

REFERENCE CHECK TEMPLATE AND SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Candidate Name _____

Position Applied _____

Person Contacted _____ Title _____

Working Relationship to Candidate _____

Organization/University _____

Reference Checked by _____ Date _____

INSTRUCTIONS

- ▶ Introduction example: *“UAB is considering ____ for a position with the School of Medicine. S/he provided you as a reference and has given us permission to verify information received during the recruitment process.”*
- ▶ Provide a brief overview of the position to which the candidate is being considered.
- ▶ Ask questions related to duties and responsibilities of the position. Refrain from prohibited pre-employment inquiries.
- ▶ Ask the same questions of all references (there may be some variation based on the relationship of the reference to the candidate or follow-up questions for clarification purposes).
- ▶ Pay attention to unusual hesitations, ambiguous or evasive responses, overly negative or overly enthusiastic responses. Ask follow-up questions if necessary for clarification.
- ▶ Take notes on relevant information. Carefully evaluate and assess the reference after the phone call.

SAMPLE GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. Describe how you know [Candidate] and in what capacity.
2. What were [Candidate’s] job title and primary duties and responsibilities?
3. How would you describe [Candidate’s] overall performance and quality of work?
4. How would you describe [Candidate’s] teaching and leadership skills?
5. What research and/or grants are you aware of with which [Candidate] has been most recently involved?
6. How did [Candidate] perform in a clinical setting? Did patients provide feedback on [Candidate]? If so, what kind of feedback?
7. Provide an example of [Candidate’s] academic accomplishments or scholarly work.
8. How well did [Candidate] respond to pressure (e.g., from high volume, deadlines, crisis situations, etc.)?

9. How did [Candidate] respond to criticism/interpersonal conflict?
10. In your opinion, what are [Candidate's] strongest attributes and/or skills?
11. In your opinion what are [Candidate's] weakest attributes and/or skills?

SPECIFIC SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

In addition to the above questions that address general performance areas common to most jobs, questions addressing specific duties of this particular position should be included here. For example, such questions might cover one or more of the following areas:

- ▶ Technical knowledge or skills applicable to this type of work.
- ▶ Experience in the applicable position (teaching, research, clinical, etc.).

SAMPLE CONCLUSION

1. Would you like to add anything else that we have not already addressed?
2. Given the position we described, would you recommend [Candidate] for the position?
3. Would you consider rehiring [Candidate] to the same level for which s/he was at your organization?
Why not and for what level would you rehire [Candidate]?
4. May we share the contents of this reference with Candidate?