

# Professional References

## An indepth perspective on applicants

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Many organizations view professional references, in addition to employment and education verifications as a valuable means of evaluating an applicant's overall character and performance prior to making a hiring decision. They are also conducted as an additional way to help mitigate risk. As an example, an applicant's demeanor during the interview phase may be completely different from their everyday persona. Regardless of the personal information the applicant has supplied, it's important to remember that you are hiring an individual, not what's on their resume.

Professional references allow organizations to learn from former employers, colleagues, managers, co-workers, or anyone else if an applicant is favorably recommend for employment. While organizations would like to assume complete honesty on an applicant's resume, unfortunately that is not always the case. As a result, employers should not risk knowing as much as possible about an applicant's history.

### Valuable Statistics:

According to a 2012 survey conducted by CareerBuilder:

- 69% of employers who say they've changed their mind about a candidate after speaking with a reference.
- Nearly 30% of employers reported that they have caught a fake reference on a candidate's application.
- Three-in-five employers (62%) said that when they contacted a reference listed on an application, the reference didn't have good things to say about the candidate.

Companies find that professional references can be a solid predictor of how an individual will be a good fit for a position, including the overall environment and culture of the organization. Professional reference checks can also provide a view into an individual's character in both personal and professional environments. They assist in assessing a person's qualities such as:

- Integrity
- Work Ethic
- Dependability
- Attitude
- Capabilities
- Strengths & Weaknesses

This information is not meant to provide legal advice of any kind. Legal advice should be sought from your attorney or corporate counsel.

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Simply stated, a professional reference check can reveal information on an applicant that is not contained within a resume, and it can make a difference during the final stage of the hiring process.

Key benefits of professional references:

- To help learn an additional level of information beyond what is listed on a resume.
- A powerful source of information and provides a personal look into an applicant's traits and integrity.
- To assist in identifying false or misleading reference information.
- Gain a comprehensive understanding of how an individual will perform on the job.

Professional references, conducted along with employment and education verifications, are an important part of a comprehensive background check, and a valuable component in the selection process. Go beyond what is listed on an individual's resume or what took place during the interview. Employers can find value in professional references, employment and education verifications regardless of industry job role. It's important to gain a more personal look into applicants being considered to help ensure employability and promote a safe work environment.

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