

What are “References”?

- People that employers can contact for more information about you
- Do not include this information with your resume, as you want to meet with the employer first; you also want to protect your references from being contacted unless you have reached the interview stage
- Three people are usually the minimum, but more can be to your advantage; for example, 3 business and 3 personal

When Are They Used?

- Bring your reference list to the interview
- Some employers may require the list when you apply for a position (usually it is requested on the job posting or application)

Who Are Suitable References?

- Work related: former or present employers, supervisors, colleagues, customers, suppliers
- Personal: contacts in volunteer organizations where you volunteered, instructors, bank managers, landlords, other people that you have assisted
- Typically, these people should have known you for at least one year

How to Create a List

- Ask potential references for permission to use them
- Provide them with a copy of your current resume
- Discuss what they could say about you to potential questions that employers may ask
- Contact them soon after you give their name to a potential employer. Tell them the name of the company/organization, the position, the name of the person who might be contacting them, if you know it. This will prepare them in advance for the employer to contact them
- Thank your references by letter, email or phone, whether or not you obtained the job

Remember:

- Keep your eye out for good references: people who you work closely with and you have done good work for and other individuals who you have assisted, supervisors who have helped you learn and grow; people who you have worked with in volunteer positions
- Avoid family members, as this does not look professional

TIPS

- Use 3 – 4 references. Get permission first and provide references with an update.
- List in order of strongest and relevant contact, easily reached
- Reference calls focus on: technical strength, ability to get the job done, ability to work with others, stability, development and potential
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- References could include: current and / or past employer, someone who reported to you, teaching reference, peer, volunteer you may have worked with
- Provide the name, job title and name of the organization or business when listing references
- Business landline or cell phone, email or residence line (if permission given)

- Use same “header” as your resume

SAMPLE FORMAT

Joe Applicant

789 Employment Avenue Hamilton, ON L8P 1X2

Home: 905.121.3456 **Email:** joeapplicant@email.com

References

1. John Doe – Administrator
Department of XXXXXXXX
McMaster University
Hamilton, ON XXX XXX

B: 905.XXX.XXXX Ext. XXXXX
Email: XXXXX@mcmaster.ca
2. Jane Referee – Administrative Co-ordinator
The XXXXXXXX Department
McMaster University
Hamilton, ON XXX XXX

B: 905.XXX.XXXX Ext. XXXXX
C: 905.XXX.XXXX
Email: XXXXX@mcmaster.ca
3. Ken Doe – Chairman of the Board (former)
The Helping Place
50 Altruism Avenue
Oakville, ON

B: 905.789.1234
C: XXX.XXX.XXXX
Email: XXXXXX@email.com