

References

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What are references?

A reference is a person who is willing to provide information about you, your work habits, ethic, performance, interpersonal skills, and attitude to a prospective employer that is evaluating you for a possible position.

Who makes a good reference?

A good reference is someone who has known you in an evaluative capacity (i.e. a work supervisor, a clinical supervisor, a current or former instructor, and a coach or clergy member).

How do I determine if I should ask someone to be a reference?

Certain criteria should be observed when choosing a reference including:

- 1.) The reference must know you well, and you must have an established relationship with him/her. Do not ask someone who is a new acquaintance, someone you only knew for a short time, or someone from the distant past who you have not kept in contact. Current and/or recent supervisors with established and strong relationships with you are the best references.
- 2.) Only ask someone whom you are certain will say consistently strong and positive things about you. Do not choose someone who has mixed feelings about you or your work.
- 3.) Do not use family or personal friends as professional references unless they supervised your work.

What are the responsibilities of a reference?

A reference must be able to receive phone calls from employers and professionally and courteously provide positive information about you. Your reference must not appear rushed or unwilling to talk in anyway. They must be willing to “sing your praises” whenever the prospective employer calls them.

How long does a reference check take?

A phone call from an employer performing a reference check can take anywhere from a few minutes to upwards of half an hour. The duration depends on how scripted the reference check is and how many questions they have. Often employers have a formal list of questions they ask each reference to ensure uniformity that can make the conversation longer. Sometimes it can be more of a casual conversation. Either way the references you choose must be comfortable speaking about you professionally and at length.

How Many References Should I have?

You should have a minimum of three professional references, and may have up to five.

Should I notify my references each time I am in a job search?

Absolutely! You want to ensure your references are aware that you are currently in a job search, so they have you at the front of their minds and the tip of their tongues when the employer calls. Few things are worse than a reference caught off guard, or one who has to try to remember you when the employer is on the line with them.

Can I list my references on my resume?

No, do not include references on your resume. Please use a separate reference sheet. See below:

References for:

Sabrina Sample

123 Maple Street

Kenosha, WI 53144

(262) 555-5555

ssample13@mail.gtc.edu

Ms. Kathleen Jones

Title

Company or School Name

Company or School Address

City, State Zip

(xxx)-xxx-xxxx

Email:

Relationship type: former supervisor

Dr. Patricia Johnson

Instructor – Tool and Die Department

Gateway Technical College

1001 S. Main Street

Racine, WI 53403

(262) 564-6666

Johnsonp112@gtc.edu

Relationship type: former instructor

Mr. Jerome Gear

Metallurgical Engineer

A1 Heat Treating Company

2727 Layton Ave.

Milwaukee, WI

(414) 222-2222

gearj@a1heattreating.com

Relationship type: internship supervisor