

Best Practices for References

Follow these best practices for accessing your references and creating a reference sheet to provide at the time of the interview or when the employer asks for it.

- Use references whom you worked with directly and who will provide positive information to a potential employer.
- Ask their preferred method of communication – email or phone.
- Ask their preferred day(s) and/or time to receive a reference call or email.
- Ensure all your reference information is current and correct – never make assumptions.
- Keep the formatting on your reference sheet consistent and match it with your resume.
- Proofread your reference sheet before printing or emailing.
- Take a copy of your reference sheet to the interview and offer it to the employer at the end of the interview.
- Supply your reference with information about the position(s) you are applying to.
- Give them advanced notice (2-3 days) that they may be contacted by an employer.
- Provide them up to two weeks to write a letter of recommendation.
- Thank them – a phone call or thank you card goes a long way.
- Stay in touch and share your success and let them know you value their support.
- If you leave a position, ask for a letter of recommendation, reference, and a LinkedIn recommendation.
- Do not over-use your references – gather as many as you can for the future.
- Treat your references well – they are serving as a reference out of the goodness of their heart as a way to help you with your career advancement.