

TIP SHEET: Reference Checks

From ***Recruiting the Right People*** by **Clark Reed and his associates at Netgain Partners Inc.** (Cultural Careers Council Ontario and Cultural Human Resources Council, 2003).

Checking references is important to measure a candidate's track record. Here are some tips for conducting reference checks.

- If possible, have candidates ask their references to call you; the reference will be much more willing to share information with you if he/she was asked by the candidates and has taken the time to call you.
- Keep your questions focused on what you need to know about the candidate's performance in previous jobs. Keep your questions consistent from reference to reference so you can compare answers.
- Some good questions include:
 - How long have you known _____?
 - What was your reporting relationship to him/her?
 - How would you describe his/her contributions to your organization?
 - None of us is perfect – we all have our strengths and weaknesses. How would you describe _____'s strengths? And skills that he/she could further develop?
 - How does he/she get along with others, both internally and with external contacts?
 - What motivates him/her?
 - Would you re-hire him/her?
 - (For a management position) How would you describe his/her management style?
 - Is there anything else you'd like to add?