



Will Your References Seal the Deal?

It's been said that...
 "resumes win interviews, but references win job offers".

When Do You Provide References?

- You do not need to provide your references until the employer requests them, however, plan ahead so you are prepared to submit them at any time during the application process.
- It will vary as to when your references are requested. They may be asked for early as part of the application materials or later after interviews or other procedures.
- Most employers will not request or contact your references until after they have interviewed you and are considering you for the job.
- Show the employer you are prepared by bringing your reference sheet to the interview. If the interviewer does not ask for it, be proactive and offer it.

Where Do You Include Your References?

- **DO NOT** list your references on your resume. Instead, create a reference sheet that is a separate document.

Reference Sheet Tips

- Include your name and contact info as it appears on your resume.
- Include the header – References
- Print on same paper and in same font as your resume
- For each reference include:
 - Name
 - Title
 - Company/Organization
 - Address
 - Phone number
 - Email address
 - Best contact times/methods - optional
 - Relationship to you – optional
- Ask your references for the contact info they would like listed. Don't assume!

Reference Sheet Example

ANNE SMITH
 1621 North South Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 00000
 (414) 332-0000 annsmith@abc.edu

REFERENCES

Mr. Benson T. Burns
 Customer Service Manager
 ABC Manufacturing
 Milwaukee, Wisconsin 00000
 Sunnyville, Wisconsin 00000
 (414) 222-0000
 btburns@burns.com
 Previous Employer

Dr. Steven Habrausch
 Director of Social Services
 Memorial Hospital
 125 East West Avenue
 Somewhere, Wisconsin 00000
 (414) 252-5555
 Best time to contact: Mon & Fri 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
 Supervisor

Professor L. Z. Beacher
 Dean of Educational Studies
 Room 911, Enderis Hall
 555 Lincoln Street
 (414) 229-0000
 beacher@xyz.edu (preferred method of contact)
 Academic Professor

Who Do You Ask To Be References?

- Choose people who can provide positive feedback regarding your work or educational skills and experience. They should validate and reinforce the accomplishments and skills on your resume.
- Don't assume people will act as references for you. You must ask them. Approach a potential reference with a tactful request such as: "Do you feel you know my work well enough to act as a positive reference for me?"
- Most employers require three references, however, at times more may be needed.
- Consider the following types of people to act as references:
 - Former and current supervisors (most preferred)
 - Contacts from volunteer work / community activities
 - Professors / Academic Advisors
 - Coaches
 - Mentors
 - Contacts through professional organizations
 - Customers / Clients
 - Colleagues

What Will Your References Be Asked?

- The following are typical questions that a reference may be asked.
 - Relationship to you? / How long have they known you?
 - Dates of employment?
 - Were you usually on time? / Dependable? / Attitude?
 - Would they hire you again?
 - What were your job responsibilities?
 - Job performance? / Quality? / Productivity?
 - Are you a fast learner?
 - Do you work well with other people? (employees, customers, supervisors, etc)
 - Strengths? / Weaknesses?
 - Ability to solve problems? / Deal with crisis?
 - Oral and written communication skills?
 - Ability to develop short and long-term goals?
 - Technical skills?

How Can You Prepare Your References?

- Once an individual has agreed to be your reference, ask to meet in person to provide information about yourself to help him/her to address the employer's questions.
- Provide your reference with the following (in conversation and in writing).
 - Your resume, portfolio, licenses, etc
 - Specifics on how long you've known them and in what capacities
 - Description of the job(s) you're applying for
 - Concrete examples of the following that demonstrate why you are qualified for the job and what you would like them to mention to the employer.
 - Job skills, knowledge, and achievements
 - Personal qualities
 - Past weaknesses that you have now strengthened
- Contact your references each time you give their names to an employer. Also, notify them of the specific position you have applied for and why you think you're qualified. This will help them to be prepared to provide a solid reference for you. Ask them if you could check in periodically to find out if they have been contacted or if they prefer, they could let you know when they have been called.

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY!!

Help your references understand how what they know about you relates to the job you're applying for.

How Do You Maintain Contact With Your References?

- During your job search, take time to thank your references and update them on how your search is going.
- Once you have received a job, send another thank you to your references to share the good news and let them know their time and assistance paid off.
- After your job search is over, maintain contact with your references to prevent stress in having to rebuild these relationships in the future. Occasionally send a note to share with them new skills and knowledge you've gained.
- View reference cultivation as a career-long process and always be aware of who might make a good reference.