

**Sample Reference Checks**

Reference checks are a further step in the assessment process and act as a verification of the information that you have already collected, as well, they act as a follow up to any inconsistencies found from the candidate's cover letter, resume, phone screen (if applicable) and interview(s). Hiring managers will typically conduct reference checks with their first choice candidate in an effort to move the process along to the point of eventually extending an offer. In order to get a well-rounded view of the candidate, hiring managers should ask that the candidate provide references from a peer, direct report (if applicable) and their most recent supervisor. Note, due to the confidential nature of most candidate's job searches, providing a reference for a current supervisor may prove to be difficult as the candidate would have to announce that he or she is looking for another job and this may put his or her current job in jeopardy. When a scenario like this happens, the employer could ask that the candidate provide a former supervisor as an immediate reference.

**How to conduct a reference check:**

1. Introduce yourself, your title, organization name and the purpose of your call.

2. Ask if you are calling at a good time or whether they would rather schedule the call for a time that works better for them.

3. Confirm that you received consent from the candidate and that all responses provided during the reference interview will remain confidential.

4. Provide a high level overview of the description of the role and performance requirements you are considering for the candidate. This will help them to answer their questions in the context of the role in question.

5. Start with the basics:

a) Verify the context in which the referee worked with the candidate (peer, direct report supervisor).

b) Verify the candidate's starting and ending dates of employment,

c) Confirm their title and job duties;

6. Probe further (if referee is receptive)

a) Ask about the candidate's strengths and areas of improvement,

b) What is the referee's overall impression of fit relative to the requirements of the role?

c) How effective was the candidate with leading and managing others? (if applicable to the role).

d) Assess problem solving, interpersonal and communication skills, etc.

7. Your closing should include:

a) Would the referee work with or rehire the candidate,

b) Provide an opportunity for the reference to provide any additional comments they would like to make regarding the candidate that has not been covered in the interview.

c) Close the interview by thanking them for their time.

**Sample Reference Check**

*Good morning/afternoon may I speak to [Reference's Name] please? Hello [Reference's Name], this is*

*[Your name, title, company]. I was given your name by [Candidate's name] as a potential, confidential reference for their application with our company. Is now a good time or would you prefer that we schedule another time that works better for you? We will need about 20 minutes of your time. Okay, let's proceed.*

**Sample Reference Check Questions (choose only those that apply):**

1. In what context did you work with [Candidate Name]? How many years?

2. Approximately when did the candidate start working for your employer and when (if applicable) did they end their employment?

3. What was their title?

4. What were their main job duties?

5. Are you aware why [Candidate Name) is currently looking to make a change in their employment/interested in the role with [company name]?

6. What are his *I* her key strengths?

7. What areas of the role might [Candidate Name] struggle with the most or require the most guidance from others on?

8. What is your overall impression of fit relative to the requirements of the role?

9. How effective was the candidate with leading and managing others? (if applicable to the role).

10. Describe their problem solving approach and skills.

11. Describe [Candidate Name's] interpersonal and relationship building skills.

12. How would you rate [Candidate Name's] written and verbal communication skills?

13. How does [Candidate Name] handle multiple competing priorities?

14. Would you re-hire [CANDIDATE NAME] and/or want to work with him again?

15. Do you have any additional comments that you would like noted?

*Thanks so much for taking the time to talk with us today.*