

VALIDATING REFERENCES

A Guide to Validating Interview Data

KEEP IN MIND

- Identify yourself, your company, and the reason for the call
- As the supervisor if they would mind validating some information that was obtained from the candidate
- Confirm that you have permission from the candidate to have the conversation
- Confirm that the information will be kept confidential
- Explain the position for which the candidate is being considered
- Do not put them “on the spot”
- Make positive statements first
- Address possible concerns second
- Listen closely for evasive answers, long pauses, etc.
- Be alert for negative factors
- Be patient
- Keep detailed documentation of the conversation; the use of a special form may be helpful
- Do not jeopardize the candidate’s current employment

LEGAL RESTRICTIONS

- Request only information necessary for the recruitment/selection process
- EEOC guidelines to pre-employment inquiries identifies the following information as creating a possible prima facie violation of Title VII
 - High School education
 - Marital status
 - Height/weight
 - Child bearing plans
 - Child care arrangements
 - Arrest record
 - Language ability
 - Credit history
 - Family relationship with current employees
- Reliance on the following factors to refuse to hire have been found to constitute a prima facie violation of Title VII
 - Arrest record
 - High school diploma
 - Poor credit rating
 - Status as an unwed mother
 - Minimum height/weight standards
 - Unrebutted adverse personnel reports from prior employers

DOS AND DON'TS OF REFERENCE CHECKING

- Do have candidates fill out an application, even if they provide a resumé
- Do obtain a release authorizing you to check all references and all information provided
- Do verify education dates, licenses, employment history and other items on the application and resumé to check the applicant's honesty
- Do check a candidate's driving record and avoid entrusting a vehicle or heavy equipment to someone with a history of DUI or other traffic convictions
- Do abide by federal laws governing the use of credit reports. You may obtain a simple credit report without the applicant's consent, but you must notify the applicant in writing within 3 days if you seek a comprehensive "investigative" report
- Do inform the candidate if a credit report played any part in the decision not to hire and provide the name of the credit bureau that furnished the report
- Do check to see if any job applicants have criminal records; ask about criminal convictions, but don't ask whether the applicant has ever been arrested
- Do keep complete records of all reference and background checks you've made
- Don't automatically deny employment to an applicant with a criminal record, but be careful not to put that individual in a position where he/she could harm others. Ask about the details of the crime, rehabilitation and subsequent work
- Don't check an applicant's involvement in questionable worker's compensation claims before extending a job offer or you could run afoul of the ADA

The ADA prohibits employment decisions based on prior injuries or disability. You may make your job offer subject to passing a background check, which could include the candidate's history of worker's compensation claims, sick leave use and general physical and mental health.

AUTHORIZATION TO CHECK REFERENCES

In connection with my application for employment, I authorize you to make a reference check regarding my background to include information concerning current or prior employment (except as noted), general reputation, transcripts as well as other information in regard to my background as deemed necessary and agree to hold such persons harmless with respect as to information that they may give. I acknowledge that I have read and agree to the above statement in its entirety.

REFERENCE NAME/ADDRESS	TELEPHONE #	SUPERVISOR/POSITION
1. _____ _____ _____	_____	_____
2. _____ _____ _____	_____	_____
3. _____ _____ _____	_____	_____
4. _____ _____ _____	_____	_____
5. _____ _____ _____	_____	_____

Print Name _____

Candidate's Signature

Date