

References

What is a Reference?

- Someone who can talk about your skills, experience, abilities, and work ethic
- A potential employer may call them and ask questions

Choosing the Right Reference:

- Choose a professional. Unless requested, do not select friends or family members to serve as "character" references. A reference can be any of the following (current or former):
 - Manager or supervisor
 - Employees
 - Coworker
 - Industry colleagues
 - Advisor, teacher, mentor, instructor
 - Connections from volunteer, academic, or professional organizations
- Choose people whom you have asked in advance to serve as references
- Be sure to ask individuals who will provide honest, candid, and positive recommendations
- Each time you begin a job search, ask professionals to serve as a reference for you. As you search for jobs in the future, you will need to ask again (whether you ask the same people or different people).

Provide Helpful Details:

- Give them a copy of your resume. Ask them for advice or feedback. Talk to them about your career goals so they will be more prepared to talk to a potential employer in a helpful way.
- Remember that people have busy lives. If there are deadlines for writing letters or completing forms, be sure to communicate that in a timely manner. Check in with them if necessary. While doing so, be respectful and gracious of their other obligations.
- Let your references know when you have interviewed for a position and that they may be called to be a reference at that point. Send them the job description of the position and your updated resume you used to apply for the position.

Follow Up:

- Always follow up with your references when you have accepted the position. Send them a thank you note telling them about your new opportunity.

SAMPLE REFERENCE EMAIL

Subject line: Reference request for [Your Name]

Dear [Recipient Name],

I hope this email finds you well. [Insert personalized pleasantry (e.g. "How is your family?" or "It was great seeing you at the career fair last month.")]

I am currently seeking employment as a [job title you are applying for] and am wondering if you would be comfortable providing a positive reference for me. Having worked for you for several years at [insert company name], I believe you can provide potential employers with specific information about my skills that will improve my chances of getting the job.

Attached is my current resume. Please let me know if you need any additional information to act as a reference on my behalf. If now is not a good time for you, do not hesitate to let me know. Thank you so much for considering my request.

Sincerely,

[Your name]

SAMPLE FOLLOW UP EMAIL

Subject line: Thank You: Reference Letter

Dear [Recipient Name],

Thank you so much for sending a reference on my behalf. I have just accepted the role of [insert title and company name]. I sincerely appreciate your support and help during this process. I am confident that your reference went a long way toward me getting this position! Thank you again for your support.

Sincerely,

[Your name]