

When applying for a job, your references can play a crucial role in validating your skills, experience, and character to potential employers. Selecting the right references can significantly impact your chances of securing the job.

TYPES OF REFERENCES

When it comes to providing references, it is generally expected to include individuals who can speak to your professional abilities and character. Ideally, you should choose work-related references.

Professional References (work-related)

- Manager
- Direct Supervisor
- Co-worker

Academic References

- Professor
- Academic Advisor

Personal References

Suitable for students with no work experience

- Coach
- Community Group Leader
- Landlord
- Family friend
- Neighbour

NUMBER OF REFERENCES

Typically, employers ask for three references, but that can vary based on the kind of job. If the interviewer does not specify the number of references needed, aim to share three to five.

OBTAIN PERMISSION

Once you have identified contacts who will provide strong references, reach out to ask them if they are willing to be a reference for you. Not only is this polite, but it's also going to help prepare them if they are contacted to offer a recommendation.

Ask your references for their contact information (email and phone) to make sure it is accurate. You can also ask what their preferred method of contact is and note this on your list of references.

ONLY OFFER YOUR REFERENCES WHEN YOU ARE ASKED FOR THEM

Do not include your references on your resume or in the application stage. References are typically provided when requested by the employer. It is common for employers to ask for references after the interview stage when they are seriously considering offering you the position.

FOLLOW UP AND EXPRESS GRATITUDE

After your references have been contacted, express your appreciation by thanking them and keeping them in the loop on your progress. Gratitude reinforces positive relationships and demonstrates your professionalism and courtesy.

SAMPLE REFERENCE LIST

YOUR NAME

City, Province | Phone | Email | LinkedIn URL/Online Portfolio

REFERENCES

Reference Name

Current Position Title

Company Name

Phone number

Email address

Reference description: one sentence explaining how you know or have worked with this person

Betty Moore

Manager

Starbucks

613-331-1234

bmoore@starbucks.ca (preferred method of contact)

Betty was my direct manager when I worked as a Barista at Starbucks.

John Dunning

Professor

St. Lawrence College

416-736-2345

johndunning@gmail.com (preferred method of contact)

John was my professor in three courses – Statistics, Accounting & Economics.