

FBM PROACTIVE PORTFOLIO BUILDING GUIDE

PRESS HERE TO
START

THE PROACTIVE FRAMEWORK

Who should use this framework?

Do you have a university course, scholarship or career in mind that you want to work towards, but have absolutely no idea on how to do so? The Proactive Framework was created to help you reach your specific goals.

There are so many different opportunities during our polytechnic years. Certain experiences may also influence your aspirations and you may change your mind by pursuing other end goals. It is often easy to lose sight on what we ultimately want to achieve.

Follow the subsequent checklists presented below. You will be more aware of yourself as well as how to create a refined action plan to seek out the most relevant opportunities and make the most out of them. We understand that everyone has different and diverse experiences, so go ahead and modify them to best suit your needs.

The checklists are also meant to accompany you throughout all the phases of your portfolio building journey. Feel free to refer to it whenever you feel lost or confused :)

Have fun!

PART I

PLANNING YOUR JOURNEY

As mentioned in the introductory guide, your portfolio should paint a cohesive picture of who you are and what you value. And just like in a video game, the first part before you even start your adventure is to plan it.

Apart from deciding on the [THEME], [ATTRIBUTES] and [MAP] of your portfolio in the following pages, you will also need to identify your [CHARACTER]. Choosing the starting [CHARACTER] for your portfolio is the most important step of the framework. It will ultimately determine the subsequent areas which you will need to invest more time and effort into.

The four starting characters are **Leader, Humanitarian, Scholar, and Innovator**:

A **LEADER** might have experience being the head of a student group, or even starting their own organisations. They are ambitious, empathetic, and excellent communicators, unafraid of taking control and ready to move things to the next step.

A **HUMANITARIAN** might have significant experience volunteering in the community or being engaged in activism. They want to make a positive impact on the world, and this mission is never let out of sight. They are diligent, socially aware, and altruistic.

A **SCHOLAR** is a born academic, and they might lose track of time learning more about their favourite field of study. They understand the importance of knowledge, and nothing is more fascinating than an experiment or debate. They are invested in understanding the world.

An **INNOVATOR** is interested in creation, be it scientific, artistic or entrepreneurial. They might use cutting-edge technology to solve a societal problem, brainstorm ideas for a startup, or write their own music. They are driven by novelty, uniqueness, and self-reliance.

You can select your persona by reflecting on the skills needed by your desired field of work, or by simply thinking about what kind of person you want to present yourself as to your dream school. You can also use the “Happening” Pyramid discussed in the introductory guide to figure out the persona with the most realistic chances of achieving success and excellence. Choose a persona that, simply put, feels like yourself. This might mean that you already have a track record of building towards this persona, or that you have the confidence to excel as this persona.

Of course, you should never box yourself in or begin to think of yourself as a stereotype. The persona is not meant to be an end-all guide. You should still actively explore your interests—it would not make sense to turn down an exciting leadership position because you think you are more established as a scholar. People change, especially as youth. While your starting [CHARACTER] can guide which area you might want to invest a bit more time and effort into, it should not encourage you to abandon your development in other fields.

I. CHOOSE YOUR [THEME]

What is the primary use of your portfolio?

The first step of portfolio building. By determining what you ultimately want to achieve with your portfolio, you will be able to shape your portfolio more coherently and efficiently.

- University**
- Scholarship**
- Work**

For example, a 'Work' portfolio can emphasise more on work experiences and internships while a 'Scholarship' or 'University' portfolio can include more academic achievements. Remember, your portfolio still can have multiple uses!

2. CHOOSE YOUR [CHARACTER]

What persona do you want to portray with your portfolio?

Your portfolio should present a cohesive picture of your strength and values. The next step is to decide how you want to come across to others.

- Leader**
- Humanitarian**
- Scholar**
- Innovator**

Do note that you should not solely focus on one persona and neglect the rest. Our portfolios should mimic our multi-faceted personalities, with an emphasis on certain dominant aspects.

IMPORTANT: Recall the "Happening Pyramid" when choosing your persona

3. CHOOSE YOUR [ATTRIBUTES]

What skills would you like to possess and hone?

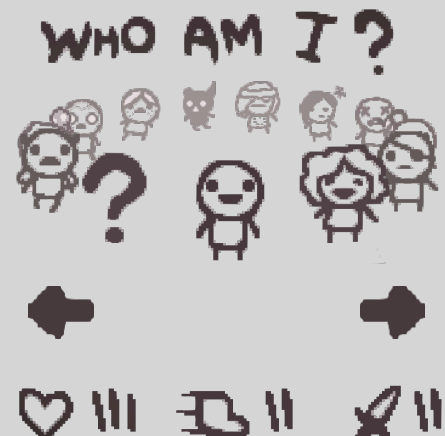
Once your main persona has been decided, it is time to evaluate relevant areas that you should invest more time and effort to develop.

Hard Skills:

- What are the skills needed by your desired organisation?
 - Which skills are you passionate about learning?
 - Which skills are you currently unfamiliar with?

Transferable Skills:

- What are the skills relevant to your desired organisation?
 - Which skills do you personally want to improve on?
 - Which skills are you currently weaker at?



4. CHOOSE YOUR [MAP]

Which category of opportunities do you need?

The last step is to determine the most relevant type of opportunities that will help you develop the persona and attributes decided above. Have Fun!

Click on the text to go to the next part of the checklist!



LEADERSHIP



**COMMUNITY
SERVICE**



INTERNSHIPS



**STUDENT-LED
INITIATIVES**



**COMPETITIONS
& FORUMS**

PART 2

ENTERING THE DUNGEON

A. BEFORE JUMPING IN

Throughout your limited time as a student, not every opportunity that comes by will be a valuable one. Carefully consider if your time is used well or you may end up being held back by unnecessary burdens.

This checklist will help you be aware of various characteristics that separate worthwhile opportunities from empty time-drainers. Keep in mind that some opportunities lie in the intersection between the two categories and you should evaluate them using both checklists.

B. FIGHTING THE BOSS

Now that you have identified the opportunities that are most valuable to you, it may feel like all you have to do is get the job done. But the hard work is not over; it is now time to SLAY IT.

As you undertake these pursuits, it is important to constantly reflect upon your progress and identify how you can take your work one step further. Each project should never feel the same for too long. You should be continually evolving alongside the project. This part of the checklist can be used at any point during your experience to make sure you are getting the most out of the opportunity.

C. UNLOCKING ACHIEVEMENTS & EXP

After working hard at your goals, you may find yourself with **tangible** ACHIEVEMENTS such as awards, prizes, or publications to show for your work. These are concrete examples of your accomplishments. It is also worth examining whether there are any final “EXP” you can take away from the progress.

EXP in this context refers to anything **intangible** such as experience, skills, and lessons learned — stuff that will help you truly become “OP”! So while unlocking achievements is fulfilling, it is also important to ask yourself a series of questions to identify how you have grown and if there is still room for growth. This will let you maximise the lessons learnt from the experience, so that the next time you pursue a similar project, you will be able to utilise more effective methods.

A. BEFORE JUMPING IN

BEFORE rushing into any leadership position that comes your way, use the following questions to determine whether it is actually worthwhile to pursue it.



- Are you interested in what the organisation is doing?

Your interest should be the fundamental determinant of whether the opportunity should be pursued.

- Are you only joining the organisation in name?

If you are only applying for this position to add it into your CV, you should really reconsider. Apart from being irresponsible, your empty title will be evident when there is no personal development or achievements to show for.

- What can you accomplish with your position?

Evaluate your competence and determine if they are useful to what you will be doing in the organisation.

- Are your members and peers equally passionate about the organisation?

This is an important factor if you are really hoping to change or get things done. If your peers are only aiming to maintain the status quo of their predecessors, then it could be an uphill battle that you may want to reconsider.

- Do you have any relevant skills or experience for the position?

A reality check on your own suitability for the position.

B. FIGHTING THE BOSS

DURING the tenure of your position, use the following questions to evaluate your performance and determine how to maximise your growth and experience.



- What have you accomplished so far?

A check-in question to reflect on the progress of you and your team

- Have you received feedback on your performance from people under your leadership and those in higher positions?

Feedback from others is essential as this can help you identify areas for improvements and determine whether you are heading in the right direction.

- Are there any tangible results/data that shows the success of your organisation?

Quantitative data such as membership or outreach numbers can be used as KPIs to substantiate your track record

- What skills have you developed or are planning to develop?

Recall the attributes that you identified in Step 3 of "Planning Your Journey".

- What other actionable plans do you have?

After reflecting on the questions above, how are you going to move forward from here?

[Click here to view the final part of the checklist once you have defeated the boss!](#)



COMMUNITY SERVICE

A. BEFORE JUMPING IN

BEFORE starting on any community service, use the following questions to determine whether it is actually worthwhile to pursue it.



- Is it something you truly care about?

Your concern and passion should be the fundamental determinant of whether the opportunity should be pursued.

- Are your actions sustainable?

Refer to the FBM Community Service Guide to understand the significance of sustainability. A one-off volunteering event is often unlikely to have long term impacts. It also does not reflect well on your commitment to the cause.

- Does it help to develop skills that you want to work on?

Recall the attributes that you identified in Step 3 of "Planning Your Journey". You may also consider how the opportunity can help you develop relevant soft and hard skills.

- Does the impact on the community match the intent you have?

Given that community service can have a myriad of results, believing in the means and ends of the project is really important as it can influence your actions, interest and commitment in the long run.

- Are you getting involved with the community in such a way that it serves their needs before yours?

A reality check on whether you are doing it more for your portfolio than for the people in need.

B. FIGHTING THE BOSS

DURING your community service, use the following questions to evaluate your performance and determine how to maximise your growth and experience.



- How committed have you been (only applies to long term projects)?

Commitment can come in many forms such as your contributions to a project or attendance for a weekly mentoring programme etc.

- Are you receiving direct feedback from the community, and is there tangible documentation of this?

Feedback from others is essential as this can help you identify areas for improvements and determine whether you are heading in the right direction. The documentation can serve as references of your contributions in the future.

- Are you looking out for opportunities to maximise your help?

Apart from having the heart to serve, helping others effectively also means helping them efficiently.

- Has your efforts yielded any measurable and/or sustainable impact?

Self-explanatory question to track your personal progress.

- What new insights have you gained from the experience so far?

A midpoint reflection.



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INTERNSHIPS

A. BEFORE JUMPING IN

BEFORE accepting any internship opportunities, use the following questions to determine whether it is actually worthwhile to pursue it.



- What are you hoping to get out of the internship?

Define your goal so that you know exactly what kind of opportunity to look for.

- Is it an established company/organisation?

Given that the skillsets and experience gained in MNCs or SMEs are quite different, your decision really depends on what you are hoping to achieve through the internship.

- Will you gain skills and experience important to you?

You can do some online research, read through forums and ask your interviewer or other relevant contacts to find out if your potential job scope is aligned with your goals.

- Who would you be reporting to and is this someone you can learn from?

If your interviewer is going to be your potential boss, it is advisable to discuss with them about what you are hoping to learn from the internship. Their reception to it can be a good indicator of how willing they are to mentor or nurture you instead of solely using you as cheap labour.

B. FIGHTING THE BOSS

DURING your internship, use the following questions to evaluate your performance and determine how to maximise your growth and experience.



- Are there any other ways you can value-add your team?

This can include workflows that can be improved upon or other services that you can offer to help your colleague with their work.

- Have you received any feedback on your work?

Feedback from others is essential as this can help you determine the skills that you are competent in and identify areas for improvements.

- Have you made any new connections?

Networking with your people from various departments can provide insights on various career pathways, job scopes and perhaps even future job opportunities.

- Who are the people you feel comfortable listing as a reference moving forward, or asking for a recommendation letter from?

Basically ~~suck up~~ to find someone who understands and appreciate your work

- What have you accomplished or are planning to accomplish?

A midpoint reflection on your work and how you can further grow during your internship.



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STUDENT-LED INITIATIVES

A. BEFORE JUMPING IN

BEFORE creating any Student-Led Initiatives (SLI), use the following questions to determine whether it is actually worthwhile to pursue it.



- Is it something you truly care about?

A self-explanatory question... if not why even bother doing it.

- Has something similar been done before?

*If yes, find out how the other projects fared and consider if there are any relevant learning points you could use.
If no, find out if it is because your idea is not practical and/or feasible.*

- What are you hoping to get out of it (i.e. skills to develop and experience to gain)?

Define your personal objectives so you know exactly how to work towards it.

- Do you have a team with the right values and passion?

Unless you are planning to be a one-man army, you will need like-minded and competent people to make the project a success.

- Is your project addressing a significant issue or need?

An initiative tackling something with little demand is just a waste of time and resources.

B. FIGHTING THE BOSS

DURING the planning phase of your project, use the following questions to evaluate whether you are going in the right direction to create an effective SLI.



- What is the size of social impact?

Evaluate the potential number of people that will benefit from your project. While quality and quantity are both equally important, having maximum input for minimal output may not be a worthwhile use of your time and effort.

- Are there any measurable KPIs to track progress?

Self-explanatory question to substantiate your successes and failures

- Is the idea and/or effect sustainable?

An effective initiative must be long term and/or impactful enough in its message to elicit sustained benefits for the people and community involved.

- Is your project scalable?

A project that has the potential to be scaled up and replicated by others can benefit more people — making it more effective and sustainable.

[Click here to view the final part of the checklist once you have defeated the boss!](#)



COMPETITIONS & FORUMS

A. BEFORE JUMPING IN

BEFORE joining any competitions or forums, use the following questions to determine whether it is actually worthwhile to pursue it.



- Is it organised by a reputable organisation/institution?

A common sense question. Events by recognisable and established organisations will carry more weight in your portfolio.

- How many participants are there, and how selective are the awards?

A question to evaluate your statistical chances of standing out in the competition and winning.

- Does it help to hone and/or publicise your skills?

Recall the attributes that you identified in Step 3 of "Planning Your Journey".

- How committed and prepared are you?

Consider your interest and competency in the event. If you also have other commitments that may interfere with your preparation, your performance may not be optimal.

- Do you know others who have also participated, or anyone that can be a mentor during preparation?

Having friends, seniors or lecturers who can help you will definitely give you an advantage.

B. FIGHTING THE BOSS

DURING the competition or forum, use the following questions to ensure that you are maximising the opportunity.



- Are there any new connections that you can make?

You will definitely have a chance to interact with other participants and professionals during the event, so why not broaden your network of friends and contacts during the competition/forum.

- Are there any mentors or internship opportunities available?

Depending on the event, there may be industry networking sessions for you to interact with working professionals and representatives from various companies.

- Are there any niche skills that you can contribute to the team?

The competition or forum will typically assign you into teams. Consider whether you can complement your other teammates by offering skillsets or experiences that they may lack.

[Click here to view the final part of the checklist once you have defeated the boss!](#)





C. UNLOCKING ACHIEVEMENTS & EXP

CONGRATS on making it this far! The journey to defeating the boss (completing the opportunity) may not be an easy one, but it is definitely worth your time and effort. However, the adventure is not over.

To fully maximise your experience, you should have a final evaluation and reflection on the lessons learnt. Below are some guiding questions to ask yourself:

Evaluating the Experience

- Are you proud of your final deliverables (products, results, outcomes etc)?
 - If yes, what's so good about them?
 - If no, what's wrong with them?
- How did you respond to challenges? Would you do anything different next time?
- Which of your methods or processes worked particularly well?
- Which of your methods or processes were difficult or frustrating to use?

Reflecting on Lessons Learnt

- What was your most interesting insight?
- How did your involvement and participation fit into your broader goals of developing yourself?
- What would you want to improve on?
- What did you realise about yourself?
 - Did this give you a new perspective,
 - challenge your point of view,
 - Introduce you to new techniques, skills, processes?

Additional Questions (for SLIs and Leadership Positions)

- How accurate were our original estimates of the size and effort of our project? What did we over or underestimate?
- What can be improved on?
- Did you have the right people assigned to all project roles?
- Were roles and responsibilities of team/stakeholder clearly delineated and communicated?
 - If no, how could things be improved?
- If given a chance to do it again, what would you have done differently