something I wrote about in my blog or on Twitter.

Q5: Have you received any constructive feedback on either your portfolio or Website during/after interviews? (or just in general) If so, what was the feedback?

Kristen A5: Actually, no. I think my portfolio shows just enough about what I can do to help the interviewers formulate follow up questions about me and my work.

Q6: Is there any advice you have for me (the newbie) in general when it comes to my portfolio?

Kristen A6: Think outside the box in terms of items that could be included in your portfolio. Like I mentioned, as a student it can be hard to select your first set of portfolio pieces because you might think you don't have a lot of work to choose from. Consider things you worked on outside of class. Maybe you designed t-shirts or marketing materials for a student club or team. I think it's totally fair game to include those items in your portfolio.