

References Worksheet



10 Easy Steps
to get the
Job You Want!

www.readysethired.com · info@readysethired.com

ReadySetHired! Worksheets are intended to be used as a guide. The elements listed are some of the things you need to consider at particular stages of your job search. The worksheets are by no means absolute, so don't feel you have to complete every item in order to proceed. They are also not exhaustive, so there are likely "other" elements you might want to consider that are not on the worksheets, depending on your particular situation and requirements. If you see the symbol ®, refer to the related Reference Sheet for more information. Revisit the worksheets often to revise and recalibrate them as necessary based on your successes and challenges.

1. Identify potential references

a) List all the people you can think of who could be potential references. Consider employers, volunteer supervisors, professors, instructors, colleagues, academic advisors and others. Indicate your relationship to them. For each name listed, ask yourself the following questions:

Name	Relationship	Does this person know me in a professional capacity?	Do they know me well enough to be able to provide meaningful commentary?	Would be willing to provide me with a positive recommendation?

b) Are any of these people personal references rather than professional references? If so, take them off the list. While personality and character are important, references from relatives and friends will hold relatively little weight.

c) If there is a reference I would really like to support me, but we don't have a substantial professional relationship, is there something I can do to start developing one?

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2. Prepare for the conversation

Prepare a script to help guide your conversations with potential references.

a) Introduction

b) Specific points you want them to consider

c) Request their support

3. Contact selected references

Once you've identified your short list of references and prepared what you are going to say and how you will ask for their support, pick up the phone. You can email your references, but a phone call is much more personal and impactful. Make sure your first contact with a potential reference isn't a request to act on our behalf immediately. Consider this a warm up.

a) Have the conversation and note their response. Specific points you want them to consider

b) If they decline, be gracious, but ask for feedback.

c) If they agree, thank them and let them know you will be in touch with them again throughout your job search.

d) Send them your resume, and a thank you email.

4. Write your own reference/ recommendation letters

It's a good exercise to write out your own letters of recommendation. This will help focus subsequent conversations with your references.

a) What are my strengths and areas for improvement?

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b) What is my relationship with this reference? What relevant interactions have we had that will support my candidacy for this particular job?

c) If I give this very letter of recommendation to my reference, would they be able to support it?

5. Follow up

Before the hire

a) Keep in regular contact with your potential references throughout your job search. Inform them of any significant changes or milestones. Don't wait until the last minute to contact them. Prepare them in advance for the eventuality that they may need to write a letter or field a phone call from a potential employer. If they agree, thank them and let them know you will be in touch with them again throughout your job search.

During the hire

b) When the potential employer ask for your references, act fast. Make sure that you have letters of recommendation on hand, or that you can obtain them quickly. Provide the employer with accurate and current contact information for your references.

c) Contact your references and let them know they will likely be receiving a call from an employer. Brief them on the company and the job to which you are applying.

After the hire

d) After the hiring decision is made, contact your references and thank them for your support. If you got the job, let them know they were instrumental in the process. If you didn't get the job, be gracious and let them know that you will likely continue to need their support.

e) Continue to stay in touch with your references while you are in your new job. Make them part of your network. Keep them informed of any changes in your career or contact information.

f) Pay it back and pay it forward. Ask if you can be of help to your reference. Who knows, they may also be job searching. Also, when someone comes to you asking if you could be a reference, always agree if it makes sense to do so. Keep in mind how important how important this part of the process was for you!