**SAMPLE REFERENCE CHECK FORM QUESTIONS**

1. How long have you known (name) and what was the nature of your relationship?
2. What was the nature of the position that (name) held and can you describe the duties of the position?
3. What are (name’s) strengths?
4. How were (name’s) working relationships?
5. (Describe position here) How do you feel (name) would perform in this type of position? What would see as (name’s) biggest challenge in that type of position? What would be her/his most difficult transition issue?
6. Would you comment on her/his ability in the following areas?
	* Detail Orientation
	* Communication Skills
	* Customer Service Skills
	* Organization Skills/Multi-tasking
	* Team-orientation
7. What would you say would be (name’s) 2 or 3 main areas for performance development?
8. Would you consider rehiring this individual?

**SOME NOTES & OTHER QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

**To make your reference checks effective, tailor your questions to the specific role and ask for concrete examples to evaluate their past performance.**

**Foundational questions**

Start with these questions to verify employment details and confirm the reference's relationship with the candidate.

* What is your relationship to the candidate, and how long did you work together?
* What were the candidate's job title, primary responsibilities, and employment dates at your organization?
* What was the candidate's documented reason for leaving?
* Given the opportunity, would you rehire this person? Why or why not?

**Assessing performance and work ethic**

These questions help you gauge the candidate's job performance and attitude, providing insight beyond what is on their resume.

* What would you say are the candidate's greatest strengths?
* What are some areas where the candidate could improve?
* Can you describe their overall work ethic and how they handled deadlines and pressure?
* How would you describe the candidate's communication style?
* Can you give an example of a project where the candidate went above and beyond expectations?

**Evaluating interpersonal skills and teamwork**

Use these questions to understand how the candidate collaborates with others and fits within a team environment.

* How well does the candidate work independently versus as part of a team?
* How does the candidate handle constructive criticism and feedback?
* Can you describe a time the candidate was involved in a workplace conflict? How did they manage it?
* How would you describe their ability to get along with co-workers and management?

**Management and leadership questions**

For candidates applying for a management role, include questions that assess their ability to lead and mentor.

* How would you describe the candidate's management style?
* In what ways did the candidate support or mentor their teammates?
* How did the candidate manage challenging situations with direct reports?
* How do you think their direct reports would describe them?

**Final and probing questions**

These final questions can help uncover new information or confirm any lingering doubts you have.

* What is one piece of advice you would give a manager to help this candidate succeed?
* Based on what I've told you about our opening, do you think the candidate would be a good fit?
* Is there anything else you would like to add that would help us better understand the candidate?
* Is there anyone else we should speak to about this candidate to get a different perspective?

**Key things to remember**

* **Prepare in advance:** Take time to review the candidate's application and your interview notes to form specific questions that address any concerns or areas you want to explore further.
* **Stay consistent:** Ask the same set of questions for all candidates to ensure a fair evaluation.
* **Look for patterns:** If you contact multiple references, note consistent feedback about strengths or weaknesses. Conflicting feedback may require follow-up.
* **Stay legal:** Focus on job-related questions and avoid illegal topics, such as age, religion, marital status, or medical history.