

# PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

THEY CAN MAKE OR BREAK YOUR JOB SEARCH.  
GET IT RIGHT.



1

## THINK STRATEGICALLY

References are people that can confidently speak about your skills and accomplishments. They serve as support for the information you have shared about yourself to a potential employer. Choose people that you have good history with and can speak to diverse parts of your professional story.

2

## PROFESSIONAL VS. PERSONAL

Employers want substantiating information about your professional accomplishments, not what your friends think about you. Consider bosses, colleagues, subordinates, vendors, or other industry-related people that have had positive experiences with you and are happy to share those experiences with others.

3

## ASK PERMISSION

Never assume just because you enjoyed a wonderful working relationship with someone that they will be a reference for you. Always extend the courtesy of asking permission to share their name and contact information with a potential employer.

4

## HELP THEM HELP YOU

Prep your references to help them perform the best on your behalf. Let them know what job you are interviewing for and share your new resume with them. Coach them on the role you are applying for and what questions they should anticipate from an employer.

5

## SAY THANK YOU

Just as you would to an employer following an interview, craft a sincere thank you note (email is fine) to those who provided a reference for you. Remember serving as a reference is a courtesy, not an entitlement. Be grateful and be timely with your follow up.