

GUIDELINES FOR REFERENCES

Obtaining References on Candidates

1. Applicants have agreed to allow you to check references by their signature on the application form. Checking with an applicant's current employer may endanger the person's job, so be sure to get specific permission (during the interview) to check the current employer as a reference.
2. Use job analysis to identify areas you want to discuss with references, and verify information you have gathered from the application and interview responses.
3. Prepare written questions in advance or use a form. Questions should be job-related and phrased neutrally.
4. Record identifying information about person giving the reference - name, position, and company.
5. Write down the answers to your questions, and keep this information with your selection materials.
6. Do not ask for references in confidence - you may not be able to keep the information confidential.
7. Only ask for references from individuals who are in a position to evaluate the candidate. Supervisors are the best source. Co-workers, subordinates, and friends are not appropriate references.
8. Check references during business hours. Social functions are not the appropriate setting for asking structured, job-related reference questions.

Giving References

1. Only give a reference if you have firsthand knowledge, as the supervisor of the employee in question.
2. Give factual information that is documented in the employee's record. Performance appraisals, disciplinary actions, etc., constitute documentation of the facts.
3. Do not express opinion or projections of future performance. Instead, give the employer the facts and let him draw his own conclusions.
4. If you are called for a reference and do not feel comfortable giving information on the spur of the moment, tell the employer that you will call back. You can then check the employee's records and call Personnel if you have concerns.

POSITION _____

**WASHOE COUNTY
TELEPHONE REFERENCE CHECK**

NAME OF APPLICANT

PERSON CONTACTED

POSITION OR TITLE

COMPANY CITY/STATE TELEPHONE NUMBER

1. I would like to verify some of the information given to us by _____
who is applying for a position with our County. What were the dates of his/her employment with
you?

From _____ 20____ To _____ 20_____

- 2. What was the nature of his/her job?
- 3. What did you think of his/her work?
- 4. Describe our job. How would you rate his/her performance in this position/setting?
- 5. Since none of us are perfect at everything we do, please describe some of his/her shortcomings.
- 6. How did he/she get along with co-workers? Supervisors? Others?

7. Would you comment on his/her:
 - a. Attendance
 - b. Dependability
 - c. Ability to take responsibility
 - d. Ability to follow instructions
 - e. Flexibility
 - f. Degree of supervision needed
 - g. Overall attitude
 - h. Quality of work
 - i. Quantity of work
8. When there was a particularly urgent assignment, what steps did he/she take to get it done on time?
9. Does he/she work well under pressure?
10. What kind of problems/situation did he/she handle well?
11. How skilled was he/she in planning and organizing his/her work?
12. Is he/she willing to cooperate with others to achieve mutual goals?
13. Did he/she have any difficulties that interfered with his/her ability to get the job done?
14. Why did he/she leave the position?
15. Is there anything else you can add that would help us make our decision?