

Use this comprehensive **Resume-Building Guide** to organize your job history, experience, education and personal information before beginning to create your resume.

After you've filled in the following template, create your resume on a computer. Be sure to upgrade your resume with keywords from the **Action Words** sheet in this packet.

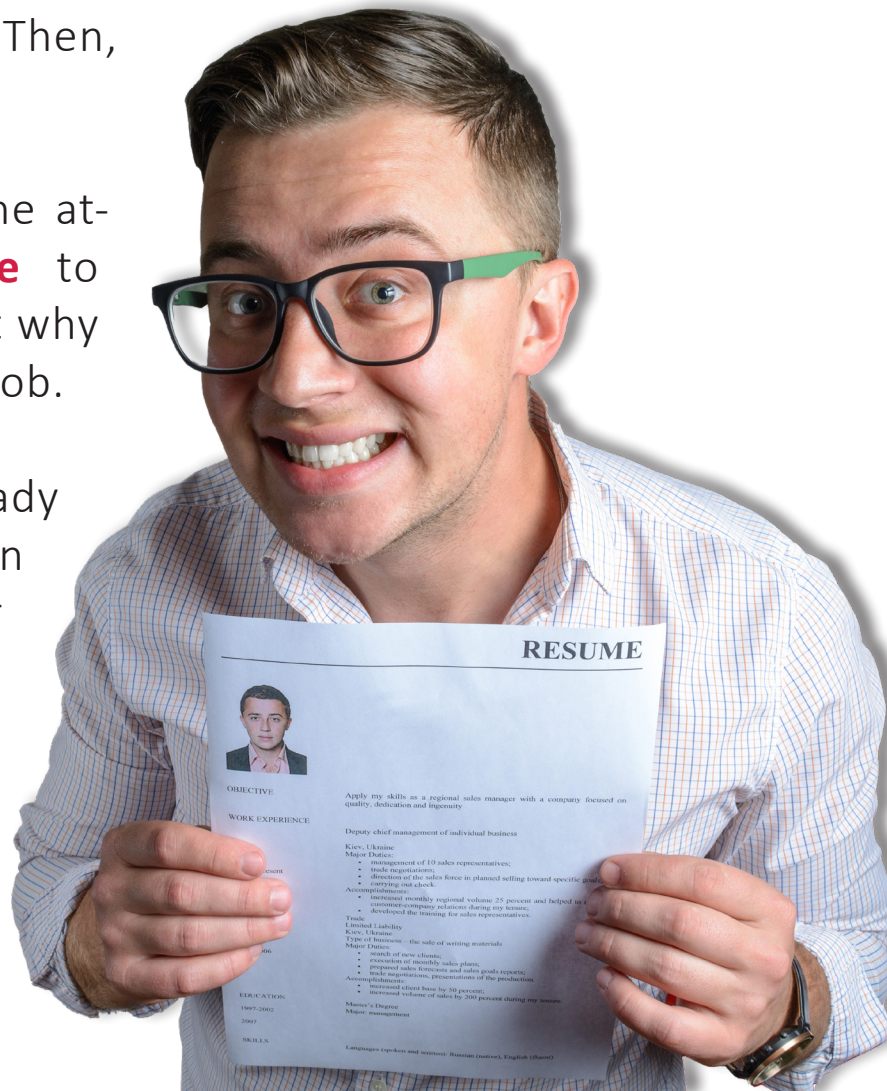
Be sure to work in a comprehensive use of **Soft Skills** into your job history that highlight your talents and accomplishments.

Finally, **proofread** your resume. Then check it for errors. Then check it for mistakes. Then oversights. Then, ... well, ... you get the idea.

Once it's ready to send, use the attached **Cover Letter Example** to draft a strong letter to highlight why you're the right person for the job.

With our help, you'll be ready for your next job interview in no time! Visit any one of our six service centers to get help from a Talent Specialist. Find the center nearest you at **MWWC.org/Contact**.

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## Use this guide to help build your resume

Everyone has an opinion about what a resume should look like, what it should include and how it should be presented on the page. No two people will agree on a resume format when asked for advice. Therefore, you should take advantage of the numerous resources available and create a resume that you are comfortable with. Here are some tips we recommend:

- A resume is a brief, one-to-two-page written summary that communicates to the reader your unique combination of skills, experience and abilities.
- Don't try to prepare your resume to suit each employer's needs. Instead target your resume to specific opportunities.
- Whenever possible, research the organization/position and target your resume accordingly.
- Focus on what the employer wants to know and what you can offer the organization.
- Think of your resume as a marketing tool or advertisement, not a historical document.
- Proofread it for accuracy, relevance, spelling, grammatical or any other errors.
- Ask someone else to read it, they may have some new ideas or find something you missed.
- List references on a separate sheet of paper and contact those listed periodically during your job search to ensure that they are still willing to be contacted.
- Do not state "References available upon request" on your resume. It is already assumed that you would supply these if asked by a potential employer and is unnecessary.
- Whenever possible include a cover letter when submitting a resume, but make it specific to the position applying for. See "Cover Letter Tip Sheet" for suggestions.
- Do not incorporate more than one type of work into a single resume. For example: A person who has a background in both childcare and the manufacturing industry would have a separate resume that highlights their skills for each field.
- Do not list personal or irrelevant information (i.e. marital status, hobbies, certain group affiliations). This type of personal information typically hurts more often than helps your chances to securing an interview.
- Remember, all information on your resume is subject to verification by the employer. Any discrepancies would likely result in not obtaining the job and could be grounds for dismissal if found after starting employment.
- Utilize resources like [Careeronestop.org](http://Careeronestop.org) and [Onetonline.org](http://Onetonline.org) for sample job descriptions and other tools.
- A resume is not easily created in one setting, is truly never complete and needs to be updated often.



# Resume Helper

Use this sheet to compile info for your resume

**Use back of pages if needed and don't worry if you do not have some entries.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
City & Street \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Summarize your experience in different fields or knowledge, including number of years.**

Field 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
Field 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
Field 3. \_\_\_\_\_

**List specific areas of skill, including technologies, tools, and equipment.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**List related experience and skills such as foreign languages, community activities and volunteer work (particularly if you are just beginning your career).**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Education

High School \_\_\_\_\_  
City & Street \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

College \_\_\_\_\_  
City & Street \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_  
Major \_\_\_\_\_ Degree \_\_\_\_\_

## Professional Certifications & Licenses

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Military (include branch, location, position, rank, years, honorable discharge, accomplishments, awards, etc.)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Resume Helper

Use this sheet to compile info for your resume

## Work History (beginning with most recent or current employment)

Company \_\_\_\_\_ Start & End Years \_\_\_\_\_

Title/Position \_\_\_\_\_ City & Street \_\_\_\_\_

Brief description of duties and responsibilities \_\_\_\_\_

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Briefly describe specific achievements that set you apart from other employees

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Company \_\_\_\_\_ Start & End Years \_\_\_\_\_

Title/Position \_\_\_\_\_ City & Street \_\_\_\_\_

Brief description of duties and responsibilities \_\_\_\_\_

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Briefly describe specific achievements that set you apart from other employees

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# Action Words

Use these words to make your resume stand out!

## From Plain... To Powerful

did/took care of...	performed, achieved, handled, completed, managed, accomplished, processed, administered
setup/started...	arranged, initiated, launched, organized, implemented, invented, established, introduced, spearheaded, founded
put together...	compiled, coordinated, collected, constructed
wrote...	composed, formulated, drafted, recorded, monitored, documented
kept up...	maintained, managed, balanced
led...	directed, headed, guided, conducted
made...	created, produced, devised, designed, established
made ready...	prepared, planned, arranged
made better...	improved, overhauled, streamlined, restructured, upgraded, revamped, revitalized, reorganized, remodeled, transformed
checked...	reviewed, verified, monitored, examined, analyzed
made sure...	assured, ensured, checked
gave...	provided, supplied, presented
showed...	demonstrated, displayed, presented, trained, instructed, coached
got...	obtained, secured, acquired

## General

accomplished	completed	eliminated	introduced	produced
achieved	composed	established	invented	provided
acquired	conducted	evaluated	justified	recorded
adjusted	consolidated	examined	launched	remodeled
administered	constructed	formulated	maintained	reorganized
advised	coordinated	founded	managed	restructured
analyzed	created	gathered	modified	revamped
approved	delivered	generated	monitored	reviewed
arranged	designated	guided	motivated	revitalized
balanced	designed	handled	obtained	secured
built	detected	headed	organized	selected
calculated	determined	implemented	performed	spearheaded
coached	devised	improved	persuaded	streamlined
charted	directed	initiated	planned	trained
collected	documented	instructed	prepared	transformed
compared	drafted	integrated	presented	verified
compiled	edited	interpreted	processed	



Soft skills are not taught in a classroom. They are what most would consider people skills, and are useful across all industries. They can be considered natural abilities and are related to emotional intelligence. Use these strong skills words below in your resume.

## **Adaptability**

Decision making  
Optimism  
Self-confidence  
Organization

## **Attention to Detail**

Critical observation  
Listening  
Organization  
Memory  
Recall  
Scheduling

## **Calm Communication**

Confidence  
Verbal communication  
Written communication  
Friendliness

## **Creativity**

Divergent thinking  
Insight  
Experimenting  
Design  
Questioning

## **Interpersonal Skills**

Empathy  
Humor  
Sensitivity  
Patience  
Public speaking  
Diplomacy

## **Leadership**

Project management  
Selflessness  
Humility  
Cultural intelligence  
Authenticity  
Versatility  
Trust  
Mentorship

## **Problem Solving**

Analysis  
Initiative  
Persistence  
Persuasion  
Brainstorming  
Decision making

## **Teamwork**

Conflict management  
Active listening  
Collaboration  
Coordination  
Mediation  
Delegation  
Negotiating

## **Time Management**

Goal setting  
Self-starter  
Focus  
Delegation  
Coping  
Organization  
Stress management

## **Work Ethic**

Integrity  
Responsibility  
Discipline  
Dependability  
Self-motivated  
Professionalism

## **Using Soft Skills on Your Resume**

It is best to avoid listing soft skills in bullet format. Anyone can list “effective communicator” or “team-player” on their resume. A highly effective way to convey these skills is to weave them into descriptive and engaging sentences. Here’s an example of what we mean:

### **Before**

*Edited from 3 to 5 reports per week, catching 95% of all grammatical and spelling errors.*

### **After**

*Led team of 5 web designers, guiding them toward the launch of an innovative solution to a complex problem, that resulted in earning 5 industry awards.*

## Follow these tips to draft a strong cover letter

- Job seekers frequently send a cover letter along with their resume as a way of introducing themselves to potential employers and explaining their suitability for the desired position.
- Don't make the reader guess what you are asking for; all cover letters should specify the position applying for and be written to address the employer's needs.
- Avoid mass mailing generic cover letters. This strategy is rarely, if ever, worth the time and energy spent. Employers can quickly spot a form letter, and it will not make a good first impression. Quality is much more effective than quantity.
- Tell specifically how you learned about the position or the organization. Include any specific referral information and the names of individuals who may have suggested you contact the company.
- Call attention to elements of your background and experience relevant to the position you are seeking. Be as specific as possible, using examples.
- Reflect your attitude, personality, motivation, enthusiasm and communication skills.
- Use the Internet, your library and your local Michigan Works! West Central service center resources to research each company.
- If responding to an advertised job posting, provide any information specifically requested that might not be covered in your resume (i.e. salary requirements, availability, etc.). You should also:
  - Read the advertisement carefully
  - Write down the qualifications the employer desires that you currently possess.
  - Use these specific qualifications to tailor your cover letter to highlight why you are the perfect match for this position.
- Indicate what you will do to follow-up on your submission. Applicants often say something like: "I look forward to hearing from you." However, if you have further contact info (e.g. phone number) and if the employer hasn't said "no phone calls," it's better to take the initiative to follow-up by calling the employer. Say something like, "I will contact you in the next two weeks to see if you require any additional information regarding my qualifications."
- Formatting your cover letter in style similar to your resume will create a streamlined look to your submission.
- The cover letter and resume submission is your passport to a possible interview. Do not minimize their importance and approach them seriously.



## **Your Contact Information**

Your Name  
Your Address  
Your City, State, Zip Code  
Your Phone Number  
Your Email Address

Date

## **Employer Contact Information**

Name  
Title  
Company  
Address  
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name:

## **First Paragraph:**

The first paragraph of your letter should include info on why you are writing. Mention the position you are applying for, and include the name of a mutual contact, if you have one. Be clear and concise regarding your request. Convince the reader they should grant the interview or appointment you requested in the first paragraph.

## **Middle Paragraphs:**

The next section of your cover letter should describe what you have to offer the employer. Make strong connections between your abilities and their needs. Mention specifically how your skills and experience match the job you are applying for. Remember, you are interpreting your resume, not repeating it. Try to support each statement you make with a piece of evidence. Use several shorter paragraphs or bullets rather than one large block of text.

## **Final Paragraph:**

Conclude your cover letter by thanking the employer for considering you for the position. Include information on how you will follow-up. State you will do so and indicate when (one week's time is typical). You may want to reduce the time between sending out your resume and follow up if you fax or email it.

Respectfully yours,