

## Finding References That Will Sing Your Praises

References are the one part of your job search over which you have complete control. The following steps may help you develop an enthusiastic panel of supporters.

- **Assume your references will be checked-** Most companies check references during the hiring process. It is a misconception that employers are not going to call your references.
- **Ask permission before listing a reference-** Many job seekers do not inform their references that they are being listed. Asking permission eliminates many problems, such as the individual not wanting to serve as your reference or he/she not remembering you.
- **Make sure your references are comfortable speaking on your behalf-** It is not just what your references say, but how they say it. Employers can tell immediately when someone is not pleased to be giving a reference.
- **Verify your information-** Make sure the phone numbers, job titles, company names and addresses for your advocates are correct.
- **Coach your references-** It is suggested that you spend 10-15 minutes talking to each person you ask to serve as your reference. You should discuss with them things such as job goals, outline your skills and the qualities you want emphasized, and give each a copy of your resume.
- **Keep your references informed-** They should be at the center of your network. Update them regularly on how your search is progressing.
- **Choose references based on job requirements-** Your references, like your resume, should reflect the position for which you are applying. You should choose your references based on the skills you want to spotlight for a particular item.
- **Choose your references based on what they can say about you, not name recognition-** Many job seekers are tempted to name drop; using your company's president rather than your direct supervisor. However those individuals may not be as able to comfortably talk about you.
- **Consider a reference check a good sign-** An employer will only call references if a candidate is seriously being considered for the position. It is often one of the last steps before a job offer is extended.

*Information from [www.Careerjournal.com](http://www.Careerjournal.com)*

### Quick Tips:

- Use the same font and heading as your resume
- Have several copies available for an interview
- Have your references on a separate document, not included with resume
- List professionals, such as employers or professors

## Sample Reference Page Layout

### References for:

**JAMES DOE**

505 Ramapo Valley Rd.  
Mahwah, NJ 07430-1680  
(201) 555-5505  
Email: jamesdoe@ramapo.edu

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Mr. Joseph Black, Director  
ABC Publishing Company  
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Supervised my internship at ABC Publishing Co.

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Email: mrdinsmore@macy.com  
Oversaw my employment at Macy's

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Faculty advisor and mentor