

CREATING A BRAG FILE

What is a brag file?

A “brag file” is a collection of professional artifacts that help tell your personal story of accomplishment and success. It should include all “brag” worthy achievements. It can be a list, paper file or a digital portfolio. Either way, it should be a handy place to keep track of, easily retrieve, and showcase your effort, abilities, and contributions.

Why do I need one?

There are three main benefits to keeping a brag file.

1. Take a moment to acknowledge your job well done.
2. Track your progress and growth over time.
3. Be ready to share with others when needed.

What should I brag about?

Educational Accomplishments:

If you have degrees (in progress or completed) or have earned certification in a training program, these are great accomplishments that need to find their way into your brag file. Take a moment to write a short statement about how these educational opportunities helped you grow and the difference they have made for you personally and professionally.

Testimonials

You may also have had evaluations (from your supervisor or from other professional activities like presentations) and these can be powerful additions to your file.

Work Samples

Work sample, like reports, analyses, presentations, planning documents, etc., are great things to have in your file. They show the quality of your work and effort.

Projects and Leadership Roles

If you have been involved in a special project (like a change initiative) be sure to include this. Also, if you have been in a leadership role, this is worth bragging about. It's not the title that's important, it's the impact you created in your role.

Volunteer Activities

Volunteer activities are great things to brag about. They not only show how you manage your time they help tell a story about your personal values, commitments, and investment in community.

Awards

If you have earned awards or recognition, include these. Be able to explain clearly what you did to earn this recognition.

When do I pull from my brag file?



LinkedIn or Other Professional Profile:

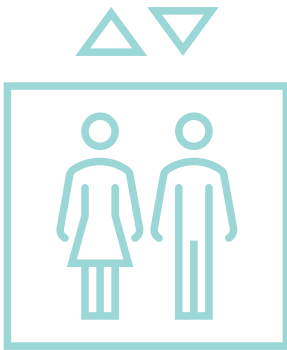
Perfect place to brag (use this also as a place to connect with and call attention to collaborative projects and partnerships).

Resume:

Your resume is the primary place where you will list professional accomplishments.

Interviews:

Review your brag file before an interview. It will help you with the important storytelling that happens in interview settings.

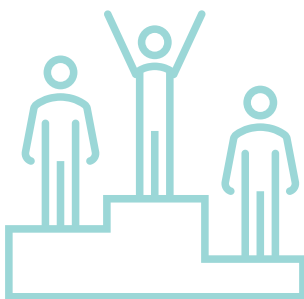


Elevator Pitch:

When you bump into someone you want to develop a professional connection with have a project or accomplishment from your brag file ready to discuss. This can be a great way to impress others and jump start potential collaborative partnerships.

Portfolio:

You may want to consider creating a digital portfolio (particularly if you are in a creative field or have several projects to showcase). A readymade link to a professional portfolio can really come in handy when you want to showcase your accomplishments in real time.



Feeling Awesome:

You may not have the confidence to publicly showcase your accomplishments yet but starting a private brag file, for your own satisfaction, is also highly recommended. It can be easy to forget or discount your growing number of achievements. Even you need to be reminded of how awesome you are.

If you are a young professional, consider making an “aspirational” brag file that projects where you would like to be in 1-3 years. Use this “future self” visualization to help build motivation and guide your choice of professional development activities. With a little extra effort and planning you will be amazed at how much you can accomplishment.