REFERENCES FOR JOB APPLICATIONS: A CHECKLIST

Provide each academic reference with:

- A list of the positions (or types of positions) for which you will be using him/her as a reference
- An updated copy of your resume
- An updated copy of your transcript
- A copy of your cover letter and/or personal statement
- A list of the courses you have taken with him/her
- A description of tasks completed as a research and/or teaching assistant
- If significant time has passed, a copy of any papers you wrote under his/her supervision

Make sure to save all papers written for professors you may use as a reference in the future!

Provide each employer reference with:

- A list of the positions for which you will be using him/her as a reference
- An updated copy of your resume
- An updated copy of your transcript
- A detailed list of the tasks you performed while working at his/her office or agency (including tasks not supervised directly by the recommender)
- Examples of your performance that illustrate important skills or qualities

For example, include instances in which you stayed late in order to meet deadlines, gained a client’s trust, successfully negotiated with adverse parties, or devised a creative solution to meet a client’s (or the office’s) needs.

When requesting a letter of reference, give the recommender:

- Clear instructions on where to send the letter
- The date by which it must either be postmarked or arrive
- Where appropriate, a pre-addressed and stamped envelope

Always ask for written recommendations well in advance (1-2 months, if possible) and send the recommender a gentle email reminder two weeks before the letter is due.

When preparing a list of references:

- Make sure to explain your connection to each reference.

Thank your references (and, if appropriate, their assistants) by:

- Sending thank-you emails or notes
- Keeping them up-to-date on your job search, particularly when you have good news!

© Eve Stotland, Esq., Public Interest Law Center, New York University School of Law