Research Article / Araştırma Makalesi

RÉSUMÉ AND PORTFOLIO DESIGN IN DESIGNER PORTFOLIO COURSE RÉSUMÉ EVALUATIONS

TASARIMCI PORTFOLYOSUNDA ÖZ GEÇMİŞ VE PORTFOLYO TASARIMI DERSİ ÖZ GEÇMİŞ DEĞERLENDİRMELERİ

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Abstract
A résumé is a way for the designer to express his or her skills and experience. A creative résumé highlights the designer's unique talents and personal style. When recruiters evaluate candidates based on their résumés, a creative résumé stands out and can strike a favorable first impression. This is an opportunity to highlight the designer's creativity and design skills. Harmonious color palettes, layouts and graphic elements demonstrate the designer's communication skills. It is essential for designers to design their résumé in an informative, easy-to-read and eye-catching way, as this document is not only a job application form but also a design product. In this article, it is discussed why a designer's resume should be creative, and the resumes created by the students in the Portfolio Design course conducted by the researcher, as a result of their discovery and subjective evaluation of their knowledge and skills through the SWOT analysis method, are examined. In addition, the importance of the Portfolio Design course, a course in which design students learn to use their résumés to identify their career goals and highlight their experiences and skills, is emphasized.

Keywords: Résumé, Portfolio Design, Résumé Design, Visual Communication Design.

Öz
Öz geçmiş, tasarımcının kendi yeteneklerini ve deneyimlerini ifade etmesinin bir yoludur. Yaratıcı bir öz geçmiş, tasarımcının benzersiz yeteneklerini ve kişisel tarzını vurgular. İşverenler, öz geçmiş üzerinden adayları değerlendirirken, yaratıcı bir öz geçmiş dikkat çekmekte ve ilk izlenimde olumlu bir etki bırakabilmektedir. Bu, tasarımcının yaratıcılığını ve tasarım becerilerini öne çıkarmak için bir fırsattır. Uyumlu renk paletleri, düzenler ve grafik öğeler, tasarımcının iletişim becerilerini gösterir. Tasarımcıların öz geçmişlerinin bilgilendirici, okunması kolay ve dikkat çekici bir şekilde tasarlamaları önemlidir, çünkü bu belge sadece bir iş başvuru formu değil aynı zamanda bir tasarım ürünü olarak da nitelendirilmektedir. Bu makalede bir tasarımcının öz geçmişinin neden yaratıcı olması gerektiği tartışılmış olup araştırmacının yürüttüğü Portfolyo Tasarımı dersinde öğrencilerin bireysel SWOT analizi yöntemiyle bilgi -becerilerini keşfetmesi ve öznel olarak değerlendirmesi sonucu oluşturduğu öz geçmişler incelenmiştir. Bunlara ek olarak tasarım öğrencilerinin kariyer hedeflerini belirlemek, deneyimlerini ve yeteneklerini vurgulamak için öz geçmişlerini kullanmayı öğrendikleri bir ders olan Portfolyo Tasarımı dersinin önemi vurgulanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Öz geçmiş, Portfolyo Tasarımı, Öz Geçmiş Tasarımı, Görsel İletişim Tasarımı.

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary designers have to stand out not only for their technical skills but also for their creativity and experience. They need to effectively present their creativity and skills when applying for any job. In this context, designers should not only showcase their projects in their portfolios but also build a résumé that is a reflection of their creativity and professional development. This article aims to emphasize the importance of presenting a creative résumé in designer portfolios and to discuss the key elements for a successful presentation in this field.

The field of design is a dynamic one at the intersection of technological and aesthetic evolution. Being an accomplished designer goes beyond having technical knowledge and skills; it also involves creativity, aesthetics and personal development. Designers carefully construct their portfolios in order to express themselves and effectively address potential employers or clients. However, the mere display of projects may not be considered sufficient to reflect a designer's true potential. At this point, it appears that a résumé in designer portfolios plays a critical role. By reflecting the designer's creative journey and professional development, a résumé is not only a job application form but also a document that can be characterized as a design product.

Creating a good résumé isn't just about listing job experiences and educational background. Designers need to present their projects, achievements, and technical skills clearly and impressively. Additionally, the visual design and layout of the résumé are crucial. Readability, aesthetic arrangement, and visual appeal are significant factors in making a résumé effective. Therefore, a r résumé should meet professional standards both in terms of content and design.

The evaluation findings of this article are the designer résumés that emerged in the 4th grade Portfolio Design course, which is the course conducted by a researcher at Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University, Faculty of Fine Arts, Department of Visual Communication Design. Portfolios of design students are produced in the course. In the output of the course, portfolio box, résumé, business card and other promotional elements are designed to provide a single visual language unity.

RÉSUMÉ IN PORTFOLIO DESIGN

The concept of portfolio has evolved in various forms from past to present and has been adopted by various professions and disciplines. Especially in art schools, it has been embraced as a tool for students to showcase their own works and projects. Portfolios used to showcase students' artistic talents and track their progress have become a significant criterion for applications and evaluations. A portfolio is a collection of an individual's work, projects or artistic works. This comprehensive collection is often used for job applications or to showcase one's skills and experience in a professional field. For Demir, considering that each designer is unique, it can be said that there is a basic need to reflect different design approaches, and the selection that represents these differences and reveals the identity/style of the designer is called a portfolio (Demir, 2022, p. 12). Portfolio is a tool that carries examples of work that shows what the designer can do (Ambrose & Harris, 2009, p. 146). Thus, a portfolio is a marketing tool that aims to show the designer's most valuable product, himself/herself. A portfolio is proof of the designer's education, experience and ability to solve visual communication problems. Therefore, visual and verbal elements should be balanced and considered, made functional, and made easy to open with accessible examples and samples (Labudovic & Vukusic, 2009, p. 47). "*A portfolio, which expresses who the designer is, how he/she thinks, how long it takes to produce and what quality he/she produces, his/her design and artistic skills, general culture, technology mastery and visual language, is of great importance for designers and design students*" (Demir, 2014, p. 81). Nowadays, even though the portfolio can speak for itself, a résumé must be sent via e-mail in order to get an appointment for a job interview. According to Orosz, résumés aim to direct the job seeker to an interview with a recruiter or hiring manager at a specific company for that position (2020, p. 11). Job candidates are pre-qualified and invited for an interview after their résumés are analyzed. The function of the résumé continues not only before the interview but also after the interview. Candidates leave their résumés instead of leaving their portfolios at every interview. Thus, it is ensured that the interview is a reminder for the employer.

A résumé is a well-structured, easy-to-read, concise presentation of one's skills and achievements (Allen, 2001, p. 1). Résumé is a document systematically listing an individual's education, work experience, skills, achievements, and personal information acquired throughout their life. It is commonly used in job applications or academic applications, serving as a fundamental tool to present a candidate's professional background and qualifications to potential employers or educational institutions. A résumé is a document that states in detail why the employer should hire the person. It constitutes information about the person's profession and provides the employer with an overview of the person's background (Myers, 2014, p. 33). According to Newar, "*a résumé is a person's advertisement*" (2018, p. 3). Your résumé is the most important part of your job search. It acts as your foot in the door and handshake; it summarizes your experience and unique qualities (Bernstein & Weiss, 2020, p. 77).

According to a study by Morgan, how long employers actually spend reviewing a résumé depends on personal preference. In a study by TheLadders, the average amount of time a résumé reviewer spends on their first review is 'six' seconds. In CareerBuilder research, one in five HR managers reported spending less than 30 seconds reviewing applications (2014, p. 85). According to Enelow and Kursmark, those who read a résumé should be able to grasp the important points in a brief 10-second glance (2007, p. 345). Résumés that are examined in such a limited time should be extremely remarkable in terms of design. In the light of this information, a designer's résumé should be an example of a design that presents his/her talents and makes him/her stand out among his/her competitors. As a designer, it should be considered as an opportunity to show how to bring a typographic approach to pure information by designing the résumé as an informative project (Santoro, 2014, p. 307).

Before starting to create a résumé, individuals should first define themselves. They should determine how much they specialize in which field. In this sense, in the first days of the portfolio design course, students are asked to make a personal SWOT analysis. SWOT is known as the abbreviation of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. According to Teoli et al. (2023), SWOT Analysis is a business strategy tool used to assess an organization's position compared to its competitors. Beyond the business world, SWOT Analysis can also be applied at the individual level to identify a person's strengths and weaknesses and to assess threats and opportunities from the internal and external environment. With SWOT analysis, the answer to which field students want to focus on after graduation of the academic knowledge they have gained for four years is quickly determined.

In the design world, SWOT analysis is a technique that allows designers to gain a strategic perspective by assessing internal and external factors. Firstly, the designer identifies their strengths. For example, they recognize personal skills and advantages such as technical proficiency, creativity, or communication skills. Next, the designer identifies weaknesses, understanding internal constraints such as specific technical deficiencies, time management challenges, or gaps in marketing skills. Another area to consider in SWOT analysis is opportunities. For instance, understanding how designers can benefit from external factors like emerging trends in the industry, developing markets, or technological advancements. Finally, the designer evaluates threats, understanding external risk factors such as increased competition, economic downturns, or technological changes.

SWOT analysis can assist designers in determining career strategies and enhancing their development. This analysis provides a crucial foundation for designers to understand their strengths and weaknesses, evaluate opportunities and threats in the external environment, and support strategic decision-making. Subsequently, designers can begin crafting the most suitable résumé for themselves based on this analysis.

Résumés are generally divided into three main groups. These are chronological, functional and mixed résumé types. Chronological résumés present information in reverse chronological order, starting with the present and working backwards. Students and recent graduates often put education first (Schuman, 2008, p.23). Chronological résumés are usually the most commonly used type of résumés.

Functional résumé is a type of résumé that focuses on skills and abilities, usually not in order of experience. While a traditional chronological résumé lists work experiences in time order, a functional résumé emphasizes the candidate's specific skills, achievements and qualities. According to Allen (2001, p.56), a functional résumé is one that groups together significant accomplishments or responsibilities regardless of where in your career they occurred. The problem here is that most employment managers prefer to look at a person's chronological progression.

A mixed résumé is a combination of a chronological and a functional résumé. In recent years, some student résumés have been prefaced with a brief summary of the individual. Students with little work and work experience present this summary information in a short paragraph in order to express themselves better.

In the portfolio design course, students are generally asked to prepare a chronological résumé. The topics that should be included in the designer's résumé are contact information, educational information, work experiences, certificates, courses, etc. documents, program skills and hobbies. In addition to these, students can also have portrait photographs in which they define themselves professionally. Having a photograph of oneself in the résumé makes it easier for the employer to remember the interview. Students interested in illustration present their portraits with 2D or 3D drawings.

Employers often have to sort through a large number of résumés. Therefore, a résumé should be informative and easy to read. It should list education, experience and skills but never exceed two pages. The person's achievements should be listed separately by category. Within each category, items should be listed in reverse chronological order, with the most recent information first (Vitali, 2003, p.195). Simple graphic elements such as bars, lines, circles can be used to further emphasize the grouping and separation of information. These elements can also be used as simple item markers (Wolk & Currier, 2021. p. 199).

In addition, designers should choose a readable font. Correct font selection, text formatting, use of whitespace, and creating hierarchy enhance the readability and aesthetic appeal of résumés. Typographic elements such as emphasized headings, visual highlighting of key information, and paragraph arrangements help strengthen the candidate's professional identity and attract employers' attention. The font is important for the reader to be able to read the information easily. Using a high-contrast, clean and professional-looking font increases the readability of the résumé and portfolio. Also, using appropriate color palettes is an important element of making a professional impression. Colors can reflect the style and personality of the designer. However, using too many colors or choosing mismatched colors can make the design look cluttered and messy. Therefore, designers should take care to choose a harmonious and professional color palette.

Although there are certain rules for designing a résumé, it can be constructed in countless variations. This section of the article presents examples of student résumés produced in the Portfolio Design course conducted by the researcher. In order to protect the personal data of the students, some of the information in the résumés has been blurred.

In this example, which was selected from the résumé studies that emerged in the portfolio design course, a simple design is seen in which the information is arranged in an orderly order (Figure 1). The student chose to use a black-and-white portrait photograph with a green background at the top left. After the photograph, the first thing to read is the name, surname, title and contact information. Then, there is a short informative paragraph called 'about me' and sentences that are considered important are highlighted with green backgrounds. The student preferred to explain the program skills with a linear infographic. At first glance, the résumé is a successful example of a design that both attracts attention and is easy to read.

Figure 1. Çağla., Courtesy of Çetintaş, (2024). Portfolio Design. Ankara, Türkiye: Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University, GSF, Department of Visual Communication Design Portfolio Design Course Project.

In another example examined, at first glance, it is seen that the student has drawn a self-portrait (Figure 2). The student, who wanted to show his talent in the field of illustration, created a completely original element by writing his name in his own handwriting. In addition to these, he created the line separating the page from the middle and the program information used as infographics in a sketch style, and drew the icons used in the 'hobbies' heading himself. All these data tell us at first glance that this person is an illustrator. In this way, the student has found an opportunity to showcase their drawing skills and aimed to draw the attention of employers to this aspect.

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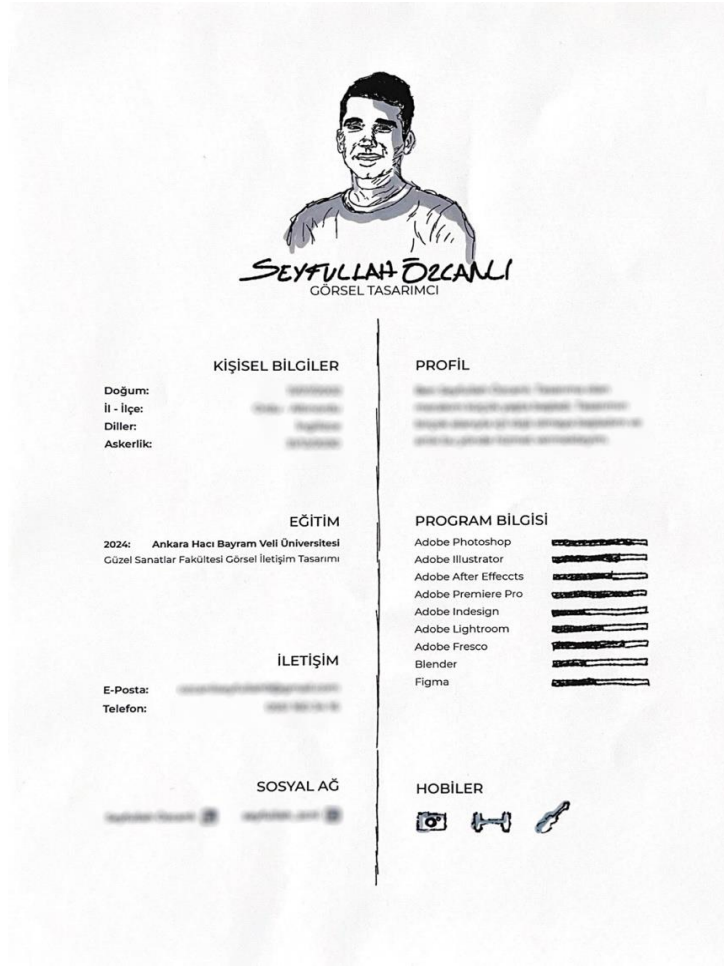
Figure 2. Özcanlı, Seyfullah. With permission, (2024). Portfolio Design. Ankara, Türkiye: Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University, GSF, Department of Visual Communication Design Portfolio Design Course Project.

In another study, the student wants to gain a place in the sector as a photographer (Figure 3). Therefore, he used a portrait photograph with his camera. Using a page as a cover, he designed the part with his portrait in the form of a photo paper. In this way, he has an unusual background that emphasizes his creativity. When the cover is opened, the information is easy to understand and has an organized appearance. At the same time, he aimed to increase interest by using contrasting colors. In this résumé, unlike the others, the student developed a title that included skills and preferred to describe his skills such as communication, teamwork and leadership. In addition to these, he presented the information contained in some headings through infographic expression. In the student's résumé, it is seen that the information is in order and easy to read.

Figure 3. Bağcıvan, Esra. With Permission, (2023). Portfolio Design. Ankara, Türkiye: Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University, GSF, Department of Visual Communication Design Portfolio Design Course Project.

Another one of the student résumés was considered successful in the course due to its originality and attractiveness (Figure 4). The student developed herself in the field of 3D illustration and started looking for a job in that field. She drew her own portrait in 3D in an original way. Around the portrait, she drew an illustration resembling a mechanism using vibrant colors through a humorous visual language. Although the student's résumé is difficult to read and follow, it has managed to be interesting. This résumé has completely unique and different features. Therefore, it is much easier for the student to stand out from her competitors.

Figure 4. Yabacı, Celil. With Permission, (2023). Portfolio Design. Ankara, Türkiye: Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University, GSF, Department of Visual Communication Design Portfolio Design Course Project.

In the other self-portrait analyzed, the student created his self-portrait with a primitive understanding (Figure 5). In order to approach the visual language of the illustration, he wrote his name in his own handwriting and succeeded. At the same time, the icons under the heading 'hobbies' have a visual language in harmony with the illustration. It can be said that spaces are used very effectively in this background. The use of spaces clearly separates the categories from each other. This makes eye tracking and readability much easier. Considering that the most fundamental feature of a résumé in terms of design is to be attention-grabbing and readable, this simple and legible résumé can be counted among successful examples. The student's self-portrait drawing and handwritten name help to showcase their skills related to the field.

Figure 5. Erbaş, Gizem. With Permission, (2024). Portfolio Design. Ankara, Türkiye: Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University, GSF, Department of Visual Communication Design Portfolio Design Course Project.

CONCLUSION

One of the most important components of a designer's portfolio is the résumé, which serves as a tool to introduce the designer's career and skills to potential employers or clients. The résumé should clearly and effectively present the designer's educational background, professional experience, and competencies. Highlighting design projects and achievements, in particular, helps to emphasize the designer's skills with concrete examples, making them stand out. In this context, the accuracy and up-to-dateness of the information contained in the résumé are noteworthy in leaving a reliable impression.

Additionally, visual design and layout are among the elements that enhance the effectiveness of the

résumé. Designers should arrange their résumés in a way that reflects their creative skills and aesthetic sense. To ensure readability and quick access to information, clear headings, bullet points, and appropriate font sizes should be used. Careful integration of visual elements contributes to a professional appearance of the résumé and captures the reader's attention.

It is also critical to maintain a professional appearance and consistency when preparing designers' résumés and portfolios. The key elements of making a professional impression are a carefully laid out design, a readable font, and the use of appropriate color palettes.

A good résumé is critical for both design and content, and many employers will ignore someone with a poorly designed résumé. Similarly, some employers hire designers based solely on their résumés (Eisenman, 2011, p. 47). Résumé design, which is part of the portfolio design course, is of such a quality that students can apply for a job immediately. When they go for a job interview, they can show their portfolio that they have printed at the end of the course. This course gives visual communication design students the ability to organize and effectively present their work. A well-prepared résumé becomes a significant factor that sets the designer apart from their competitors by showcasing their skills, experiences, and potential in the best possible way. Therefore, designers should pay attention to details and organize their résumés in accordance with professional standards. This will help them seize more opportunities in their careers and achieve their professional goals. The résumés showcased in this study belong to students who successfully completed the course and received positive feedback in job interviews. These résumés have managed to align with the objectives and outcomes of the course.

In conclusion, designers should include a creative résumé in their portfolios and present it in a way that emphasizes their design skills and personal style. Employers can get a positive first impression when evaluating candidates through a creative résumé.

The future of resume design is undergoing a significant transformation with technological advances. Traditional, static resumes are beginning to be replaced by dynamic and interactive digital formats. Artificial intelligence-powered tools offer innovative approaches to resume design, enabling the creation of personalized documents. AI can analyze candidates' competencies, experiences, and career goals, suggesting the most appropriate format and content structure. This process both saves time and helps the candidate reflect their professional profile more effectively. In addition, thanks to AI's data analysis capabilities, strategies such as adapting the resume to specific job positions and keyword optimization can be automatically applied. This increases the likelihood of attracting employers' attention, while also playing an important role as a tool supporting designers' creative processes. Therefore, the integration of AI into resume design will become even more widespread in the future, both in terms of efficiency and competitive advantage.

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