



The Use of References in Your Job Search

An Individual who can verify for all or part of the information you provide on your resume is known as a resume reference, and is generally contacted after the interview stage. They could be former supervisors, clients, professors or any other contact who has a fairly good idea about your credentials, skills, and talents.

Although very important in your job search pursuits, it is highly recommended that you do not include the details of **references on resumes**, unless it is specifically mentioned in the job advertisement. If you wish, you could mention the commonly used phrase, 'References available upon request' on your resume and have a separate sheet of paper exclusively for references which could be presented on request during the interview stage.

You need to keep the following points in mind while creating your list of references:

- **Prepare a list of references:**

First and foremost, make a list of all those names you could use as references. Once done, skim through the list and taper down to not more than five to six people – three professional and three personal references is ideal. However, before doing anything, you need to ask for permission in order to use them as a reference and to use their contact details. Remember, never to use any details until and unless the person has permitted you to do it.

Professional References: Along with the names of the individuals, include the **job title**, company, address, phone numbers, and Email address. Including a person's job title can be particularly advantageous if it is similar to the one you are seeking or in a similar industry. Their positive feedback about you will be of immense value and your professional image and caliber will be promoted to a great extent.

Personal References: Pick out three individuals who know you well on a personal level for at least a few years and can vouch for your character. Include their job title and contact details along with their names.

Make sure to brief your references about the **types of positions** you will be applying for and request them to speak of what they believe to be your finest traits, skills, and talents while speaking to prospective employers.

- **Know your references well and verify what they will say about you:**

Understanding whose name to use and whose not to as a reference, is one of the most important



things while making a reference list. No matter which names you use, you must be absolutely sure that these persons will unquestionably give a positive feedback about you. Ask them what they would say about you on certain subjects and this will help in ensuring whether you could use them as references or not. Even the slightest of doubt regarding the kind of feedback they will provide, should not stop you from removing their names from the list. Prior to being contacted, your references should be well versed with subjects like your personal or professional character, your unique skills, strengths and weaknesses, your attitude, and your level of ethic.

Since references are so crucial and can often be the deciding factor in your **job search** pursuits, you should ensure the use of the best of individuals within your circle of contacts.

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