



# References

Professional references are used in the job search process and usually come into play following the interview stage. Employers contact the references you provide to validate the skills and abilities you have already highlighted in your résumé and interview.

## General guidelines.

- The most important thing is to ask for permission to use someone as a reference. You don't want them to be surprised if an employer calls them.
- References are often listed on a separate sheet with the same heading and contact information as your résumé. See an example on the opposite side of this page.
- 3-5 references are common.
- It is optional to list "References provided upon request" at the bottom of your résumé.
- Keep your references informed by providing them with both a copy of your résumé and the names of companies and contact people where you are applying.
- References are not usually given out until requested by the employer. Add a comment to the reference name if you don't want the employer to contact your references before an offer is given.
- References are different than letters of recommendation. Anyone can provide you with a letter of recommendation, while a reference is a contact that can provide information to the employer about your qualifications for the job in which you are applying.

## Selecting references.

- A good reference is someone who can identify your skills and abilities and provide examples for why the employer should hire you. Don't ask someone if you are unsure about their ability to provide a positive reference for you.
- References can be from instructors, past supervisors or co-workers, advisors/counselors, fellow students, internship supervisors, etc.
- Please be selective with personal references and if you use them, note that they are a personal reference. Remember the employer is contacting your references to validate your skills and abilities for the position.
- It is optional to list the number of years you have known your references, but can be helpful when it is a significant amount of time.
- Be sure the contact information you provide on your references is accurate.
- Don't forget to thank your references.



## Career Services

College Services Building 106  
360-752-8396

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### EXAMPLE:

#### **Jordan Smith**

111 Apple Lane  
Bellingham, WA 98225  
123.456.7890  
jsmith@email.com

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### REFERENCES

Name  
Title  
Company  
Address  
Phone  
Email

Name  
Title  
Company  
Address  
Phone  
Email

Name  
Title  
Company  
Address  
Phone  
Email