References: What are they and why do I need to have good ones?

References are statements that a professional associate (see examples below) uses to describe a person’s work ethic. Reference checks are typically conducted by telephone, or in writing through a letter or email.

The most common references are your current and/or former job or internship supervisors, academic advisors/ professors, coaches or anyone you have worked with in a professional or academic manner.

Why are they important?

Positive references can get you the job you want. Hiring is competitive, companies are selective. Good job references can make the difference in getting hired. “Honor these rules of etiquette for good job references and they should continue singing your praises for a long time (Adapted from www.myreferences.com).

Good Job References Rules of Etiquette:

- Assemble people to use for references in the future. Make it a point stay in touch with them on your accomplishments.
- Call your former references and ask them if they are willing to be good job reference for you, and thank them for his/her time.
- Give your references ample notice to prepare a written recommendation.
- Be sure to apprise them of your goals, accomplishments and provide them with your resume.
- Keep your former positive references informed of your professional work experiences and your educational progress. He / she will be more inclined to see you in a stronger light as you progress.

For additional information on how to request letters of recommendation, please visit:

http://jobsearch.about.com/od/referencesrecommendations/a/recommendation.htm