

FLY WITH THE WIND!

Engaging Inuit Youth in the Canadian Economy

References

When you apply for a job or submit your resume to a potential employer, you will probably be asked for references. Having a good reference and following a few simple rules will help increase your chances of getting the job you want.

The term “**references**” means people who know you who can vouch for your good character and provide some positive comments regarding your work or volunteer history. References are most often past employers where you had a positive working experience. If you don’t have a lot of work references, and many youth don’t, you can also use teachers, volunteer supervisors, coaches, etc.; basically anyone who knows you personally and from a position of some authority.

Before you use someone as a reference, be sure you talk to them first to let them know you are thinking of using them as a reference. Don’t use a person who you may have left on bad terms or who you don’t know will give you a good reference. If in doubt, ask them.

Once you identify a reference, let them know what kinds of jobs you will be looking for and when they may be contacted by a possible employer.

It’s a good idea to talk a bit about some details of what your reference might say about you. You will want to emphasize things that will reflect well on you in the eyes of an employer. Things like being a team player, hard worker, being on time, willing to take on challenges and responsibilities – these kinds of characteristics will reflect well on you if an employer contacts your reference.

Review the dates and specific details of some of the major events your reference may be asked about. For example, if you volunteered at a summer camp for kids, make sure you both know the dates, some of the regular activities and an example of what kind of contribution you made to the camp.

If you have a past employer as a reference, make sure you both know the dates of your employment, what tasks you did and have an example or two of things you did particularly well.

Finally, if you haven’t talked with your reference for a while, let them know when you are going in to apply for a job and that you would like to use them as a reference. You don’t want the employer calling up and having your reference say “Peter who?”



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