



BEST PRACTICES FOR USING AI IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools can serve as a resource in career development. However, ChatGPT, Google Bard, and other such tools have limitations and should be used with caution. For example, in Summer 2023, an employer alerted UMD's University Career Center that they received approximately 60 nearly-identical cover letters for a job posting. It was determined that these letters were formulated by AI. To avoid such scenarios, please see some important guidelines outlined below.

General Guidelines

- Avoid copying/pasting results from AI-generated content.** While this content can be used to brainstorm or begin a project, it is necessary to customize the final product and write all of your content in your own voice.
- Protect your privacy.** Pasting information to AI tools is equal to posting information online publicly. Never include sensitive data in your prompts to AI; this includes information that might pertain to your work.
- Beware AI Hallucination:** Proofread content carefully to ascertain if AI has invented false information.

Our Recommendations for Using AI (based on our testing)

- Company Research:** We encourage you to leverage AI when searching for companies in specific industries or companies hiring for specific job types, as well finding companies who are seeking a specific major or who are hiring in certain locations. It could also be used to learn more about specific organizations, as AI can scan for and summarize large amounts of data effectively.
- Skills Assessment:** You may want to use AI to scan job descriptions and see what key skills it recommends focusing on throughout your application process.
- Interview Preparation:** Some have reported that AI-generated questions have been helpful in preparing for behavioral and technical interviews.
- Drafting Written Materials:** While we do not recommend using AI to write your career development materials, if you are going to do so, we only advise using it to draft your content. You must customize every product to reflect your authentic voice. Here are some notes about particular cases:
 - **LinkedIn Summary:** Ensure you provide enough details to make your summary unique and reflective of your personal voice. However, again, please remember to abstain from sharing private info.
 - **Connection Invitations/Thank You Notes:** We advise against using AI to craft brief and personal notes as they affect the authenticity of the messages.
 - **Elevator Pitch:** AI might limit the sincerity and natural tone of this important statement. As each elevator pitch should be customized for a particular company, it might also provide incorrect context.
 - **Cover Letters/Resumes:** AI has generated vague and generic language/examples for these vital documents. Be sure to review anything drafted by AI and add as much specificity and metrics as possible to differentiate your final materials.
 - **Proofreading:** AI is not particularly effective in catching glaring errors or otherwise improving upon text.