

Identify & Secure Professional References

Purpose of a Reference

Employers will ask for you for typically three professional references. The reason for this is to verify that what you said about yourself in the application and interview is accurate. They also want to hear from a professional that you have worked for or with, how you are as an employee. A reference check also helps employers narrow down top candidates.

Identifying & Securing a Reference

Step 1: Identify who will speak best about your strengths in relation to the specific job you have applied for.

Step 2: Be sure this is a professional reference which could include: a supervisor, former employer, faculty member, or college personnel who were an advisor or you have worked closely with. The key is picking references who have observed you acting in a productive capacity where you displayed your skills and credentials for employment.

Step 3: Provide your reference updates as you job search. This would include letting them know what kinds of jobs you have applied for, providing a job description of what you have applied for, when they might start hearing from the employer, and giving them a current copy of your resume.

Step 4: Be sure to formally thank your references either through email or handwritten. Remember, they are taking the time to speak on your behalf. Also, keep them in the loop as to whether you were hired.