

References 101 Guide

10 Steps to Making the Most of your References

1: Consider your potential references

- The best references are individuals who have known you in a close capacity and can speak favorably about your abilities.
- Brainstorm by listing your past and present activities and experiences and the people associated with each.

2: Select at least three (3) references

- Choose your references carefully – they are a very important part of the job search process.
- Try to select 3-5 references from different experiences.
 - Examples: your communications professor, internship supervisor, volunteer organization coordinator, computer science professor, or summer job supervisor

3: Be sure to ask each reference for permission

- Ask each potential reference whether they would be able to provide a “strong” reference.
- Provide each reference with a copy of your resume and a job description, if possible.

4: Keep your references informed of your job search

- References appreciate hearing how your search is going and it also helps them to anticipate when you’ll be needing a reference.

5: References should be listed on a separate document

- Do not list your references on the resume, rather have a separate document prepared.
- Please review the sample reference page on Seaver Career Center website.

6: Use the same heading as your cover letter and resume

- This will help make your application look more professional and will help to keep the documents together once they reach the employer.

7: List all relevant contact information

- Information should include: title, name, position, and company, phone number, email address and mailing address.

8: Be sure to include the salutation for each reference

- Examples: Mr., Ms., Mrs., Dr.

9: Provide reference list when requested

- Prepare your list ahead of time and provide this information when requested by the employer. Many times, employers will request your reference list after an interview, so bring your reference list with you.

10: Thank your references

- Don’t forget to thank your references when your job search is complete.