

PORTRFOIO CURATION FRAMEWORK

How to Show Work That Gets You Hired

THE PROBLEM

Most AI portfolios:

- Random collection of cool images
- No cohesion or story
- Showcases tool, not taste
- Says "I can make AI images"

Winning portfolios:

- Curated, intentional
- Clear point of view
- Shows problem-solving
- Says "I can solve your visual problems"

THE 5-PROJECT PORTFOLIO

You only need 5 strong projects. Each should:

- Be a complete brand/concept
- Show 10-15 cohesive images
- Include context (brief, process, outcome)
- Demonstrate different capability

PROJECT TYPES TO INCLUDE

1. Product/E-Commerce

Shows you can create commercial-ready product imagery.

- Hero shots
- Lifestyle context
- Detail close-ups
- Packaging

2. Brand Identity

Shows you can build cohesive visual systems.

- Full brand concept
- Multiple touchpoints
- Consistent style
- Real-world application

3. Lifestyle/Editorial

Shows taste and art direction skills.

- Fashion, food, or hospitality
- Editorial quality
- Mood and atmosphere
- Storytelling

4. Technical Excellence

Shows range and capability.

- Photorealistic
- Challenging subjects
- Specific industry (architecture, automotive)
- Demonstrates skill

5. Personal/Experimental

Shows creative vision and taste.

- Your unique style
 - What you'd create with no brief
 - Personality and point of view
 - Memorable and distinctive
-

CASE STUDY FORMAT

For each project:

1. Hero Image

The single best image that represents the project.

2. Brief

What was the challenge?

- "Create a visual identity for a specialty coffee brand"
- "Develop product photography for a skincare launch"

3. Approach

How did you solve it?

- Visual references you drew from
- Style decisions you made
- Key prompt strategies

4. Gallery

10-15 images showing:

- Range of applications
- Consistency of style
- Attention to detail
- Complete thinking

5. Impact (if applicable)

What happened?

- Client feedback
 - Metrics
 - Outcomes
-

CURATION RULES

Rule 1: Less Is More

5 strong projects > 50 random images Remove anything that doesn't represent your best work.

Rule 2: Show Range

Different industries, styles, and applications. Prove you can adapt to different needs.

Rule 3: Complete > Perfect

Full brand concepts > single stunning images. Shows you can think in systems.

Rule 4: Recent > Old

Only show work from last 6-12 months. AI capabilities change fast.

Rule 5: Tell Stories

Context makes work memorable. Don't just show images; explain decisions.

WHAT TO CUT

Remove If:

- It's not your best work
- It doesn't represent what you want to do
- It's older than 12 months
- It doesn't fit with other work
- You can't explain the thinking

Keep If:

- You're proud of it
 - It shows unique capability
 - Clients respond to it
 - It represents your direction
 - It demonstrates problem-solving
-

PORTFOLIO STRUCTURE

Option 1: Website

Best for serious clients and authority.

Pages:

- Home (3-5 hero images)
- Work (project case studies)
- About (your story, approach)
- Contact (simple form)

Platforms:

- Squarespace (easy, professional)
- Webflow (more custom)
- Cargo (creative-focused)
- Notion (simple, free)

Option 2: Behance/Dribbble

Good for discoverability.

Best Practices:

- Complete case studies
- Regular posting
- Engage with community
- Link to full portfolio

Option 3: Social Media

Instagram or TikTok as portfolio.

Best Practices:

- Highlight pinned posts
- Consistent grid
- Story highlights by category
- Clear bio with CTA

Option 4: PDF Portfolio

For direct outreach.

Structure:

- Cover with contact
- 5 project spreads
- About page
- Contact page
- Keep under 20 pages

PRESENTATION TIPS

Show Process

Before/after, iterations, thinking.

Add Context

Brief, constraints, decisions made.

Include Mockups

Show work in real-world context.

Maintain Consistency

Your portfolio should feel like a brand.

Update Regularly

Refresh every 2-3 months minimum.

PORTFOLIO CHECKLIST

Content

- 5 complete projects
- 10-15 images per project
- Case study for each
- Mix of industries
- Recent work (6-12 months)

Presentation

- Professional platform
- Mobile-optimized
- Fast loading
- Easy navigation
- Clear contact info

Branding

- Consistent style
 - Your personality shows
 - Clear positioning
 - Professional bio
 - Good headshot (optional)
-

EXAMPLES BY POSITIONING

"I do brand identity"

- 5 complete brand concepts
- Various industries
- Show full systems
- Emphasize consistency

"I do product photography"

- E-commerce sets
- Campaign imagery
- Lifestyle context shots

- Technical product details

"I do everything"

- Diverse project types
- Range of styles
- Emphasis on adaptability
- Jack of trades, master of taste

"I specialize in [industry]"

- Deep in one vertical
 - Multiple projects in niche
 - Industry-specific knowledge
 - Premium positioning
-

QUICK WINS

This Week

1. Audit current work
2. Identify your 5 best projects
3. Write case study for each

This Month

1. Create missing project types
2. Build or update website
3. Get testimonials

Ongoing

1. Update quarterly
 2. Remove old work
 3. Add new projects
-

This framework is from LOOPWORKER. For more resources, follow @loopworker.