

# ***BlogBooker***

Low resolution pictures

From Blog to Book.

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# 1. 2015

## 1.1 May

### 364MC - My Chosen Profession (2015-05-13 09:24)

I would like to pursue a career as a Floor Manager for a TV studio. During my time at Coventry University, I have tried and tested many roles including; cinematography, sound, light, producing and more. Although I gained knowledge and experience from them all, the role I truly enjoyed was being a Floor Manager for my TV Modules.

When anyone asks why I want to be a 'FM', it's hard for me to answer. I can't find the words to explain why I want to do it, except just that I think it'll be something I will be really good at and enjoy! During the times I have been a Floor Manager, I thoroughly enjoyed it and didn't want it to come to an end. I like the fact that I am in charge, that I know what's going on, where everyone has to be, the times in which things have to be done etc. It might sound like I just like being bossy, but that is what I enjoyed about the role. I also loved the fast pace and pressure of the job too. How you're always busy, the importance of getting things right and done on time. I know that is the type of work atmosphere I will enjoy.

'Formal qualifications are helpful but practical experience is what really matters.'

I have completed some research about Floor Managers and have learnt that it is now more common for Floor Managers to be Freelance. Although I have never considered going freelance, my research has taught me that it is quite a risky career choice to make, but if you do well, you will be successful and I definitely think that if I work as hard as I possible can, I can be a successful freelance FM.

Bibliography:

<http://www.mediacollege.com/employment/television/floor-manager.html>

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### 364MC - What is a Floor Manager? (2015-05-14 09:30)

The Floor Manager is the person in charge of the studio floor. The studio floor is the main production area, but this could also be a stage or where the presenters and guests are located if shooting outside. The 'FM' is also the link from the gallery to presenters, guests and audience on the studio floor. A talkback system is used to stay in contact with the gallery, this is usually an earpiece and microphone. The information which is passed, usually consists of the cues and timings for the presenters and guests, which the FM then relays to the studio.

A floor manager is a member of the crew of a television show. The floor manager is responsible for giving information from the director in the control room, to the crew on the studio floor, and then back to the director.

Before the show:

- Seating and preparing the audience
- coordinating rehearsals
- Ensuring all equipment is in place and checked for any potential technical faults
- Checking the staging, furniture and props are all ready
- Brief the presenters and participants in the show
- Production planning and consulting on logistics

During the show:

- Preparing and organising upcoming parts of the show
- Relaying information from the gallery and to the studio
- Cuing presenters and guests and giving them timings
- Controlling the audience and keeping them safe and entertained
- Safety issues on the studio floor
- Updating the director of action happening off camera
- If outside of the studio; talks with venue staff, organising the guests, etc.

A typical starting salary for a Floor Manager is between £14,000 - £20,000. At senior level with 10-15 years of experience, a typical salary would be £25,000 upwards. A majority of FM work on a Freelance basis, where salaries can be paid on an hourly, daily or weekly basis, depending on the company's preferences. Higher salaries will be earned in London, but a freelance FM may earn between £180 to £400 for an average days work. This is all average, however each job varies depending on the location, company, experience and the duration and demand.

A Floor Manager is always expected to stay until the job is complete. This could mean working late nights and evenings, with irregular and long hours. It is not uncommon to work a 15-hour day. The hours a FM will be needed, is dictated by the studios booking times. Each day will be different, depending on the demand. They could film one episode a day, or five. This could lead to working ten days in a row, or three extremely long days, then a day off. This is mainly the conditions for someone working freelance, they will be expected to work the hours demanded by the production company. Freelance workers will also experience periods of time of unemployment, which is the same for many freelance workers in different media sectors. FM mainly work within a studio, however if they're covering such sporting events they will work on location. Big television companies such as the BBC and even small independents, are now more commonly hiring self employed or freelance Floor Managers, as freelance work is more commonly possible.

FM's usually dress casually, but will need to be smart casual if working on location, as they're representing their company and need to be professional.

I know I won't be able to get a job straight away as a floor manager, so I could gain experience being an Assistant Floor Manager 'Assistant Floor Manager is a junior member of the production team involved with the practicalities of the production. In drama, will collect actors, look after them, prepare props, reset them after takes, wash up etc as necessary. On studio shows will look after contributors and assist the floor manager with similar duties to those above.

#### Bibliography:

<http://www.inputyouth.co.uk/jobguides/job-tvfloormanagerfilmassistan tdirector.html>

<http://www.startintv.com/jobs/assistant-floor-manager.php>

<http://www.mediacollege.com/employment/television/floor-manager.html>

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### **364MC - Research Entry Requirements (2015-05-15 19:06)**

Having a degree is the most successful way of becoming a Floor Manager. Subjects such as Media Studies, Drama/Theatre Studies and Photography/Film/Television are the most helpful.

Although having a Degree in a relevant subject is the quickest and most common way to becoming a Floor Manager, it is not the only way. 'Many floor managers have worked their way up to this position from a more junior or related role.' Some have started as just a runner or junior assistant on set, then worked their way up, gaining first hand experience along the way. Doing it this way could take a number of years, it will be worth while due to the amount of vital experience you are gaining and contacts you are making. It also gives you a great chance to impress the directors and producers. I have found that to get a job these days, the experience counts for more than your education.

It is essential to have experience to become a Floor Manager. Theatre experience is helpful, however previous work in television is more likely. This could be either as a runner, assistant floor manager or in other technical roles such as sound or lighting. Many years experience is essential to compete within this industry.

## Study

- British Film Institute (BFI) (<http://www.bfi.org.uk>)
- Cymru (<http://www.cymru.co.uk>)
- FT2 - Film & Television Freelance Training
- Scottish Screen
- Skills for Screen (Skills Council for the Audio Visual Industries) (<http://www.skillsforfilm.org>)

## What Does It Take?

You should be:

- dedicated and resilient
- calm under pressure
- well organised and able to multi-task
- skilled in the technical side of productions
- able to give information clearly and concisely
- confident and resourceful
- responsible about safety.

You should have:

- patience
- excellent communication and networking skills
- the ability to solve problems
- the ability to make quick decisions.

## Getting In

- There are no set entry requirements, but most applicants have a degree - any subject... If not, but subject must be music studies, theatre studies and performing arts would normally your ideal.
- Technical experience in Broadcasting or Theatre is essential - perhaps through unpaid work experience placements (internships).
- Floor managers normally start as assistant floor managers (A floor) - (See further (id profile).
- Employment is often ad-hoc (part-time).
- You should be in their contacts in Broadcasting.
- After leaving you might consider more work in Broadcasting, such as travel, sport or children's programmes.
- They operate in Broadcasting from early mornings, moving from one short-term contract to another.

## Bibliography:

[http://www.prospects.ac.uk/television\\_floor\\_manager\\_entry\\_requirements.htm](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/television_floor_manager_entry_requirements.htm)

[http://130.88.36.167/p/types\\_of\\_job/print/television\\_floor\\_manager.jsp](http://130.88.36.167/p/types_of_job/print/television_floor_manager.jsp)

<http://www.planitplus.net/careerzone/areas/default.aspx?PID=nf &TOPL=7 &SECL=7a &ID=182>



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### **364MC - Floor Manager Skills Research (2015-05-16 19:03)**

I wanted to make sure I knew and understood everything which being a Floor Manager involves; so I have completed the research below using Prospects and Agcas.

A person will require many skills to be a successful and professional Floor Manager. As well as being mature, confident and competent, a good FM will have a great understanding of the television requirements and know all of the relevant floor positions well; such as camera, sound, light etc. A FM will at times being very stressful and have to deal with difficult situations, so the person must deal with these calmly and work well under stress. They also must be a people person, as a FM will always be working with lots of different people everyday, they must have good interpersonal skills. As the FM is cuing and timing the presenters, it is critical they must have a great sense of time and continuity. The FM will be working with the producers and set designers on the floor plans and set changes, so they should have a good sense of space to do this well and with eas.

I do believe that I have many of the skills above including; television requirements, knowing the relevant floor positions, working well under stress, good interpersonal skills etc. However, the rest I will have to gain through experience. For example, learning about the floor plans, continuity, equipment I don't already know etc. I can learn all of these over time, through the experience I will gain.

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### **364MC - My Floor Managing Experience (2015-05-17 19:06)**

#### **Year 1 - TV Module**

The first year TV module was my first experience as a Floor Manager. I decided this was the role I wanted to do, after researching the possible roles and thinking it was the one most suited to me. We had to create a LIVE magazine show, based around UFO's. It was a big task for my first time in the studio, but we all worked really hard and had a great outcome. I loved every minute of the experience. After a few weeks into the module, my confidence as a Floor Manager really grew and I knew exactly what I had to do and what was expected of me. It was this module which helped me decide that I career in TV was perfect for me.

#### **Year 2 - Formats**

Second year we had to make a pre recorded dating show. For this module, I knew straight away I wanted to be a Floor Manager again. So I put myself forward and the group decide I would be the best person for the job. Of course I was thrilled. I was really happy the show was pre-recorded as it gave me the chance to experience something different. Although the lead up was pretty much the same; rehearsals, set making etc. The recording itself was much

more relaxed and less pressure. I enjoyed being able to experience both types of TV recording.

#### Year 2 - CovTV

At the end of my second year, I was approached to help the third year journalism students create a live news program in the TV Studio. I was more than happy to help out! Again, I put myself forward for the role of Floor Manager, this was approved. This project was slightly different, as I wasn't doing it for my own module and grade, but for someone else's. Which I found more pressured. I guess this is what it is like to work for a TV company, you're making the best show possible for them, not you.

Here is a video of Shelly Stevenson and David Hayward talking about my contributions towards CovTV and my Floor Managing skills. <https://vimeo.com/128467495>

#### Year 3 - Peer Mentoring

I chose this advantage basically as it would be the last chance to get into the TV studio before leaving the course. Although I wasn't using the equipment myself, I really enjoyed teaching the first years how to use it all. I spent three weeks in the studio with them, teaching them how to use the equipment and how to make their TV show successful.

#### Watching TV recordings:

I remember going along to watch TV recordings since I was little. I still go whenever I get the chance. I have seen a mixture of recordings such as; Celebrity Juice, The Big Fat Quiz, Britain's Got Talent LIVE, X Factor LIVE and more. Each time I have gone to see a recording, I spend most of the time watching the crew, especially the Floor Manager. I love seeing how they work, what they do, what everyone's responsibilities are etc. Although I have researched all of these things, going to see it in action is so much better. Seeing it first hand I can really get an understanding of everyone's roles.

#### The difference between live and pre recording, which I would prefer, why?

From all of my experience within the TV studio, with both watching and making, I have learnt that I definitely prefer LIVE TV. Although pre-recording is still fun and I enjoy it, I much prefer the fast pace and pressured side of LIVE TV. The fact you only have one chance to get it right is slightly scary, I also think it's really exciting and thrilling.

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#### **364MC - Networking (2015-05-20 13:38)**

I have been emailing professionals, asking for advice on how to start my career. I am hoping to gain lots of advice and tips on how to become a Floor Manager, also hoping this way I could gain some contacts for the future. I have also connected with many Floor Managers and people with similar careers, so I can see their posts and keep updated with potential job opportunities.



I received a very honest reply from a freelance Floor Manager, Jo Hudd who has 15 years experience as a FM;

'Hi Gemma,

Good luck with the rest of your degree! I will be as honest as I can be in response to your message....it probably won't be what you want to hear though, for which I apologise.

Floor Management has become an extremely competitive field in recent years. There is a very tight-knit group of experienced FMs and AFMs that do 90 % of the work within the industry. It is so hard for anyone trying to break into the industry nowadays as it is very much a 'dead-man's shoes' scenario, but nobody is going anywhere! Obviously if people need cover, they ask one of their experienced peers, rather than chance a new person.

When I started out, 15 years ago, it was a different world and relatively easy to take steps into the field of FMing. I started at a shopping channel (QVC) and worked a staff job there for 5 years (started as Floor Assistant and worked up to FM). After 3 years, I started doing freelance work outside of QVC and after 5 years I had enough contacts to leave the world of shopping and go fully freelance.

The trouble with starting out in the FM world, is that there are very few chances to earn money. If you take a part-time job to fund the early years, it means that you aren't always available when asked (often at very late

notice), which is a problem and yet having no money is a problem in itself, particularly because most of the TV work is in London. You can, of course, shadow for experience but in honesty this very rarely leads to paid work.

You may be better off trying to start out in Manchester, as the pool of experience is far smaller and therefore easier to break into. Having said that, I have experienced friends that moved up there to try and get more work, are even they are struggling and having to take temp/bar jobs.

My advice, if you are still keen to pursue a career in Floor Management, would be to perhaps try and get a staff job to get your experience...perhaps a shopping channel, or a news or sport network or anything that broadcasts from a studio 24/7. You really get a chance to cut to teeth in such an environment and are being paid whilst doing so. Also, most of these jobs are shift based, which leaves lots of time to freelance outside of your working hours for free. Make sense?

Sorry to be so negative...it is a wonderful career and I love it dearly, but I wouldn't want to be trying to get into now if I'm honest. However...good luck with it all...I wish you lots of luck.

Jo'

After reading the reply, my heart sank slightly. I thought I was getting way over my head and that there was no way I could start my career. Although I knew it was going to be hard starting my career as a FM without much experience, I didn't realise exactly how hard. However, I did then receive replies from Joe Wilcox who is the Floor Manager at 'Rocks & Co', Ben KeyStone a Studio Floor Manager at Jet Studios and Tom Neary a Floor Manager also from 'Rocks & Co' who said this;





iMail | Jet Studios

RE: Advice for an upcoming Floor Manager

Ben KeyStone, Studio Floor Manager at Jet Studios

May 22, 2013, 3:04 PM

Ben KeyStone has accepted your iMail.

Hi Gemma,

I'm afraid I can't be of much use to you, all my experience is in photography rather than TV. The industries are similar though, and there's a lot of competition. My advice would be to start at the bottom, as a runner, and work your way up. The pay and the hours will be rubbish, but that tends to be the way it is, so stick with it. Do some unpaid work for experience if you need to, but don't get sucked into working for free for too long. Be helpful, polite and hardworking and you can't go far wrong, and don't be afraid to ask for things. Most importantly, don't see any task as being beneath you, and have a good attitude at everything you do. London is probably the best place to be for any creative industry, but with TV I imagine Manchester is a close second, what with the BBC being up there. Hope this helps, sorry I couldn't be of more concrete use!

Ben

'Hi Gemma,

Hope you are well. I can only really speak for my situation but I know people who are working on other shows as well and its generally the same.

I work for Rocks and you start out working on Crew which involves Cam Opping and Running which is good fun. Then work hard at that and positions will come available as there is high turn over of staff, people move on, get promoted themselves etc.

Most companies including my own will offer jobs internally first which is why it is so important to get into a company in anyway, for example there could be a position as a director available which will be offered to staff before it even makes it out the front door, basically you have a better chance if you are already there, even if you are 'just a runner'.

In terms of Floor Managing itself it is sort of the same role as a runner however I would be in charge of making sure everything is done and I have more responsibilities, job delegation etc. Once again a fun but stressful thing to do on live television. As you are at Cov Uni im sure you done the television module at some stage and when I was there, there was a lot of 'Job Roles' to fill, this isnt the case in a real company as you will be doing about 5 of them at one time simply because if it needs doing to stay on air it needs doing and someone will have to do it.

Our standard setup is about 4 people and a presenter, this will include a Floor Manager, Crew Member (both of whom will take it in turns to operate the Cameras), Producer and Director with cover coming in throughout the day.

When looking for a job it is very competitive however its know what companies are in your area. London for example has a lot of television work along with Bristol, Birmingham not so much. You have to just apply and then the second you send it forget about it and move onto applying for something else. Targeting companies in your area is the best idea, finding out a lot about the company and when applying making it known you are local and show how

much you know about them.

You can go and try and find the Heads of production and email them directly but more than anything its keep- ing and eye out and if a television company needs staff it will happen very quickly as they have to stay on air.

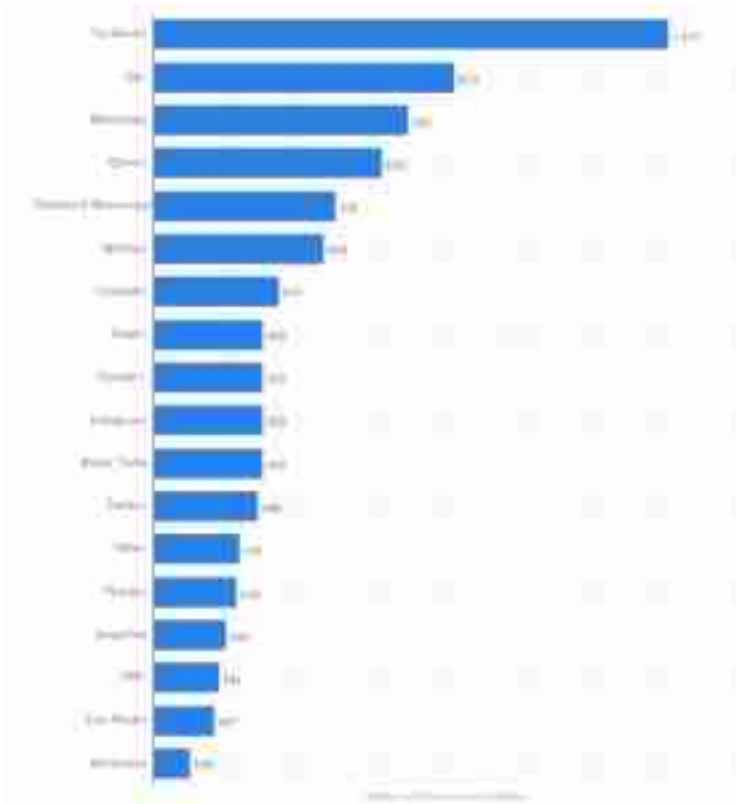
Hope that is helpful, let me know if you have anymore questions. Good luck in your degree say hi to Steve for me haha.

Thomas Neary'

Virtual Networking:

I will be networking to help my career, to become a Television Floor Manager. I have joined sites including; LinkedIn, The Royal Television Society, Shooting People, No Film School and Vimeo Video School. It is important for anyone in the Media Industry to be Networking, as it is a vital and successful way to create contacts and stay in touch with the contacts you already have.

I have set up a professional profile on LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter to keep up to date with potential jobs, keep in touch with my contacts and to be connected with the latest technology and social networking sites. Although Facebook and Twitter aren't seen as being 'professional' sites, they are a great way to stay in contact with people and to promote yourself, as they are both used by so many people. Facebook is being used more and more by people now days starting out with their career.



LinkedIn is a professional networking site, for all professionals, however it is commonly used for all Media Professionals. I have used the site to connect with not only people I know, but also potential employers, people in the same or a similar industry as i'm interested in and to keep up to date with potential jobs. LinkedIn will help with

my Professional Development, as it can be used for more than just keeping contact with other professionals. It can also be used to look for work, post jobs, see useful links which other people post, previous jobs, work experience, internships, find other people within the same or a similar industry which you may need to contact and more. At the minute the most useful parts are finding work experience, internships, looking for jobs and viewing the useful link which other professionals post. These things will help find work to help me add experience to my CV. The other things such as previous jobs, keeping in contact with people etc, will help me once I have started my career and gained more contacts. Also it will allow me to keep in contact with previous jobs, incase they need me again. All of these things will help develop my future career to become a Floor Manager.



The 'No Film School' and 'Vimeo Video School' networking pages are a great way for me to keep up with the upcoming technology and video techniques which is being released. Although the sites are mainly used for short film makers, I will still be visiting them from time to time to find out the latest news. It is also a good way of gaining new contacts in a different media sectors, incase I ever need them.



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### **364MC - Contacts (2015-05-22 19:09)**

I have chosen the following contacts, as I believe they will help me with my future career. Some of the contacts I already knew from past experiences, but most of them are new. The new contacts I have, I gained through LinkedIn. I have been emailing professionals, asking for advice and tips on how to get into the industry. I would like to think they're now contacts I can use in the future.

David Hayward

David is a successful Journalist. He has worked for both the BBC and ITV. However, he now owns his own journalism company, also training people to become journalists. I have included a video of David speaking about my Floor Managing skills in my 'Floor Managing Experience' blog page.

I worked with David on 'CoventryTV' last year. It was good experience for me to work with a professional with many years experience. He gave me lots of good advice and tips for the future.

Social Networking:

<https://www.facebook.com/haywardblackmedia>

[https://twitter.com/david\\_hbm](https://twitter.com/david_hbm)

Email:

[david@haywardblackmedia.com](mailto:david@haywardblackmedia.com)

Carmel Sudbury

Director of Carmel Jane Photography.

Although Carmel is a photographer, she could be helpful in my future career if I ever need a photography for jobs I will be doing.

Website: <http://www.carmeljane.co.uk/>

Social Networking: <https://www.facebook.com/CarmelJanePhotography>

Telephone: 01277 822674

Email: [Info@carmeljane.co.uk](mailto:Info@carmeljane.co.uk)

Ben KeyStone



Studio Floor Manager at 'Jet Studios'.

Emailing advice for the future

<https://uk.linkedin.com/pub/ben-keystone/66/305/604>

Joe Wilcox

Floor Manager at 'Rocks & Co'

Emailing advice for the future

<https://uk.linkedin.com/pub/joe-wilcox/43/201/188>

Jo Hudd

Freelance Floor Manager

Emailing advice for the future

<https://uk.linkedin.com/pub/jo-hudd/11/497/b2>

Tom Neary

Floor Manager at 'Rocks & Co'

Emailing advice for the future

<https://uk.linkedin.com/pub/tom-neary/70/241/525>





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### 364MC - Creating a Professional Portfolio (2015-05-22 19:10)

I am starting to create a Professional Portfolio for myself. I will taking my time with creating this portfolio, as I believe that a viewer's first glance at your portfolio can determine their decision on whether they will carry on looking, or exit.

I planned my Portfolio on paper. I wanted to plan the design, colours, text and images before hand, so I would know what it will look like before actually doing it. I could also list down all of the page I want, with the different information I need to include.

I decided to include my CV on my Portfolio. I learnt from my research, that other Floor Managers were also doing this, so I thought I should too, to keep up with the competition. My CV was very old, it included jobs and experiences from many years ago, which are not longer relevant. It also wasn't very 'media professional'. I needed to update it before posting it on my Portfolio. I wasn't entirely sure how to write a CV, especially a professional CV, so I have used a number of sites to use as a template. I have been using Prospects to help with re-writing my CV.

I have started to plan my portfolio. I will be spending a lot of time of this plan, as I think planning for something so important is what makes it successful. So far I have decided that I want my profile to have a plain background, with pops of colour. I want it to be eye catching, so I think the bit of colour will do this. Especially using different colours for headings and having colourful, interesting images.

I have been using the site Clippings.Me to start creating my portfolio. The site is very easy to use, used by other professionals and they have some great advice about how to get your portfolio to be successful. I will be following their guide to writing the perfect portfolio which I have copied below;

#### STEP 1

## OBJECTIVES

You want to make sure your writing portfolio achieves its objectives - if you're an author, that may be to get you a book deal. If you're a student, it's likely academic consideration and if you're a freelance journalist, it could be to get you an article commission. So think hard and be specific about what your portfolio should tell the people that come across it. Doing so will make drafting your copy and planning out the different sections much easier.

### Common Objectives

To get a job - you'll be sending your portfolio to prospective employers or clients, so your main aim is to impress in the field you work in.

To sell - you've written some great stuff, and now you want to sell it to an agent, publisher or commissioner.

To be more visible - you want a place where people can find you online and learn more about what you do.

Once you know what the aim is, write that down somewhere. As you build your portfolio, every time you write a sentence or add a piece of work, ask yourself "does this addition help my objective?" If the answer is no, don't add it.

## STEP 2

## HOSTING

The days of the hard portfolio are definitely over - for 99 % of portfolio users, digital is the right way to go, as Steve Buttry explains in this excellent blog post.



Steve Buttry

Digital Transformation Editor at Digital First Media

## VIEW PORTFOLIO

## FOLLOW ON TWITTER

We're way past the days of deciding which half-dozen hard-copy clips to stuff into an envelope with your résumé. Unless an employer specifically asks for a hard-copy application, you should apply by email with a hyperlinked résumé. Even if the employer asks for hard-copy (and if you want to work for someone who needs hard copy), you need a URL (or a few) at the top, guiding your future boss to a place to study your work at length.

There are tons of options for creating portfolios out there - [clippings.me](#) is one of them, but you can also build your own using a tool like Wordpress, Wix or Weebly. However, your choice of tool will likely be determined by the formats that you chose to include in your portfolio. So spend some time considering your pieces of work and the formats that you use the most often. Below, I've included some of the most common, but you may have others:

Writing

Plain text, links, PDF files, Slideshare presentations, Scribd documents

### Images

All common image format files, plus 'rich' media files like Flash and Shockwave. Also, material you've posted on photo upload sites such as Flickr.

### Social media

Storify curated stories, Twitter feeds, Facebook Posts

### Videos

YouTube videos, Vimeo videos, Wistia videos, embedded newsreels

### Audio

Podcasts (mp3, AAC or other), AudioBoo files, SoundCloud files

Back when I founded [clippings.me](#), it only allowed for the addition of links and PDF files - but now you can embed all of the above, and most journalists I see take advantage of that functionality. You'll want to consider this before moving onto the next step.

### Finding a portfolio provider

Journalists have tons of options here - I've included some of the most common ways journalists build their writing portfolio below:

- Use a hosted portfolio
- Build and design your own
- Adapt another type of site



### Clippings.me

Clippings.me is the world's largest journalism portfolio website and allows the creation of writing-specific portfolios with custom URLs.



## MuckRack

Muckrack is not a dedicated portfolio tool, but allows Twitter-based portfolios to be created for journalists.



## Contently

Contently allows freelance journalists to create good-looking portfolios easily.



## Pressfolios

It's not open to the public yet, but Pressfolios is another portfolio resource for journalists.



## Elana Zak

Social Media Producer, Wall St Journal

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If you need some more help choosing, googling 'journalism portfolio tools' is a good place to start. Plenty of other people have taken a look at what's available too though. We'll start with this piece by Elana Zak for 10,000 Words, which covers Wordpress, Clippings.me, Pressfolios, Flavors.me and About.me

They all offer the ability to create a customizable URL, are free (unless you choose the paid version), and don't require you to know any code. The most work you'll have to do is click the mouse or trackpad.



Sarah Marshall

Technology Reporter, [journalism.co.uk](http://journalism.co.uk)

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Another roundup by [journalism.co.uk](http://journalism.co.uk)'s Sarah Marshall, took a look at various portfolio tools available last year, including [clippings.me](http://clippings.me), [Contently](http://Contently), [Journalisted](http://Journalisted), [Muck Rack](http://Muck Rack) and [About.me](http://About.me). Sarah also pointed out that it's critical to pay attention to your social media channels too:

Whether applying for a job, pitching as a freelancer or showcasing your work, an online portfolio with a biography and links to your work can be hugely valuable. Of course LinkedIn, Google+, Facebook and other platforms provide journalists with an online presence, and it is always worth paying attention to your bio information available on social networks as other people will search for you.

STEP 3

DESIGN

Overwhelmingly, journalists using [clippings.me](http://clippings.me) tend to opt for a simple layout which draws attention to work with little in the way of fancy distractions on the site. My strong style advice would be to keep things as simple as possible, and try to let your writing speak for itself.

[youtube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yIVPuSyepX0?rel=0>]  
A quick guide to pairing typefaces

Typefaces:

Use a crisp, clear font which is professional and legible - no MS Comic Sans if you want to be taken seriously. In addition, try to keep the font size above 14pt, ideally edging towards 16pt, to maximise the readability of what you've got. Another neat trick here is to increase the line-spacing, which will give your writing more room to breathe.

Colors:

Again, keep professional - shocking pink and lime green are rarely seen in portfolios, and there's probably a reason for that. If you choose to have a background color, make sure it's sufficiently contrasting with the text for things to be easy on the eye - using two different shades of blue for background and text, for instance, is usually a bad idea.

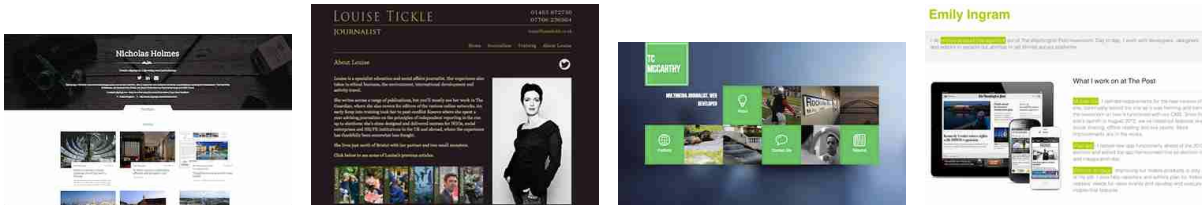
Width:

### I STRONGLY ADVISE AGAINST HAVING A FLASH-BASED SITE

Some portfolio sites include a mobile option, but not all of them. If there's a chance people will be checking out your portfolio on a mobile or a tablet, you'll want to make sure it scales correctly on different screen sizes. For this reason, I strongly advise against having a flash-based portfolio, which generally won't work as designed on mobile devices.

Pictures:

Too many images may end up distracting from your writing, but there's no doubt that images can liven up a portfolio. Try to make sure the images that you use are compelling and colourful, relate well to the words next to them and don't take too long to load.



Some of my favorite portfolio designs.

### STEP 4

#### ADDING SAMPLES

Now the fun bit begins! We generally recommend adding between 10-20 pieces of work to an online portfolio - the overall aim here is to give a snapshot of what you can do in an overview that the other person will actually be able to finish. Don't feel that you have to include everything that you've ever written.



Susanna Speier  
Freelance Digital Journalist

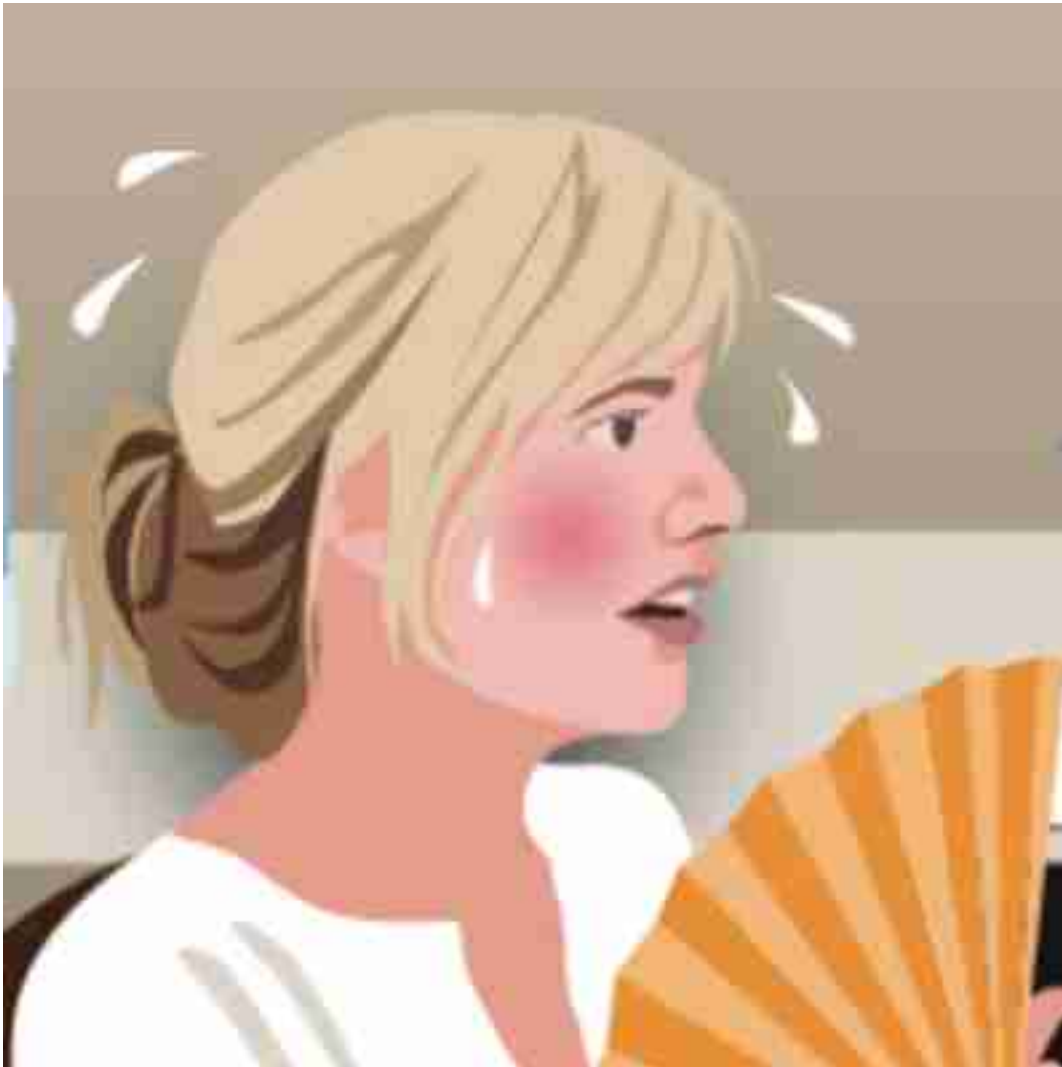
[VIEW PORTFOLIO](#)

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Choose a selection that best serves the purpose you identified in section 1. Generally, it's good to use work that shows the versatility of your skills, but this may not be the case for your specific needs. As Susanna Speier identified in a great Poynter piece on journalism portfolios:

Recruiters and HR departments simply “don’t always have the bandwidth” to research a candidate on the Internet, said Lars Schmidt, NPR’s senior director for talent acquisition. Schmidt said he prefers journalist portfolios that are clearly categorized. He also advises journalists to organize their portfolios according to the job they’re seeking. Most portfolios I see are a mix of links and PDF uploads, although there’s certainly no harm in using more of one than the other. Do remember, if using links, that they have a nasty habit of moving or changing over time, so it’s sometimes best to host the files yourself or set a schedule to come back and check that everything’s still where it should be.



Kat Downs

Graphics Director, The Washington Post

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The Washington Post's Graphics Director Kat Downs talks to ItsAllJournalism about her portfolio

Based on the formats you identified earlier, you'll want to make sure you've got enough examples to show the versatility of what you do. Multimedia portfolios can be trickier to make but offer a better overview in the long term - as The Washington Post's Graphics Director Kat Downs explains in this ItsAllJournalism podcast.

You'll want to pay more attention to the order of your written work, though - make sure it's logical. Some people display their clippings by date, some prefer to do it by section type, and either is fine as long as you're consistent.



Emily Ingram

Mobile Product Management, The Washington Post

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Emily Ingram has some superb advice in this series on how to build your own Wordpress portfolio (it's applicable to any portfolio, really).

I think a good rule of thumb is to keep things simple and try to eliminate any extra clicks for users. In other words: if you can put a good amount of your clips all on one page and still make it look simple, do it. Know how annoying it is to go to a newspaper's Web site and have to load an entirely new page for each photo in a 50-photo slideshow? It's the same concept.

If possible, try to include subheadings as well as the article title with each piece of work that you add - just as with a real article, they dramatically increase the chances of someone reading on. And, as already mentioned, if you're able to use pictures it can make a real difference.

In the case of an author portfolio rather than a journalist one, consider using shorter excerpts rather than full chapters. It can be overwhelming for readers to be faced with dense chapters to navigate so offering the option of something shorter is normally appreciated.

If you're building an academic portfolio, make sure that you're meeting the requirements of whichever institution you're applying to. Critically, make sure that you've chosen a sufficient variety of papers - don't submit one with three or four with a very similar structure. There may also be restrictions on how many papers you can submit from any one course.

STEP 5

## BIOGRAPHY

Most writers include some sort of overview in their portfolio to provide context. It's up to you to make this as long or as short as you want - I've seen people including a full CV or just a few lines of text to explain who they are.

### USE THE BIO AS A SPACE TO TELL A STORY

What to include in your bio? Well, your job title and company are a good place to start. Then, many writers use the bio as a space to do what they do best - tell a story. If you can get some attention by weaving together some bullet points that fulfil your portfolio's objectives (see step 1), that's great. Can you explain some of your best creations or achievements?

For students and graduates, this is a place to mention your college, your major and year, your roles on campus and any other information that will give people a flavor of who you are. But consider - always - that this is a public piece of work and if you're asked about it later, you don't want to squirm.

Before attempting this section, it's generally worth firing up a word processor so you've got an idea of word count. Realistically, 200 words is probably the limit of what you should go for - readers want to get an overview of you in ten seconds or less, so make every word in those first sentences count. No fluff, no buzzwords - just plain-spoken facts about you.

### CV or no CV?

Back again to NPR's Lars Schmidt in the Poynter piece:

He urges journalists to "include a resume and have it up on your portfolio." Yes, a resume. An easy-to-find resume, Schmidt said, is still the best way to say, "here's what I can bring to your organization."

So adding a CV is considered a good idea, but if you choose to do so, make sure it's formatted correctly - often you'll find it looks more professional to embed it within your clips than to paste it in plain text somewhere. If you have a portfolio service where you can include it as a separate document, all the better.

Finally, make sure you've got your contact details. In many great portfolios, this is in the form of a call to action - e.g. "contact me via email at xxx@xxx.com", leaving the reader in no doubt as to what to do next. You'll also want to include social media links so that people can find you on Twitter, LinkedIn, Tumblr and anywhere else you maintain a professional presence. If your Facebook page contains embarrassing pictures, don't link to that - obviously.

### What not to add

From personal experience, I can tell you it's normally best not to include the following in a profile.

1. Your age - nobody wants to see this, especially if it translates to 'young and inexperienced'. If you must put a number, make it about your experience - "I've been a reporter for ten years".

### IT RANKLES WHEN WRITERS WRITE ABOUT WHAT THEY ONE DAY "HOPE" TO BECOME

2. Lack of confidence - in general, it rankles when writers write about what they one day "hope" to become. If you haven't got there yet, it's fine, but there's no need to draw attention to that fact. It damages a reader's belief that

you'll deliver quality.

3. Grammatical mistakes - obviously.

4. Condescension - it's OK if you're great, but if you're that good a wordsmith you'll be able to tell me that without making me feel like the little guy. The trick is to make your audience feel good about themselves at the same time as showcasing your own skill. So no spammy header lines, no passive-aggressive copy and no cockiness. Just be honest, open and proud.

## STEP 6

### SHARING

Congratulations! If you've followed the advice above, you should have an awesome writing portfolio, ready to go. Now, time to get it out there. Even if you're really just planning on sending the portfolio to one person, this is a worthwhile thing to do. For most people, getting more visibility to your portfolio will result in a higher search ranking, as search engines like to see social media shares, inbound links and clicks through. That means that your portfolio is more likely to appear in future searches, which can be useful for personal branding and in any future job hunt. So...

#### Get sharing

Make sure your friends and family know all about your portfolio. Share it on Facebook first to ask for feedback (you'll be amazed at what you missed), and then cast the net a little wider on Twitter, Tumblr, LinkedIn and your other social networks. Ask people to like your page on Google Plus too - this is factored into Google's ranking algorithms and will result in a higher search score for your portfolio.

#### Get linking

You need to drive traffic to your portfolio for it to be shared, so it's a good idea to start dropping the link around the place. Put it in your email signature and in the profile pages of your social networks, especially Twitter (if you've got an account!). You may also want to make sure that it's included on your personal blog and your LinkedIn page (clippings.me users can actually embed their clips right into their LinkedIn pages).

#### Keep it updated

There's nothing worse than an out-of-date writing portfolio. We recommend returning to your profile a couple of times a month to check that the links are all working and to add new pieces of work. This is a good thing to do because it allows you to build up a following around your portfolio, and it also shows the evolution of what you do, proving that you're active in the field and a good bet for your target audience!

#### Bibliography:

[http://www.prospects.ac.uk/how\\_to\\_write\\_a\\_cv.htm](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/how_to_write_a_cv.htm)

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**364MC - Finished Portfolio (2015-05-22 19:12)**

Here is the link to my finished Portfolio:

PORTFOLIO PDF

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**364MC - Module Evaluation (2015-05-22 19:12)**

Throughout this module, I have learnt a great deal about how to be a Media Professional and how to kick start my career as a TV Floor Manager. Although I am still undecided on Freelancing, I am confident I have learnt great knowledge about the role, the skills I will need, the entry requirements etc. It has also given me a great understanding the TV industry and Media industry as a whole. The module has allowed me to think professionally and learn how to develop my ambition. I am now aware of the challenges I am face and the journey I will have to take to reach my deal, but I feel confident I can do this and will be prepared for it. Not only have the module taught me the skills I will need and how to get a job, it has now also given me contacts within the industry I want a career in. Therefore, I can use these contacts in the future to help better my chance of getting a job.

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**364MC - BlogBooker Submission (2015-05-22 20:27)**

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*gads*

BlogBook v0.5,  
L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X 2<sub>ε</sub> & GNU/Linux.  
<http://www.blogbooker.com>

Edited: May 22, 2015

