



## PREPARING REFERENCES

After creating a great resume and developing strong interviewing skills, nothing could be worse than having a reference that doesn't speak positively about you. In today's job market, you simply can't afford to take this chance. The first step in this process is to identify several individuals that you know professionally and will speak well of your work (skills, experience, and characteristics such as work ethic). Note that I didn't say personal references. The same individual might also be a friend, but you're selecting them since

they know you in a professional context. Next, you should contact these individuals and inform them of your pending job search and ask if they might consider being a reference. Surprised references may tell a prospective employer, intentionally or unintentionally, they weren't aware of the potential to be contacted. Even if they provide positive comments, the fact they weren't expecting to be contacted tells an employer a great deal. Next, you should provide them with a copy of your resume and insights regarding the types of positions or specific opportunities that you're pursuing. Once you've shared this information, allow them time to consider and accept or decline your request. If you have any doubt regarding their willingness to accept, you should reconsider asking since references don't always speak in a positive manner. If you have doubt and still want to ask an individual to be a reference, we suggest that you make the request via email or through another person. This will allow them to decline gracefully or simply not answer. Don't take a decline or lack of response personally – this is a much better outcome compared to them speaking

of you in a less than positive manner. Assuming they agree to serve as a reference, you should: 1) thank them, 2) ask them if they need anything further to speak about you in a professional context, and 3) ask them how they'd prefer to be contacted (work, home or cell phone/email). In addition, you should provide them with routine updates as your job search progresses so they aren't caught off-guard by a potential employer. A word of caution regarding use of individuals who are friends as professional references. This might put a friend in an awkward position since they might be asked to speak about your personal habits or may provide unintended information that you might not want shared. Finally, sometimes references still don't speak positively about those whom have asked them to serve as a reference. The steps we've outlined should help reduce this risk and there are additional methods that we discuss at our hands-on workshops.

### ***The Bottom Line:***

Surprised, under-informed, or less than positive references can have a major impact on your job search. Don't go to all the effort of preparing while neglecting to prepare your references.



## UNUSUAL ITEMS THAT YOU SHOULD BE READY TO DISCUSS

Let's face it, life is full of surprises and many people have items in their past or on their resumes which reflect significant changes or deviations. Examples include changing majors in college, changing professions after a few years of experience, getting out of the military, or moving a significant distance. To be clear, there's nothing wrong with these types of changes. Just realize that a potential employer might ask you about anything on your resume which implies a significant or atypical change. The reason these types of questions are asked is to understand how a candidate deals with adversity and the key is to have a positive reason for making the change. Adversity might be the cause for us to make significant changes, however, life changes are often the result of well thought out and pre-planned actions. Don't go into an interview unprepared. Study your resume and find anything that might appear to be a change from the norm. This might warrant a question and offer you a unique chance to discuss something that demonstrates a strength which is aligned to the position of interest. Preparation and practice are essential in this case.



## ask the hiring manager

Should I do anything different in the second round of interviews?

**Answer:** Congratulations on making it to the second round of interviews! The key to subsequent interviews is to remain consistent while balancing new or expanded information that aligns to the position of interest. Second and third interviews are where more sensitive issues might also be discussed like compensation and benefits. Also, don't get too confident and let your guard down. They've not extended an offer and might still have other candidates being interviewed. Preparation and practice are still your best way to ensure success in subsequent interview rounds.

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### UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

Our team is currently working on the Winter/Spring 2014 schedule. At present, we plan to be at several locations in the Ohio region:

- Northern Cincinnati (Mason / Sharonville)
- Southern Cincinnati and Northern KY
- Miami University
- Wright-State Univ / Wright Patterson AFB area
- The Ohio State University
- Ohio University
- Bowling Green State University
- The University of Toledo
- Kent State University

Specific dates/times are TBD as of the publishing of this newsletter and we'll update the website when specifics have been confirmed.

Please email us at [service@interviewskills101.com](mailto:service@interviewskills101.com)

if you have questions regarding the upcoming schedule. We hope to see you at one of our seminars with the goal of preparing you for the most important day of your career, the interview day...because without a successful interview, you won't get your ideal job.

Download a copy of our eBook titled "The Hiring Process Made Simple"

Visit our website and receive your free copy of our eBook ([www.InterviewSkills101.com](http://www.InterviewSkills101.com)).

This is our first of several eBooks so please let us know what you think!

*Sign-up to receive our monthly email and receive a promotion code for use at an upcoming workshop.*

THE HIRING PROCESS  
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TALENT  
NEEDED

