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*Background*

Prior to this class my experience with HTML and CSS had been only casual, and I had engaged in little actual programming of it. On a few occasions I had used Chrome Inspect to look at various web elements but never delved too deeply into it. My previous classes in C++ gave me a basic understanding of coding language but this was over 15 years ago, and the language elements are distinctly different.

*Learning & Testing*

My first stop in the learning process was the HTML Cheat Sheet from freelancer.com provided in the Resources section of the assignment page. I wanted to get an idea of the basic terminology of the HTML elements before jumping into any texts or programming. This was quite helpful, but the descriptions were not very long.

I moved next to the video tutorials from Lynda.com and watched the videos from the first three sections. I felt at this point I had a decent grasp of how HTML worked, and I set to writing some basic code in a notepad file and testing it in my browser. I laid out what I thought would be a simple but effective webpage at this point and began attempting to write the code. I was able to create a basic header with an image link with little trouble. When I attempted to start putting in the navbar I realized just how much more I needed to learn.

I began reading through the Duckett text and found the chapter on images especially helpful, however the best resource for teaching myself how all the code worked was the w3.com sections. Both the HTML and especially CSS sections were beyond helpful. I went back to the lynda.com video tutorials at this point to get more knowledge of styling elements. The w3.com examples provided excellent testing of these elements but the lynnda.com videos were much better at explaining how they interacted with other elements.

I ran into my biggest problems in the body of the site, where I wanted to use a system of tiles or image boxes as links to the information pages. I began with a grid layout that looked especially dull and wasn’t large enough for all the info I wanted to provide on or below the image link. I moved next to an image row which didn’t look any better and was even harder to control in terms of styling. Browsing the different layout styles in w3.com I came across a profile columns section that provided the layout I desired. While it was intended for short personal profiles on a company’s website it fit my purposes as intended. Instead of individual profiles, each of my columns described a section of the site pertaining to related services.

Initially I was testing most of the code through w3.com but once I began incorporating more images into the site I moved to testing everything through my browser. Without access to the local images, continuing to use this up to now essential tool became less effective. The styling attributes for the images and columns wouldn’t be properly rendered without access to the local files.

*Conclusion*

My results were mixed in terms of which parts of my layout turned out as intended. The header and navbar are largely what I was hoping but I will need to play around with more styling attributes to give it a bit sleeker, less chunky look. The body of the page diverges the most from what I intended. Originally there were to be 5-6 boxes or tiles of image links but I eventually consolidated these into the 3 profile options. I will need to read up more in the elements of CSS to improve my styling options and give the site an overall more professional look.

*Revisions*

After the first draft submission I decided the change the border size and font size of the header above the navigation bar. It was far too large and forced much of the page content farther down the page than necessary. The heading, navigation bar, and background color elements were moved from the HTML files to a styles.css file. The buttons that stated ‘More Information’ were changed to ‘Contact Information’, since that is what people will be coming to the site for. The profile images were made taller, as they appeared a bit mashed in the first version.

https://brum0047.github.io/4662Project-First-Draft/index.html