

Sample Reference Check Questions

The following sample questions suggest the types of information you might seek from references about potential job candidates.

Background questions

1. How long have you known X?
2. What was your relationship with X?
3. When did you work with X and for how long?

Validating interview or resume information

1. What type of tasks was X assigned to?
2. How did X fulfill these tasks?

Focusing on the candidate's competencies

1. How did X interact with co-workers?
2. Can you give examples of X taking the initiative to help a colleague without first being asked?
3. Please describe two examples of X going beyond the call of duty.
4. Can you provide an example of a time that X was required to use strategic thinking skills?
5. What are three of X's strengths?
6. In what areas do you feel X may need further development?
7. Please rank, on a scale of one to ten, the following abilities:
 - Writing skills
 - Verbal presentations
 - Professionalism
 - Ability to work in teams
 - Ability to work under pressure or respond to competing deadlines
 - Conflict resolution skills

Note: The abilities identified above are examples. You will want to identify areas and abilities that are critical to the position that you are trying to staff.

Assessing personal suitability

1. What is the ideal career/perfect job for X?
2. In what type of work environment would X thrive? Where would X struggle?
3. If you had the option, would you hire X again?
4. Is there anything else we should know before we make a hiring decision?