Reference Checking Checklist



Follow these steps to ensure proper reference checking:

- Tell each applicant that no employment offer will be made until satisfactory reference checks are made.
- Call or write to each reference given. If you are not going to check references, do not ask for them.
- If you don’t get a response to a written request to a local employer, call them. The conversation may reap more information than a letter would anyway, although you should be aware that many employers are reluctant to disclose much about a former employee because they are afraid of being sued.
- If you request references in writing, include a signed release by the job applicant permitting the information you want to be given out.
- Document all information that you receive.
- Also document unsuccessful tries at gathering information, to protect you from negligent hiring claims.
- If the former supervisor won’t tell you anything, record the fact that he or she refused to give any information about why you should (or shouldn’t) hire the applicant.
- If you can’t get the requested information from references, ask the job applicant for more information or to clear the way for you with the references he or she gave you.