REFERENCE QUESTION SAMPLES

1) How long have you (did you) supervise the candidate? Verify dates of employment/supervision.
2) What was the nature of the candidate’s job when he/she worked for you?
3) Does the candidate possess any specialized knowledge and or skills? If so, please discuss.
4) What is the candidate’s ability to interpret/apply reference material?*
5) What is the candidate’s ability to independently research problems?*
6) Is there any training that could be offered to the candidate to improve a particular skill or quality? If so, what would it be?
7) What is the candidate’s ability to work under pressure?*
8) What is the candidate’s ability to accept change?*
9) How does/did the candidate perform with minimal supervision?*
10) Is/was the candidate willing to accept close supervision?*
11) Rate the quality of the candidate’s work in comparison to others in the unit?*
12) Describe the strengths the candidate would bring to the Unit/Department.
13) Describe any shortcomings the candidate would bring to the Unit/Department.
14) What skills would you suggest could be worked on to improve overall performance?
15) Describe an example(s) of the candidate’s working relationship with peers.
16) Describe an example(s) of the candidate’s working relationship with management.

*These questions may tend to elicit more opinion than facts. Be clear that you are asking for factual information, not opinion. Ask for specific examples.
REFERENCE QUESTION SAMPLES CONTINUED

On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being outstanding, how would you rate the candidate’s performance in the following areas:

(a) Attendance*
(b) Follows attendance reporting procedures
(c) Punctuality
(d) Dependability
(e) Ability to follow instructions
(f) Willingness to take on responsibility
(g) Degree of supervision needed
(h) Level of detail and accuracy in work
(i) Organization of work
(j) Ability to communicate in writing/verbally
(k) Ability to prioritize work
(l) Ability to meet deadlines
(m) Ability to accept constructive criticism

USE WITH CAUTION

1) Have you ever taken or contemplated taking disciplinary/adverse action against this employee? Please elaborate.
   [Note: An applicant whose prior discipline was withdrawn pursuant to settlement, or other means, may state on an application that no action was taken]

2) Do you have any reservations about recommending the candidate for this job? If yes, please explain.

3) Would you rehire him/her if you had the opportunity? If no, please explain.

4) Are there any other work related factors that we should consider in making a decision to hire this candidate?
   [Note: Be sure to specify “work related factors” and redirect the reference provider if any inappropriate personal or protected information is offered]