



Organizing Your Research Portfolio

Outcomes, Questions, and Keywords

Research is driven by outcomes, interests and questions. This folder contains documents critical in guiding your research, including your learning outcomes, reflections on your relevant interests and experience, your primary research question, secondary questions, and your carefully curated list of keywords, all of which are essential in keeping your research focused and aligned closely with your objectives.

Research Tools & Software

The Research Tools & Software folder is a mini-toolkit, a place to store recommended software and digital tools that can optimize your research and organizational efforts. From data analysis tools to citation management, this folder or document is a place to jot down notes and links to tools to further streamline your project workflow.

Insights; Ideas and Inspiration

In this folder you can track your developing insights and ideas. This is a good place to keep notes on casual conversations and cursory findings about how your topic, problems and needs are discussed across contexts. You can include a mix of personal insights, informal chat summaries, and first impressions. As you progress, you can add additional documents, project ideas, interesting quotes, and statistics that might influence the direction of the research or the design of the project.

This can also be a space for links to websites and online platforms that provide useful information, links to credible articles, websites, and online forums that offer both surface-level and in-depth views of the topic. These notes will help remind you of potential avenues of research and sources of information.

Interviews and Surveys

When you begin interviewing and developing surveys, you'll want a space to keep your questionnaires, permissions, survey links,, transcripts, audio recordings, survey results, and analyses of interviews and surveys conducted. This could be further divided into sub-categories for different types of interviews or survey themes, facilitating efficient data retrieval.

Scholarly Research and Articles

For academic and peer-reviewed articles, this sub-folder contains additional subfolders and documents that deepen your understanding of the topic and the problem.

A central repository for quantitative data and statistics gathered from both initial research and scholarly sources is a must. Organizing this information here allows for easy access when establishing the importance of the topic, identifying problems, and outlining needs.

You might also want to start and keep a formal annotated bibliography, this ensures citations and article summaries, including statistics and quotes from useful sources are readily available for presentations, proposals, and final deliverables.

Project Development and Brainstorming

As you progress in your research, consider creating a sub-folder dedicated to the evolution of your project ideas, including those initial ideas, mind maps, project outlines, and brainstorming session notes specifically relevant to project ideas. This folder and its subfolder helps track the development of the project from conception to execution.

Drafts and Deliverables

Finally, you'll want to include a subfolder to store drafts, revisions, and final versions of presentations, proposals, and any other project deliverables you create along the way. It might be beneficial to organize this folder by the type of deliverable or project phase.