## Reference calls – basic guidelines

Basic guidelines for a valuable reference call:

* Start by introducing yourself and state the purpose of your call.
* Confirm whether it’s a convenient time to talk.
* Briefly describe the position (field of expertise, core goals, most important techniques).
* Confirm the relationship between the referent and the candidate.
* Verify basic duties such as internship topics, products, duties and dates of assignments/ internships.
* Ask your project-specific questions about knowledge, skills and competencies (e.g., time management, technical experience, and content of theoretical or practical courses).
* Ask for examples when the reference offers an opinion.
* Be consistent. Ask the same questions about all final candidates and weigh the information equally; what disqualifies one should be the basis for disqualifying others.

Questions could include:

* What was the nature and length of your relationship with the candidate?
* Which duties and responsibilities were assigned to the candidate?
* Did they complete them satisfactorily?
* Did they go above and beyond what was required without being asked?
* What were the candidate’s strengths as an employee/intern/student?
* What would you consider as the ideal next step for this candidate? Why?
* Would you hire or want to work with the candidate again? Why?
* Why did they leave the position? (if applicable).
* Is there anything else I should take into consideration before I hire this candidate?