



# The Graduate-To-Industry Launch Kit

STARTER WORKBOOK FOR  
FASHION DESIGN & MARKETING GRADUATES

VANFASHIONMARKETING  
VFMARK

# WELL DONE! YOU'VE JUST GRADUATED FROM FASHION SCHOOL –

CONGRADUATIONS!



## Why This Kit Matters

You've just completed a major milestone—graduation. Now, you're stepping into an industry that's fast-paced, competitive, and often unclear about how newcomers break in.

## Here's the truth:

Only 10% of fashion grads move into design roles immediately after school (CFDA, 2023), 27% freelance without clear guidance or support, many job seekers struggle to translate their student work into industry-ready portfolios, and most don't have the connections or structure to confidently launch their careers.

**This kit was created to bridge that gap.**

# WHAT YOU'LL GAIN

*A practical workbook for fashion design and marketing graduates.*

**This is not just another “how-to” PDF. It’s a structured, confidence-building system designed to help you:**

- Take intentional action in your first 30 days after graduation
- Audit and upgrade your skills to meet real-world industry needs
- Build a standout portfolio for jobs, freelance, or launching your brand
- Pitch yourself to collaborators, mentors, and future clients
- And most importantly—stay grounded and empowered during this transition

***You don’t need to have it all figured out—just a place to begin.***

*This guide is that place.*

## How to Use This Workbook

- Complete one section per week—or skip around based on what you need
- Use the templates, fillable checklists, and scripts to take real action
- Bookmark your wins, reflections, and ideas—you’re building momentum

**Your talent got you through school. This guide helps you turn it into a career.**



Whether your path leads to a studio, a showroom, a retail floor, or your own label—this kit is your starting block.  
**You don't need to be ready for everything.  
You just need to start.**

**Let's go.**

- Bridging the gap between education + industry @VanFashionMarketing

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# First 30 Days Post Graduation

## Week 1: Clarify & Assess

### Reflection Prompts:

- What kind of fashion work energizes you most—design, styling, marketing, retail?
- Who are 3 creatives or companies whose values align with yours?
- What skills do you currently feel confident in—and where do you feel the biggest gap?

## Week 2: Build Visibility

### Reflection Prompts:

- Which 3 pieces from your schoolwork best show your potential?
- If someone scrolled your portfolio in 30 seconds, what would they understand about you?
- What platform (website, IG, LinkedIn) could boost your discoverability right now?

## Week 3: Network & Apply

### Reflection Prompts:

- Who do you admire that you could reach out to this week?
- What kinds of job titles or freelance gigs excite you?
- What would success look like at the end of this week—one reply, one pitch sent?

## Week 4: Polish & Reflect

### Reflection Prompts:

- What feedback have you received that surprised or encouraged you?
- What parts of your pitch or resume still feel unclear?
- If you had to describe your style or voice in one line—what would it be?

# Portfolio Strategy & Reflection Prompts

## Portfolio Reflection Prompts (for Both Tracks):

- What is the story you're telling through your portfolio as a whole?
- Which project are you most proud of and why?
- How would a stranger describe your creative voice after viewing your work?

*This isn't theory—it's action. Let's build the career you've imagined, one decision at a time. – @VanFashionMarketing*

## Portfolio Builder Templates

Choose the version that fits your path:

### Portfolio Reflection Prompts (for Both Tracks):

- What is the story you're telling through your portfolio as a whole?
- Which project are you most proud of and why?
- How would a stranger describe your creative voice after viewing your work?

### Marketing Prompts:

- What brand challenge did this campaign solve?
- What strategy did you use to connect with the audience?
- How did you bring the brand to life visually and verbally?

## **Portfolio Builder Template 1: Fashion Design**

1. Cover page (name, logo, contact info)
2. Visual Identity Board / Moodboard
3. Collection Highlights (illustrations, photos, tech packs)
4. Concept Narrative (1–2 paragraphs)
5. Lookbook Spread or Garment Details
6. Press/Runway Features (if applicable)
7. Resume or CV page

### **Additional Design-Specific Prompts for Reflection:**

- What materials or construction techniques are most important to your creative identity?
- How does this collection or project reflect your values or personal journey?
- What challenges did you face during production—and how did you overcome them?

## **Portfolio Builder Template 2: Fashion Marketing**

1. About Me + Skill Highlights
2. Brand Case Study (Problem > Strategy > Execution > Outcome)
3. Sample Work (social posts, moodboards, decks, styling)
4. Retail/Visual Merch Plan (if applicable)
5. Campaign Results (mock metrics or concept decks)
6. Testimonials or instructor feedback
7. Resume or LinkedIn link

### **Additional Marketing-Specific Prompts for Reflection:**

- What was the unique selling proposition or key message of this campaign?
- How did you adapt the strategy to suit your intended audience?
- What channel (social, email, in-store, etc.) was most impactful and why?
- What inspired this project or campaign?
- What role did you play in the outcome?
- How did you apply a real marketing or design principle?

# Search Tracker

Suggested (spreadsheet style) Columns:

- Company Name
- Role Title
- Contact Person
- Date Applied
- Follow-up Date
- Response Received (Y/N)
- Notes

Tips:

- Use color coding for priority or deadlines
- Add a "Mentorship" tab to track industry convos
- Schedule a "weekly check-in" for tracker review



**Real-world steps.**

**Creative momentum.**

Everything in here is made for where you are now.

# Skill Gap Audit Tool

## Fashion Design Graduate

**Instructions:** Rate your comfort level from 1 (no experience) to 5 (fully confident).

Add notes to plan your next steps.

Table with 15+ core technical and creative design skills (already structured).

### Fashion Design Skill Gap Audit

#### Fashion Design Skill Gap Audit

Skill	Rating (1-5)	Notes / Learning Plan
Adobe Illustrator		
Adobe Photoshop		
CLO 3D or other 3D software		
Hand Sketching		
Digital Flats & Technical Drawings		
Sewing Construction		
Pattern Drafting		
Draping		
Tech Pack Creation		
Moodboard & Concept Development		
Trend Forecasting		
Fabric Sourcing & Material Knowledge		
Garment Fitting & Revisions		
Line Sheet Creation		
Styling for Lookbooks/Runway		

# Skill Gap Audit

## Fashion Marketing Graduate

**Instructions:** Rate your comfort level from 1 (no experience) to 5 (fully confident).

Use the notes to plan learning goals or training.

Table with 15+ marketing-specific tools and knowledge areas

### Fashion Marketing Skill Gap Audit

Fashion Marketing Skill Gap Audit		
Skill	Rating (1-5)	Notes / Learning Plan
Canva / Creative Suite		
Adobe InDesign or Photoshop		
Copywriting		
Trend Analysis & Insights		
Social Media Strategy		
Content Calendar Planning		
Influencer Outreach		
Email Marketing e.g. Mailchimp		
Website Management e.g. Shopify		
Brand Storytelling		
Campaign Planning		
Visual Merchandising		
Basic Analytics (IG Insights, GA, etc.)		
Presentation Design (Decks, Pitches)		
Public Speaking or Client Pitching		

**Confidence isn't something you wait for.**

**It's something you build by showing up prepared.** - @VanFashionMarketing

# Pricing Template

## For Fashion Design Graduates

### Freelance Pricing Examples:

- Custom Garment: \$200–\$600 per piece depending on complexity
- Illustration Package: \$100 for 3 concept sketches
- Technical Flats: \$40/hr or per garment basis
- Styling Assistance: \$150 per lookbook shoot

# Email Template

## Email Template (Commission Inquiry)

Subject: Commission or Custom Garment Inquiry

Hi [Name],

I'm a recent graduate in fashion design and currently taking on freelance projects. I create custom garments, illustrations, and offer design development services. If you're looking to collaborate or commission a piece, I'd love to connect.

[Insert Portfolio Link]

Thanks for your time!

[Your Name]

## Cold Outreach Email Template

Subject: Freelance Fashion Marketing Support

Hi [Name],

I'm a recent grad in fashion marketing looking to build strong brand stories through design, digital content, and strategy. If you're open to collaborating or need freelance support, I'd love to share my portfolio.

[Insert Link]

Thank you for your time!

Best,

[Your Name]

# Mini Pricing Guide

## For Fashion Marketing Graduates

### Freelance Pricing Examples:

- Social Media Content Package: \$250 for 5 branded posts
- Email Marketing Campaign: \$150 per setup and automation
- Brand Strategy Deck: \$300+ depending on scope
- Product Photography Coordination: \$100/day project support

# Email Template

## Email Template (Freelance Marketing Services)

Subject: Freelance Fashion Marketing Support

Hi [Name],

I'm a recent grad in fashion marketing and specialize in helping fashion brands grow through content, digital strategy, and campaign planning. I'd love to share my portfolio if you're open to creative collaboration or support.

[Insert Portfolio Link]

Thanks for your time!

Best,

[Your Name]

### Freelance Pricing Basics:

- Research average hourly rates in your region (e.g. \$25-\$65/hr entry)
- Consider project-based bundles (e.g., \$300 for 5 styled IG posts)
- Track time spent to refine future pricing

***You already have the creativity. Now it's time to build clarity. - VFMRK.com***



**One connection. One pitch.  
One page at a time.**

It starts here.

# Networking Passport

## Reflection Prompts:

- Who are three people in fashion (locally or online) you'd love to learn from?
- What spaces or communities make you feel seen and supported?
- How do you want people to feel when they see your name or brand online?

## Event Types to Attend:

- Designer pop-ups or market events
- Fashion education panels (online)
- Creative meetups or co-working spaces
- Instagram lives or LinkedIn webinars with pros

## Follow-Up Script (DM or Email)

Hi [Name], it was great hearing your insights at [event]. I'm building my career in [your focus], and I'd love to stay connected. Here's my work: [portfolio link]



# Well-Being Planner

## For Fashion Design Graduates

### Mentor Quote Examples:

- “You don’t need to figure it all out. You just need momentum.”
- “Trust the process. Build your own proof.”

### Checkpoints:

- Imposter thoughts I noticed today: \_\_\_\_\_
- What I’m proud of: \_\_\_\_\_

One thing I’ll try differently tomorrow:

---

**Daily Reflection Prompt:** What did I explore creatively today that pushed me forward?

### Mentor Quote Examples:

- “Every great collection started with a single sketch.”
- “You design for a future that doesn’t exist yet—and that’s powerful.”

### Checkpoints:

- What part of my process felt meaningful today? \_\_\_\_\_
- What visual or tactile inspiration did I connect with? \_\_\_\_\_
- What is one idea I’m curious to pursue further? \_\_\_\_\_

**Made for the fashion grad who wants more than a diploma. You want momentum. You want options.** – Selena Grummett

# Well-Being Planner

## For Fashion Marketing Graduates

### Mentor Quote Examples:

- “You don’t need to figure it all out. You just need momentum.”
- “Trust the process. Build your own proof.”

### Checkpoints:

- Imposter thoughts I noticed today: \_\_\_\_\_
- What I’m proud of: \_\_\_\_\_

One thing I’ll try differently tomorrow:

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**Daily Reflection Prompt:** What value did I create or communicate today?

### Mentor Quote Examples:

- “Marketing is about making others feel seen.”
- “Strategy is creativity with purpose.”

### Checkpoints:

- A message I was proud to shape today: \_\_\_\_\_
- What did I learn about my audience or client? \_\_\_\_\_
- What idea am I testing, refining, or ready to share? \_\_\_\_\_
- Daily Reflection Prompt: What did I do today that moved me 1% closer to my goal?

***The gap between school and industry is real. This guide bridges it—with purpose, clarity, and creativity. - VFMRK.com***

**Let this toolkit be your warmup.  
Let professional launch support be your breakthrough.**

Inquire about consulting, brand launch services or 1:1  
mentorship. - VFMRK.com | Van Fashion Marketing

*Transforming ideas into brands, digital assets and  
market-ready experiences.*



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QUESTIONS? SUGGESTIONS? COMMENTS? GLOW UP PRAISES?  
SEND VANFASHIONMARKETING AN EMAIL: [hello@vfmrk.com](mailto:hello@vfmrk.com)