

REFERENCE CHECK ADDITIONAL INQUIRIES

Dartmouth's reference checks are first conducted at a hiring manager's request by Talent Acquisition through SkillSurvey, an automated referencing process. Hiring managers are also expected to supplement the initial SkillSurvey reference check results for a final candidate with additional inquiries of current and previous supervisors. All reference checks must be completed prior to the initiation of a [background check](#).

This guide is intended to assist hiring managers in making appropriate additional inquiries after receiving the results of a completed SkillSurvey reference report. It is important to be prepared with questions before calling a reference and to listen carefully to what is and isn't said in response to specific questions. Your [Talent Acquisition Consultant](#) can help you put together a summary that contains feedback from a completed SkillSurvey reference report. Your Talent Acquisition Consultant can also help you develop behavioral questions arranged by competency cluster to help you structure your additional inquiries.

Prior to making any additional inquiries with a final candidate's current and previous supervisors, confirm that the supervisor you are contacting has completed the online SkillSurvey reference check. If a final candidate objects to offering a current or most-recent supervisor, the SkillSurvey reference check with the final candidate's current supervisor may be deferred until after a conditional offer of employment has been extended. If a final candidate is a current or previous Dartmouth employee, the hiring manager must speak with the final candidate's current or most-recent Dartmouth supervisor prior to making an offer of employment.

When following up with a reference regarding a recently-completed SkillSurvey result, remember to always begin with the following information:

- Your name and title
- Thank you for responding to the initial SkillSurvey
- You are calling from Dartmouth, the name of the candidate, and the title of the position
- You are authorized by the candidate to inquire about their previous employment and to call former supervisors, including this reference
- Time needed for the conversation (if now is not convenient, schedule a time to call back)
- Information will be kept confidential and will not be shared with the candidate

Additional Inquiry Guide

- When introducing yourself to the current or previous supervisor, do not state that the applicant has been "selected", only that they are a finalist for a position
- Consider whether performance problems reported by current or previous supervisors are in areas that might affect performance in the position you are filling and follow up
- Be sure there is a job-related reason for asking specific questions
- Do not ask any questions about characteristics that are protected by non-discrimination laws and Dartmouth policy, such as questions about gender, race, color, national origin, age, disability, religion, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital or parental status, military or veteran status or genetic information. Dartmouth's Notice of Non-Discrimination is found at https://www.dartmouth.edu/~hrs/pdfs/notice_of_nondiscrimination.pdf
- Maintain a high level of confidentiality throughout the process. Do not delegate the additional inquiry responsibility to anyone outside the hiring process, and share information gathered only on a need-to-know basis

Below are a variety of **possible competencies** that can be explored with references regarding a candidate's past work-related performance. This list is not comprehensive and can be discussed and developed further with your Talent Acquisition Consultant:

- Ability to learn
- Adaptability and flexibility
- Analysis and problem solving
- Attendance and dependability
- Attention to detail
- Communication
- Creativity and innovation
- Customer service orientation
- Degree of supervision required
- Impact and influence
- Initiative
- Integrity and ethics
- Job satisfaction
- Leadership and management
- Planning and organization
- Teamwork and professionalism
- Technical and professional knowledge
- Understanding of organization and industry
- Work standards (*e.g.*, reliability and dependability)
- Diversity and inclusivity

Please ensure that information received through additional inquiries are weighted in the same way for all candidates for which reference checks are completed. For example, a factor which disqualifies one candidate should be the basis for disqualifying any candidate. Document the information gathered from your reference check calls and include them in the official search file maintained by the hiring department.

If you have any questions about the reference check process, including developing follow-up questions and how and with whom you may share information collected from references, please be sure to contact your Talent Acquisition Consultant.

APPENDIX A

Sample Additional Inquiry Form

Name of Applicant:

Position Title and Number:

Reference Provider's Name and Title:

1. Did you directly supervise, manage, or teach the candidate?
2. Please give detailed comments on their [NOTE: Examples of relevant position qualities adapted from list above]:
 - a. Attendance and dependability
 - b. Initiative and motivation to take on additional tasks
 - c. Ability to get along with others

- d. Degree of supervision required
 - e. Professionalism/teamwork/collaborations
 - f. Overall attitude
- 3. Why did he/she leave or is leaving your organization (if applicable)?
 - 4. What type of professional development would this person need to be successful in this role?
 - 5. Additional questions (customized to areas in which a candidate may have scored low on SkillSurvey results, or to job-specific items):
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.