Managing the Dental Team
ADA’s Guidelines for Practice Success™ (GPS™)

Professional and/or Personal References

- Consider hiring an outside company to check applicants’ professional and/or personal references. The cost typically ranges from $200-300 per individual.

- Have the candidate sign a waiver of liability form authorizing you to conduct the reference check.
  - Make sure the form also grants you permission to share it with a previous employer in case they request confirmation that you have the applicant’s permission to request the information.

- While the applicant likely provided you with direct contact information for each reference, call the business’ main telephone number and ask to be connected with the specific individual.
  - This reduces the possibility of the reference being a friend and former colleague who is posing as someone in authority.
  - Make sure the contact has access to the human resources information needed to confirm the information you need.
    - Be familiar with state and local regulations regarding references. Some states allow information to be shared doctor-to-doctor; others require the conversation to be limited to Human Resources staff.
  - Whenever possible, speak with the doctor.

- Ask questions that require more than just “yes” and “no” answers.
  - Open-ended questions give the former employer the opportunity to provide more detailed and complete answers.

- Ask questions that confirm:
  - the individual is eligible to work in the U.S.
  - dates of hire and separation
  - rate of pay
  - regular attendance and absenteeism/tardiness rates
  - whether the employer would rehire the individual
    - Think carefully about extending an offer if the answer is not an immediate and emphatic yes.
  - the duties performed by the individual while in that position
    - They should be similar or related to the duties and responsibilities of the position for which you are hiring.

- Avoid questions that ask about:
  - marital status
  - children or interest in starting a family
  - citizenship
  - age
  - health
  - pregnancy
  - year of graduation
  - ethnic heritage
  - religion
  - gender

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