SAMPLE REFERENCE CHECK QUESTIONS

One committee member, typically the hiring authority who has direct knowledge of the position responsibilities, should conduct reference checking. Be sure to give a brief description of the position to the person giving the reference (current/former supervisors are in the best position to address work performance). Verify facts listed on the resume (position, responsibilities, years of service, reason for leaving). The same questions may be used for all references; however, make sure all questions are job related. Keep in mind that all information received is confidential and should only be shared with search committee members and/or Human Resources.

1. What is/was your working relationship with the candidate?
2. How long have you known the candidate?
3. How would you describe his/her performance?
4. What do you think are his/her strengths?
5. What areas do you believe this individual could develop?
6. Describe the candidate’s technical skills.
7. Is he/she a team player?
8. Explain his/her supervisory style.
9. Have you had to resolve any conflict related to this candidate?
10. Are you aware of any problems related to attendance or punctuality?
11. Describe the candidate’s organizational skills including their ability to follow through.
12. How would you describe the candidate’s verbal and written communication skills?
13. Has the candidate demonstrated the ability to work in a high volume/fast paced environment?
14. How would you describe the candidate’s interpersonal skills? positive, enthusiastic energetic, etc.
15. Are you aware of any instances of inappropriate behavior including violence?
16. Do you know why he/she is leaving his/her current employment?
17. Would he/she be eligible for re-employment?
18. Would you hire this individual for a position like this?

It is strongly encouraged that the bolded questions be asked of each reference.