

## **RULES FOR ESTABLISHING AND CULTIVATING A REFERENCE LIST**

### **What is a reference list?**

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A reference list is a list of people who will speak on your behalf when interviewing for a particular position.

### **Who do you want to ask to be a reference on your behalf?**

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You will want to ask someone who has in-depth knowledge of your abilities and capabilities and feels comfortable speaking on how you will positively impact the organization. References can include people from past work experiences, internships, professors, community service, advisors, athletics, or extracurricular activities.

### **What about family, friends, and neighbors as a reference?**

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Generally, you will want to use professional or educational people as references. These people will be able to highlight your skills and accomplishments related to the position to which you are applying, not just talk about what a great neighbor you were because you brought in their mail. If you work for a family business and your supervisor is a family member, see if there is someone else within the company that could speak to your abilities. If not, a family member is fine.

### **Do you use the same people for every position?**

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Not necessarily. You need to be very strategic in choosing who you will list as a reference. Different people know your strengths and abilities in different lights. It is important that you fully understand what qualities the organization you are interviewing with requires so you can choose the strongest references.

### **Can I just list anyone?**

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Definitely NOT! The first rule of reference lists is to ASK the person if they would serve as a reference on your behalf. You don't want to assume that someone will speak on your behalf. There are many reasons why people don't want to do so, so you always want to ask the person if they would serve as a reference.

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Provide them with a current copy of your resume, your transcript if necessary, and a copy of the job description or the

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