

How Do I Choose and Prepare My List of References?

Job references are recommendations referring to an individual about their work ethic, character, and their skills. Job references usually come from a former manager, supervisor, or colleagues, but can also include professors, coaches, or advisors.

Ask for Permission

No matter how close you are with your former manager, supervisor, or colleagues, ask for their permission. Some might be uncomfortable providing you with a job reference or need time to recall a supportive example as a reference. When you ask for permission remember to be respectful, professional and informative. Provide your references with a description of the job opportunity and an explanation of why you think you would be a good fit.

Ask Your References for Their Contact Information

Attention to detail is important at every step of the job search. Even if you already have your references contact information, ask for it anyway. This will ensure you use their preferred method of professional communication. Make sure you ask for their full name, current job title, phone number, and email address.

Choose People Who Can Attest to Your Abilities

When you are selecting your references, choose people who can speak positively of you, your work ethic, how you approach a challenge and your skills as they relate to the specific job you are applying for. This will highlight your valuable skills and what you can bring to the organization.

Find Common Ground

Do your research to find commonalities between the hiring manager, the organization's mission, and your references. It may improve your chances of getting a job.

