CREATE A STRUCTURED RANGE OF DATA-GUIDELINES

To use a range of data effectively, the data must have the same structure throughout. The following guidelines should be kept in mind when creating a data table.

❖ A **Data Table** is made up of columns and rows, just like a worksheet.
  ◦ A **column** represents a record and a row represents a field.
  ◦ A **record** is a collection of data about a person, place, or thing.
  ◦ A **field** is individual information such as a person’s last name, first name, address, and so forth.

❖ Enter the field names in the top row of the range.
  ◦ A **Field Name** (Column Header) is a unique label that describes the contents of the column.
  ◦ Each **Field Name** must be unique; no two names can be the same.
  ◦ This row of names is called the header row.
  ◦ The header row can be any row in the worksheet. It is, however, usually the first row.

❖ Use short, descriptive field names.
  ◦ Shorter field names are easier to remember.
  ◦ More field names will appear in the Excel workbook window when shorter names are used.

❖ **Format Field Names** differently than the rest of the rows.
  ◦ This will distinguish the header row from the rest of the rows.
  ◦ Use bold formatting, colors, underlines/borders, and a different font size.
  ◦ Solid underlines/borders must be used; the database will not work properly if the lines are not solid.

❖ Enter the same kind of data for a field in each record.
  ◦ Some of the records may not contain information in every field.
  ◦ Some fields may be blank if information is not available for that field in a particular record.

❖ Insert at least one blank line and one blank column between the data and other information in the worksheet.
  ◦ This will enable Excel to accurately determine the range of the data.
  ◦ If a blank row or column does not appear between the data, the Data Table will assume all the data is part of the range.