Showcase Your Skills and Values

You're an *exceptional designer* and it's your job to show that off! Bragging about your accomplishments and strengths can be awkward at best, but it's important to get past the discomfort to showcase your skills, values, and personality.

Complete this exercise to pinpoint what your skills, values, and more are so you can incorporate your identity in your portfolio and case studies.

1. Answer some questions about yourself.

1. What is an activity or idea I am passionate about?
2. List three things I value.
3. What are my biggest strengths? What do I do well?
4. What do I want to be recognized for? What have I been recognized for? What is an accomplishment I am proud of?

2. Ask others, like your friends, peers, co-workers, and clients, to answer questions about you.

1. What is an activity or idea you think I am <u>passionate</u> about?
2. What are some things you think I <u>value</u>?
3. What <u>strengths</u> do you think I have?
4. What makes me <u>stand out</u> from other people you know or work with?

3. Compare the responses from the first section to the second section. Summarize what they say about you as a person and designer.

Use this template: "[Your name] is a designer who is known for ___"

For example, "Navi is a designer who is known for their human-centered approach and illustrations that create more inclusive communities."

Begin Your Case Study: Create an Outline

What is the story you want to tell about this project?

For example, "In this project I solved the users' problem of not knowing how to participate in a research study by making the study's online dashboard more actionable and creating custom illustrations that explain the value of the program."

Outline

Here is an example of a way to outline your case study. Customize the sections based on your story.

Section Name	Contents	Examples
Overview	Your role in the project and the timeline (could include multiple roles)	Roles: UX researcher, UX writer, Visual designer, Interaction designer, Motion designer, Project manager, Illustrator, Brand Identity designer
	Brief list of challenges and/or pain points	"To improve the user experience of the study enrollment process to engage participants To reduce drop-off and enroll more people in the study to increase data for research"
	Brief list of outcomes or the most important outcome	"The updated ARC enrollment process and portal makes it easy and engaging for participants who are living with ALS to contribute data about their disease experience."
	Project overview	1-2 sentences that give an introduction to the project and your involvement
	Link to the live product	
Problem	Problem statement	"More than 800 participants interact with the study's portal one or more times. The inefficient enrollment process and counterintuitive participant portal deter some people from completing their enrollment or consistently engaging with the program. Without intuitive platforms that explain the

		program and its benefits, the program loses valuable participants and data."
	Context to set up your story	"Researchers don't know enough about ALS to invent effective treatments. That's why the ARC Study was established to learn as much about the fatal disease as possible from people with ALS."
Research	Affinity diagrams	Imagery of sticky notes from a workshop
	Insights	Summarize what you learned from research
	Persona	Photo of a person, their name, a quote
	User stories	Text that pairs with your personas
	Journey maps	A table of a journey map
Design Process	Information architecture	A diagram
	Competitive analysis	Highlight details pulled from an analysis
	Paper wireframes	Photos or a video of your drawings
	Paper prototypes	Photos of your drawings
	Digital wireframes	Screenshots of Figma
	Low-fi prototypes	Screenshots or a link to Figma
	User testing insights	A diagram or sticky notes
	Design decisions you made based on insights	Screenshots of your designs before and after usability studies with captions explaining changes you made
Solution	Summary of your solutions	2-3 sentences
	List of challenges (from the **Overview** section) with explanations of how you have designed for those challenges	"Challenge 1: **User friendly enrollment process** The redesigned enrollment process includes **multiple save points, a progress bar, audio and video options, and an always accessible sticky bottom navigation bar** that points you to an email address to get help."

	Prototypes illustrating your solutions	Screen recordings showing different flows of your prototypes
	Mockups or high-fi designs in context	Static images of your mobile app designs on a picture or illustration of a phone screen
	Any additional designed results	Sticker sheet, custom iconography, component library, custom illustrations, videos, animations, style guidelines
Takeaways	Quotes from users or stakeholders that illustrate results	"'The new dashboard is great and such an improvement! It's very simple and the changes were necessary' - Lori"
	Analytics or quantitative data that illustrate results	"The study's enrollment rate increased by 120% after the portal was updated"
	What did you learn?	"I learned that by designing with empathy AND by having fun while designing users will also be more engaged and willing to complete tasks."
	Next steps that provide examples of how the project could be iterated on	"Continue to intake user feedback from the research team, especially about the participant dashboard, and iterate on the designs to improve the experience."

KEY WORD BANK

User experience	Wireframes	User research
User's needs	Mockups	Usability testing/studies
Pain points	Prototypes	Launch
Usability	Iteration or iterative design	Responsive design
Equitable	Human-centered design	Gestalt principles
Foundational research	Accessible design	Information architecture
Design research	Inclusive design	Personas
Post-launch research	Equity-focused design	User stories
A/B testing	Ethical design	Use case
Card sorting	Value proposition	Happy path
Affinity diagram	Design thinking	Edge case
Low-fidelity ("low-fi")	Competitive analysis	User flow
High-fidelity ("High-fi")	Design sprints	Storyboard
Journey map	Stakeholders	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

Case Study Checklist and Feedback

First, go through the below checklist on your own. Next, ask at least two other people (co-workers, friends, family, etc.) to review your case study and answer some, if not all, of these questions.

☐ **Does your case study include the following elements?**
  - ☐ Your role in the project
  - ☐ A overview of the project
  - ☐ Problem statement
  - ☐ User research
  - ☐ Design process
  - ☐ Final polished designs (your solution)
  - ☐ Takeaways

☐ **Does your case study tell a story? Does it start with a problem(s) and work towards a solution(s)?**

☐ **Do you use terms that highlight your expertise but balance them in a way that is easy to understand and conversational?**

☐ **Do you explain imagery? Do you need to add captions or explanations?**

☐ **Is your case study engaging?**

☐ **Does your unique personality and perspective come through?**