

WASHBURN  MCGOLDRICK, INC.

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Building Relationships to Advance Education and Philanthropy

REFERENCE QUESTIONS FOR DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT CANDIDATES:

Introduce yourself and state that the purpose of your call is to discuss _____, who is currently an active candidate for the position of Director of Development for the School.

Explain that you have been given their name by the candidate [or by another source if that is the case].

Ask, "May I ask you some questions about _____ that will help us to understand his/her abilities and past experiences?"

Inform the referee that the position is the senior managerial position at the School responsible for development and critical collaborative relationships with Board members, donors and potential donors.

There are many questions you might choose to ask. Here are a few to help you:

1. Please characterize for me the professional strengths of Mr./Ms.. _____.
2. Can you offer some examples of his/her ability to think and act strategically in his/her role at [last Institution] _____
3. Can you describe some examples of changes that have taken place in your organization that involved him/her as a change-agent.
How successful were these changes?
4. How does he/she communicate with staff? with peers? with donors and volunteers? with the CEO?
Can you describe a challenging communications problem that he/she was able to resolve successfully?
5. What are some of the areas that _____ can still work on to improve as a manager? as a development officer?
6. Describe the process he/she uses to set goals for the development program.
Has he/she been successful in achieving institutional goals? development goals?
Can you describe his/her participation in one or more successful major gift solicitations?
7. Describe how _____ has been involved in planning and leading a campaign at your institution. Describe how his/her contribution has been important to the campaign.
Describe how _____ has worked with staff during a campaign. With volunteers. With senior management and academic leaders.
8. Which of _____'s achievements has been his/her most important contribution to the institution?
9. Are there two or three adjectives that come to your mind that describe _____ ?
10. Can you describe a problem or conflict within the program that _____ has helped to solve with an imagination or a creative approach?
11. Thank you for your help and assistance. Are there any other comments that you would like to make?