

Lesson 9: Professional References

Category: Job Search Skills

Employability Skills

- a) Interpersonal Communication
- b) Professionalism
- c) Work Ethic: Integrity, Responsibility, & Accountability

Instructional Direction

This activity can be modified in a number of different ways based on teacher preference. Students can work alone, in small groups, or as part of a large group to complete these activities.

Students should discuss Yelp and similar online review sites then share methods that they use to let others know about a product or service that they like. Students should then choose at least one of the following categories: music, food, sports, fashion, or technology. Students should write one positive referral for a product or service that falls into each of their chosen categories. As part of the referral, students should describe the product or service, how they are familiar with it, how long they have used it, and what is so great about it. Students should then choose a product or service for the same category/-ies chosen about which to write a negative referral. Allow time for students to share.

This activity should be used to start a discussion about who students should and should not use as references and why. Explain that online review sites are like professional references because they are both used by third parties to evaluate our perception of a product, service, or (in the case of employment) a potential candidate for a job.

Be sure to share the following:

- Students should have between three and five professional references.
- References should never be family members.
- References may include former or current employers, teachers, coaches, and mentors.
- All references should be asked permission before they are used, then informed after they are used.
- Neither a list of references nor should the line "References Available Upon Request" be included in a resume.

Explain that each reference should include the first and last name, mailing address, phone number, and e-mail address. It is also a good idea to know where that person works and what their title is. Finally, be sure to include a brief description of how you know the person and how long you have known them. Students should complete the discussion by making a list of people that they might ask to be a reference for them. A sample reference is included here:

John Smith – Senior Marketing Manager, Accento Corporation

1222 Lead Line Drive, Suite 440B

Houston, TX 77002

(832) 222-2222 (office)

jsmith@accento.com

Relationship: worked for Mr. Smith as an intern and part-time employee for 1½ years in the Sales Department

Learning Outcome(s)

Students will understand how to effectively choose references and be able to construct a reference page for use in employment applications or as requested by employers upon conditional offer of employment.

Resources Needed

1. Paper
2. Writing utensils

