A reference check is a valuable tool in the recruitment process to verify facts and obtain additional information about the candidate. The best indicator of future performance is past performance. A minimum of two (2) professional references are required prior to an offer being extended to your final candidate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant name:</th>
<th>Position applying for:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference name:</td>
<td>Company:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title:</td>
<td>Phone:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date of reference:</td>
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1. **What position did the candidate hold in your company?**

2. **List Dates of employment**

3. **What was your relationship to the candidate?**

4. **What was it like to work with this candidate?**

   (Their response can shed light on things like their general attitude in the workplace, how they treated colleagues, how they performed their job duties and tackled assigned projects and whether they were reliable and trustworthy. This will give you a better idea of how well this candidate will mesh with the rest of the team).

5. **What are this candidate’s greatest strengths?**

   By asking this question, you can identify which skills and abilities you can expect the candidate to display most often.

6. **What were this candidate’s biggest areas of opportunity while you worked together?**

   Asking this question will help clarify specific things the candidate may need to address to meet their full potential. Just be sure to consider the length of time that’s passed since the reference worked with the candidate as they may have overcome these weaknesses in the meantime.

7. **What was one of this candidate’s best accomplishments while you worked together?**

   It’s important to determine whether or not a candidate is someone who regularly goes above and beyond their prescribed duties before you extend an offer. Asking this question will give references the opportunity to reflect on moments when the candidate leveraged their strengths, displayed unique skills or overcame a difficult challenge. This can provide you with insight into how the candidate may behave when faced with similar needs and challenges at your organization.
8. If you could hire this candidate again, would you? Why or why not?

This simple question may be the most critical one on the list. A reference who would rehire someone, shows the candidate is honorable and adds value to a team. However, if a reference would hesitate to hire a candidate again, it could be a warning sign. Be sure to understand the reference’s reasoning behind their answer, before making your decision.

9. Why did this candidate leave your company?

Whether the candidate was laid off, looking for new challenges or switching career fields, asking references this question can validate what the candidate has already told you. If the reasons don’t match up, it may be a red flag.

10. How did this candidate handle challenges?

This can reveal how well the candidate works under pressure and how they come across to others during stressful situations — i.e., do they appear calm and composed or agitated and annoyed?

11. Tell me something about this candidate that might not be listed on their resume.

This purposely vague question gives references a chance to elaborate on any of the candidate’s skills, traits or accomplishments you might’ve missed.