REFERENCE CHECK HELPFUL HINTS

1. Identify yourself immediately, explain your position with UA and explain to the person why you are calling.

2. Assure your contact that any discussion you have will be held in confidence.

3. Try to establish rapport with the person you are calling. Many times there is a freer exchange of information when the person you are calling identifies with UA, your position, or some mutual point of interest.

4. Tell the person about the position for which the applicant is being considered so that he or she can give a more accurate evaluation.

5. After giving background information on the position you are trying to fill, ask a general response question such as “How do you think the applicant would fit into our vacancy?” After the person responds ask more specific questions.

6. Let the person talk freely for as long as he or she wishes without interruption. An interruption may shut off further information or discussion.

7. Follow up and probe when you feel the contact is reluctant to discuss certain factors.

8. Watch for obvious pauses in answering when you ask questions.

9. Don’t hang up until you’re sure that you know the opinion of the person you have called. Frequently, you will receive ambiguous answers. The person called may give very little useful information. A technique that frequently works is to summarize the conversation by making either of the following two statements: “I take it that you don’t recommend the individual very highly for this position”, or “I take it that you recommend the individual very highly for this position.” Sometimes this brings the responses you need.

10. Be sure you cover all the questions on your checklist.

11. Always include in your reference check the question, “Would you re-employ this individual?” or “Would you recommend for employment?” Often this question brings forth information that you were unable to get with other questions.

12. If the contact refuses to provide information, ask if a signed release from the applicant would be acceptable. If so, copy and share with the contact the signed statement on the UA Application form or the individual’s signed PERMISSION TO OBTAIN INFORMATION form. You may also ask the individual to provide an alternate reference.

13. Be sure to thank the contact for their help.