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4 Types of References

When you apply for jobs, you will be asked for references. A reference is someone who can answer questions about your work history, skills, abilities and work style. Choose your references with care. What they say can make a big difference.

There are four types of references:

- **Employment References** include past employers, co-workers, subordinates or clients. You can also list people for whom you perform volunteer activities, babysitting, lawn mowing and other odd jobs.
- **Professional References** are people you know on a professional basis. They may include contacts form business and sales, professional or community organizations.
- **Academic References** are instructors and vocational counselors.
- **Personal References** are people who know you personally and can describe your skills. Only use this type of reference if you do not have the other types. Avoid using family members or close friends.

Contact the person to ask if they are willing to be your reference before you give their name to a potential employer. Obtain permission to give out their contact information which will include their name, occupation, nature of your relationship, phone number and email address. Inform your references about your job search goals and the specific employers who may be contacting them. And, remember to send your references a thank you note when you know they have given you a recommendation.

For more information contact GST Michigan Works! at 800-285-WORKS.