

## References Structure

### Why are References Important when I am Seeking Employment?

A reference is a person to whom your potential employer will communicate with (via telephone, email, e-survey) who can attest to your work and character. The reference should be someone who can articulate why you are well suited for the job and why you are the best choice for the position.

### How Do I Select the Appropriate Reference?

Your reference is someone you have a professional relationship with who knows your knowledge, skills, abilities, work ethic, and/or character; and can provide specific examples.

### Who Could be a Reference?

- Employers/supervisors (paid and volunteer)—individuals in organizations who supervised you in an authoritative capacity.
- Co-workers/Team members/Group Project members—individuals who have worked alongside of you.
- College professors, faculty, advisors, mentors.
- High school teachers, principals, or coaches—individuals who have known you for many years.

### Communicating with Your References...

- Respectfully ask each Reference if they are willing to be a Reference for a particular employment opportunity.
- Make sure the Reference is comfortable with accepting this role and will provide positive information.
- Communicate with your Reference each time you give their contact information. Give your Reference the organization's name, position title, and any other pertinent information.
- Remember to genuinely thank your References and keep them up-to-date on your career progress.

### How Many References Do I Need?

- 3-5—Some References will be more appropriate for certain jobs than others.
- **Do not list References on your resume or in a cover letter.**
- Maintain a Contact List\* for your References.

### \*Contact List Format

Reference [First Name] [Last Name] Credentials

Title

Organization

Mailing address

City, State, Zipcode

Telephone #

Email Address

### When Do I Give My List of References to a Potential Employer?

- When they ask.
- Then, select the most appropriate Reference(s) to meet the request of the potential employer.