REFERENCES

Getting professionals who can vouch for your strengths and qualifications

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What Exactly is Meant By The Term Reference?

- References should be provided upon request
- Gather letters of recommendations well in advance of applying to graduate school or starting your job search
  - Make sure you keep them current
- Choose people who can speak positively about your skills and qualification and be sure they can communicate well through their writing
- Try and **meet** with potential references to explain your need for the recommendation
- Offer background information that may be vital in writing your letter of recommendation
  - Job description, work/internship experience, classes you took
- Explain the purpose of the recommendation to describe how the letter will be used and who will be reading it
- Keep track of your references
  - Update address, phone number, email address every couple of years
- Always have a reference page prepared but don't send it unless specified

Where Should I List My References?

- Do not list names on your resume
  - This leaves room for you to save room for important skills and qualifications
- If room permits, at the bottom of the resume include, "*References Available Upon Request*"
- Create a Separate Page, similar in appearance to your resume
  - Use the same type of paper used for the resume

Who Should I Ask For A Reference?

- A good reference is someone that has known you at least one year, preferably three years
  - Supervisors, Professors, Advisors
  - Personal references, such as family and friends, are not typically valued by employers or graduate programs
- Reference candidates should be able to confirm your resume and offer positive feedback about credentials
- Try to choose four or five candidates
- Reference Candidates should be able to answer
  - How long they have known you
  - Their professional relationship with you
  - Description of your duties
  - Quality of your work
  - Communication skills (oral, written)
  - Decision-making ability
  - Strengths and weaknesses
  - Attendance

Formatting the Reference Page

- Have the same contact information as listed on resume at the top of the reference page
- Use the same font and font size as the resume
- The reference page should not be more than 1 page
- Always list the most important reference first
- Include the name, title, organization, street address, phone number, and email address of each reference
  - Ask each reference how they prefer to be contacted

Follow-up

- Be sure to send a *thank you* note or email to everyone that writes you a recommendation
- Inform them if you get the position you applied for
  - This could help your chances in the future for another recommendation

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