

# The Human Portfolio Project: A Student-Directed, Inquiry-Based Approach to High School

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The Human Portfolio Project helps students take agency for their learning, encouraging a culture of personal enterprise in a community-minded classroom. Sometimes offered as Business Studies courses and applicable to all content areas, learners present and differentiate themselves in the 'marketplace', creating projects of their own design. The key is for students to recognise themselves as enabled, possessing unique qualities within a community that dignifies all participants. Mandated curriculum is used as a frame through which to consider their projects, and students learn to make connections between what they are doing and what they are 'supposed' to be learning. Activities are framed using the language of finance (value, invest, exchange), connected to the practice of Positive Psychology (autonomy, grit, optimism).

This program lends itself to any classroom environment because:

- **Teachers are enabled** to do the work they're good at (mentoring and auditing instead of directing and administrating)
- **Students are encouraged** to develop projects of their own choosing (accepting more responsibility when they're in the driver's seat)

Students are engaged through the following activities:

- **Who are you?**  
Ask students to articulate their particular visions of 'success', identifying their existing capacities to create
- **What are you building?**  
Ask students to commit to a goal of their own choosing, sharing their process with others
- **Who can you share it with?**  
Ask students to identify, design and market a collaborative initiative for use in their community

Through the activities, students learn two distinct sets of tools:

- **Process Portfolios (Evidence Building)**  
Documented evidence of students' learning process
- **Tracking Tools (Accountability Record)**  
Tracks students' decision making process

These tools are useful because:

1. Turns **process into output**, where students curate their unique approach to achieving the common targets shared by their peers
2. Holds students **accountable** for their choices;
3. Offers a way to **demonstrate achievement** of mandated content outcomes.

To find out more, please visit [lifewellspent.ca](http://lifewellspent.ca)

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