## Why Check References?

* Information from references is likely to prove very useful in evaluating a candidate's skills, training, experience, and ability to perform position duties.
* Checking multiple references demonstrates that reasonable care was used in the hiring process.
* Multiple references allow supervisors to look for consistency among comments.

## Who Should be a Reference?

* The most useful references generally come from former supervisors.
* Request personal and work references.

## What Should be Considered Before a Reference Check?

* Keep the candidate experience in mind when determining when you will collect reference information from candidates.
  + Asking for references at the time of application may deter candidates from applying to your job. Candidates may not feel comfortable providing reference information until they are notified that they are a finalist, or a verbal offer is made.

## How to Conduct a Reference Check?

### Do This

* Provide advanced notice to candidates that you will be checking their references.
* Introduce yourself and explain why you are calling.
* Ask whether it is a convenient time to talk.
* Briefly describe the position the candidate applied for.
* Confirm the relationship between the person giving the reference and the candidate.
* Verify basic information such as job title, duties, and dates of employment.
* Be consistent! Ask the same questions about all final candidates and weigh the information equally; what disqualifies one candidate should disqualify any candidate.

### Don’t Do This

* Don’t request information about race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or age.
* Don’t ask questions that can be answered with “yes” or “no.” Be sure that all questions are open-ended and relate directly to the position.
* Don’t ask a reference any questions that you’re not permitted to ask the candidate.

## Additional Resources

* [Reference Check Overview (SHRM)](https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/pages/reference-check-checkup.aspx)
* [Reference Check Basics (SHRM)](https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/toolkits/pages/conductingbackgroundinvestigations.aspx)
* [Reference Check Additional Considerations (SHRM)](https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/pages/creative-compliant-ways-check-references.aspx)

## Reference Check Question Guide

### Reference Details

**Date:** Tuesday, April 18, 2023

**Candidate's Name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Reference Check provided by:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Organization:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Title:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Phone Number:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Employment Dates:** Click or tap here to enter text.

### General Reference Questions

1. **What was the nature and length of your relationship with the candidate?**  
   Click or tap here to enter text.
2. **What were the candidate’s beginning and ending employment dates/positions?**  
   Click or tap here to enter text.
3. **What were the candidate’s most recent job duties?**  
   Click or tap here to enter text.
4. **What balance does the candidate achieve between working independently and checking in with stakeholders and supervisors?**  
   Click or tap here to enter text.
5. **What are the candidate’s key accomplishments or impacts on the organization?**Click or tap here to enter text.
6. **What can you tell me about the quality and quantity of the candidate’s work?**Click or tap here to enter text.
7. **How would you describe this person’s ability to meet deadlines?**  
   Click or tap here to enter text.
8. **What kind of supervision did this person require?**  
   Click or tap here to enter text.
9. **How well did this person get along with management and peers?**  
   Click or tap here to enter text.
10. **In what ways is this person a team player?**Click or tap here to enter text.
11. **How would you describe the candidate’s overall performance?**Click or tap here to enter text.
12. **Would you reemploy this person if you had the opportunity?**Click or tap here to enter text.
13. **Is there any more job-related information you would like to add?**  
    Click or tap here to enter text.

### Potential Job Specific Questions

1. **How did the candidate demonstrate leadership skills?**  
   Click or tap here to enter text.
2. **How does the candidate handle difficult people and work to resolve conflict?**Click or tap here to enter text.
3. **Has the candidate mainly served the role of implementer or initiator of projects and proposals?**  
   Click or tap here to enter text.
4. **How would you describe this candidate’s leadership, managerial, or supervisory skills?**  
   Click or tap here to enter text.
5. **Describe the quality of this candidate’s written and verbal communication skills.**Click or tap here to enter text.
6. **How do you rate this candidate’s ability to plan short-term? Long-term?**Click or tap here to enter text.
7. **Provide examples in which this person had to make sound and timely decisions. What were the results?**  
   Click or tap here to enter text.
8. **Did this person plan and administer a budget? If so, what was the size, and how did this person manage it?**  
   Click or tap here to enter text.
9. **How would you describe this candidate’s technical skills?**  
   Click or tap here to enter text.
10. **How well did this person manage crisis, pressure, or stress?**Click or tap here to enter text.
11. **How many people did this person directly supervise, for how long, and what were their levels (professional, administrative, blue collar, technical)?**  
    Click or tap here to enter text.
12. **What area of development could the candidate focus on?**  
    Click or tap here to enter text.
13. **If you were to offer advice on how best to guide this person, what would it be?**Click or tap here to enter text.
14. **Would you hire or want to work with this person again?**  
    Yes  No  (If No, explain why)  
    Click or tap here to enter text.

## Reference Check Form

Explain the reason for the call and verify the information below.

**Date:** Tuesday, April 18, 2023

**Candidate Name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Employment Dates:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Person Contacted:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Title:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Company:** Click or tap here to enter text.

1. **Please describe the type of work for which the candidate was responsible.**Click or tap here to enter text.
2. **How would you describe the candidate’s work performance and progress?** Click or tap here to enter text.
3. **Would you employ the candidate again? If no, why not?**  
   Click or tap here to enter text.
4. **What are the candidate’s strengths?**  
   Click or tap here to enter text.
5. **Where does the candidate have room for growth?**  
   Click or tap here to enter text.
6. **Could you describe how the candidate worked as part of a team?**Click or tap here to enter text.
7. **Please comment on the candidate’s…**
   1. **Ability to assume responsibility**  
      Click or tap here to enter text.
   2. **Degree of supervision needed**  
      Click or tap here to enter text.
8. **Is there additional job-related information you would like to share?**Click or tap here to enter text.