

## The Reference Q&A

### **1. *Who should I use as a reference?***

Anyone who could attest to your specific capabilities, who has had a (working) relationship with you for 2 years or more ( peer, supervisory, even subordinate when appropriate), whom you trust can articulate well.

### **2. *What is the procedure for using a reference?***

First you must ask permission of the individual to be used as a reference. Discuss briefly with that person what your job objective is, and how they might be of help to you (the kind of feedback that will possibly be solicited from them). Then, just prior to them being called, you might contact them quickly, just to provide some notice. Afterward, you always want to thank your reference, either with a call or a brief written note of thanks. Finally, you promise to keep them informed of your progress, by periodically 'touching base' with them.

### **3. *When do I provide a reference?***

The ideal time to present an appropriate reference is at the close of a face-to-face interview. This way you are better able to decide and offer the most relevant contact for the position at hand.

### **4. *How do I present it?***

You will have prepared a list of about 3 to 5 persons who make the most sense in terms of your current job objective. That list is typed, on the same color, quality bond paper and letterhead as your resume. It contains necessary contacting information

for each of your references (i.e., name, title, address, phone number), and a statement of your association (i.e., “worked with Sally for 6 years in customer service).

### **5. *What about written references?***

Often, employers, particularly superiors or owners of companies, will offer to provide you with a letter of reference. This is usually typed on company letterhead or personal stationery. These are fine, particularly if they are more specific than general, and can be very useful when the reference is either out of town, traveling often, or no longer with the company. The caveat is that if the letter is dated over 6 months previous, it can begin to lose some relevance. In this case, if it is possible, try to obtain an updated letter.

### **6. *Reference Format On Resume (See References Template)***