

## **RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY**

### **REFERENCE CHECK PROCEDURES**

1. Do not leave a call-back if the person you are trying to reach is not available. You may receive the return call when you are unable to discuss the applicant.
2. Identify yourself immediately, explain your position with Ramapo College, and tell the party why you are calling about the applicant.
3. Assure the person you contact that any discussions you have will be held in confidence.
4. Ask whether they are free to discuss the situation
5. Offer to have the party call you back if you sense that they doubt the legitimacy of your call.
6. Try to establish rapport with the person you are calling. Perhaps they have a son or daughter attending your institution. Maybe you know someone in their organization. Many times a freer exchange of information comes about when the individual you are calling identifies with your organization, your position, or some other mutual point of interest.
7. Tell the person about the position for which the applicant is being considered. A better evaluation can be made if done in relation to a specific job. The job must be explained completely enough to have meaning.
8. Ask a general question such as, "How do you think the applicant would fit into our vacancy?" After the person responds, lead in with more specific questions, such as:
  - a. What are the applicant's strengths?
  - b. How did the applicant get along with co-workers?
  - c. How did the applicant get along with supervisors?
  - d. Did you consider the applicant to be reliable?
  - e. Did the applicant meet commitments, deadlines?
  - f. Would you comment on her/his?
    - Attendance
    - Dependability
    - Ability to take on responsibility
    - Ability to follow instructions
    - Degree of supervision needed
    - Overall attitude
    - Quality of work
    - Quantity of work

- g. Has the applicant ever applied and been rejected for a promotion with your institution?
  - h. Why did the applicant leave your employment?
  - i. Is there anything else you can tell me about the applicant?
  - j. Would you reemploy the applicant?
- 9. Let the person talk freely in answering for as long as they wish without your interrupting. Often a question from you at the wrong time will shut off further information.
  - 10. Follow up and probe when you feel the contact is reluctant to discuss certain factors. Many times a further explanation of why you are “digging in” will elicit the information you want. After all, you are doing the applicant a favor by checking. Placement in the wrong job could lead to ultimate unhappiness or even dismissal.
  - 11. Be alert for obvious pauses in answering when you ask questions. Often these are a sign that further questions may bring additional information you might not otherwise have received.
  - 12. Do not hang up until you are sure that you know the opinion of the person called. Frequently you will receive ambiguous answers. The person called may give very little useful information. One technique that often works is to summarize the conversation by making either of the following two statements:
    - “I take it that you don’t recommend the applicant for the position,” or
    - “I take it that you highly recommend the applicant for the position.”
  - 13. Glance at your checklist of question to be sure you have covered everything.
  - 14. Always end the call by asking the person, “Would you reemploy the applicant?” Often this question brings forth information that you were unable to get by other questions.
  - 15. Be sure to thank your contact for their help.

June 18, 2018

P:Manual/Employment/Reference Checks

June 14, 2006

Page 2 of 2