

How to Add References



ANNA MARIA
COLLEGE

Career Services

Trinity Hall East, Room 133 (1st Floor)

Anna Maria College

50 Sunset Lane

Paxton, MA 01612

careerservices@annamaria.edu

508.849.3596

References: What Are They?

Employers are looking for people that can give them a clear description of you and your greatest strengths. You may be a good worker who never is late and you give more than the minimum but employers want to see more proof. They want to know how you interact with people and gain the insight of the people and previous employers that know you the best. A reference is a letter from a person who knows you well that tells your hiring employer about you and how you would be a great candidate for the position.

References are either called by your hiring employer or write a recommendation for you to send to the employer. The written recommendations are sent directly to the hiring employer and you do not see what is said about you. Make sure you chose your references wisely.

Who Do I Ask?

Most hiring managers want three reliable references. Specifically, they want the name of your current boss. However, if you are leaving your current job and your current employer does not know you are leaving, do not put them as a reference. If that is the case, you can give them a reference from another previous employer.

Other good references may include former supervisors, teachers, coaches, coworkers, customers, and prominent people who know you. Prominent people may also include an attorney, banker, doctor, a member of the clergy or a local business worker.

Am I supposed to ask before offering someone's name as a reference?

Yes, always ask.

If you ask, you may get a better recommendation than those you don't ask.

Those who are not asked are often caught off guard. He/she might struggle to remember who you are and how you are/were connected with them when the hiring employer contacts him/her. To a hiring employer, the hesitation might sound like the person is not eager to recommend you.

How Do I Ask?

You have to call or visit them.

Don't ask by email, text, or Facebook. They need to see your face or hear your voice when you ask and you need to see them. When you do ask, don't just ask for a recommendation. Ask for a "positive recommendation."

You might say: “(Ms. Jones), I’m applying for a (nursing) position at the (UMASS Memorial Center). I would like to list you as a reference. Would you be able to give me a positive recommendation?”

Most people are honored when asked. They’ll be happy to give you a good recommendation.

Others might not be interested in singing your praises. So, listen to their voice. Notice their body language. What does your gut tell you? If you don’t think they’ll give you a good recommendation, do not put them down as a reference.

Also, do not pressure them into giving you a recommendation by being upset and starting drama.

If you ask them and they are a bit hesitant, let them know its okay and say that you have other people you can use as reference:

“(Ms. Jones), I’m applying for a (nursing) position at the (UMASS Memorial Center). I would like to list you as a reference. Would you be able to give me a positive recommendation?”

“Well, (Sue) ... I’m not sure because of your actions during your employment with us that I would be a good reference.”

“That’s okay, Ms. Jones. I have other references I can contact. Thank you for letting me know.”

If you know that your boss won’t give you a good recommendation, you could ask your boss’s boss to give you a positive recommendation instead.

What do I do if the hiring employer is apprehensive?

If the hiring employer asks you why your previous boss was not a reference for you then you should react responsibly and respectfully. Do not badmouth a former boss. It makes you look like a trouble maker to your hiring employer.

The hiring employer may ask: “I see here that you previously worked for (Elaine Jones). Is there a reason why (she) is not one of your references?”

You response could be: “(Ms. Jones (always say their name in a professional manner using Mr., Ms., or Mrs. And their last name)) was the most demanding boss I ever worked for. We had our moments. However, I learned more from (her) than anyone. I’m sure, someday, I’ll probably miss (her).”

Do I need to tell my references anything else?

Yes, of course.

You need to tell your references about the job in a little more detail. You could give them a copy of the job description you are applying for. **Also, let your references know the name of the hiring manager or at least the name of the company you are applying for.**

With this information your references will not be caught off guard when the hiring manager calls their phone. Also, if you give the hiring manager your reference's house number, another member of the household may answer and be confused. So, in order to lesson confusion, you need to let your references know who is going to be calling them.

Should I send my references a copy of my resume?

Yes.

You should send a copy of your resume and job details to your references. It makes it easier for them to remember who you are and what jobs you were previously involved in.

Do I list references on my resume?

No, do not list your references on your resume.

Your resume will pass through lots of hands- friends, friend-of-friends, connectors, and probably a few people you might not even know. You don't want the names of your references to fall into the wrong hands. So, keep them off your resume. If you do put your references on your resume, you are inviting hiring managers to call your references before they've even met you.

Can employers interview people not listed as my references?

Yes.

Employers can interview anyone, even people not on your list. They may, however, interview current instructors and employers only with your permission.

Do I send a thank you to my references even if I don't get the job?

Yes, always send a thank you whether you get the job or not.

A thank you letter to your reference(s) will make you look professional, grateful, and courteous. Whether you are hired for the job or not, you should always send a thank you to your references.

Your thank you letter should be **handwritten**, not emailed. You could buy simple thank you cards at a dollar store or Wall Mart.

Example Thank You:

Dear Ms. Jones,

Thank you for being one of my references for the nursing position I applied for at UMASS Medical. Your time and assistance in reaching my future goal of being a nurse are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Anna Maria

How do I display my references?

After you receive confirmation that you can use their names, **list your references on a separate sheet of paper**. Include each person's name, address, phone number, job title, relationship to you and the best times for the hiring manager to call. Hand your list of references to the hiring manager during your job interview.

Bob Smith

50 Sunset Lane Paxton, MA 01612

(555) 123-4567

bsmith@gmail.com

REFERENCES

Kim Truman

Title: Manager of Kim's Clothesline

123 Clothesline Lane Paxton, MA 01612

Contact Information:

(508)-XXX-XXX

ktruman@ktruman.com

Richard O'Leary

Title: Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice

Anna Maria University

51 Sunset Lane Paxton, MA 01612

Contact Information:

(508)-XXX-XXX

roleary@rolearyamu.edu

Dennis Stanley

Title: Head Basketball Coach

Anna Maria University

51 Sunset Lane Paxton, MA 01612

Contact Information:

(508)-XXX-XXX

dstanley@dstanleyamu.edu