

References

Prospective employers want to talk to people who can discuss your work habits, strengths and weaknesses in order to determine if you are a good fit for the role. This affects who they hire, so references are important.

Who do I ask?

Ask someone who is familiar with your work and can discuss your competencies. They don't have to have an important title. Some suggestions are:

- Past and present employers/supervisors from a professional or volunteer setting.
- Professors, instructors or faculty members.
- Colleagues or co-workers who can speak to your skills.
- Advisors, mentors or professionals in the field who know you well.
- Former clients, customers or suppliers who can speak about your excellent service.

Format the list

- Title your page "References for [Your Name]".
- Under the title, add your contact information.
- Below that, list 3-5 references in the following format:

First Name Last Name, Current Job Title

Current Company Name

Company Address

Company Phone Number

Email: [Email address]

Hours: [Times your reference is available] **(Optional)**

Relationship: [Business relationship to you]

Key Reference Areas: [What they can speak to] **(Optional)**

Susan Smith, General Manager

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Hours: 8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m, Monday - Thursday

Relationship: Previous supervisor at McKay's Groceries

Key Reference Areas: Customer service, sales experience

- Either hand in the printed list or attach the PDF to an email.

How do I ask?

- 1 Contact the people you want to use as references, giving them plenty of notice. Even if they have agreed in the past, you must ask permission every time.
- 2 Confirm their contact information.
- 3 Give your reference some information to help them prepare. Provide them with your resume, cover letter and/or job description of the role you are applying to.
- 4 Write thank you notes to people who agreed to act as references.

Q: When do I provide references?

A: Usually, the employer will ask for references after you have been interviewed. No need to put them on your resume.

Q: I didn't get along with my last boss. Do I have to include them as a reference?

A: No. You want a reference who will advocate for you and support your career growth. However not providing a reference from your last employer raises red flags. If at all possible, include a positive reference from someone else at your last job.

Q: What if the person I want to ask no longer works at the company, or the company no longer exists?

A: That's ok. If you have their new contact information and their permission, they can still be a reference.

Q: What if my current employer doesn't know I'm looking for a new job yet?

A: Ask that your employer not be contacted and provide an alternative reference from your current job. If they must speak with your current employer as a final step, ask that you be notified, so you can be the one to tell them.

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NEED MORE HELP?

Book an appointment with us through [MyCareerHub](#).

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