

# ReferenceCheck

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**Candidate:** Anne Example

**Position:** Customer Service Officer

**Company Name:** Company ABC

**Date:** 20 Feb 2016

**Referee Name:** John Smith

**Referee Company:** Company XYZ

**Referee Position:** Customer Service Manager

## Referee Verification

Anne reported to John directly for her last eighteen months at Company XYZ, and he was also involved in recruiting her back in 2008. As such he is an ideal referee.

## Resume Verification

John was able to confirm that Anne worked with Company XYZ from September 2008 until January 2016. She was originally in an administrative capacity, and then was promoted into a Customer Service role in July 2012.

## Reasons for Leaving/ Eligibility for rehire

Anne resigned from the company of her own volition, but John did say that this came after a process of counselling had been undertaken.

John would definitely rehire Anne based on her capabilities, but would need to ensure that she had addressed some of these interpersonal issues.

## Strength/ Accomplishments

John recalled one instance when Anne turned around a particularly aggrieved client and ended up selling him a more expensive program than his current one. She could be very effective with the clients.

We asked John for specifics from Anne's last performance review, and he pulled out the file for us. She rated very highly for her customer skills as well as for her attention to detail with her reports internally. Anne is a natural communicator who can effectively talk to anybody.

This was one of the key reasons behind her move from an administrative role into a customer contact role. She has excellent PC literacy and a willingness to learn and improve herself.

## **Areas for Improvement**

Anne would occasionally be very dismissive of the capabilities of her colleagues, and this did create some tension in the team.

If Anne were to ask John for one piece of advice as to how she could improve her performance at work, he would suggest that she concentrate on her own performance and not worry about everybody else. Anne may see that she does not tolerate fools gladly, others may perceive this trait as being abrasive.

The same performance review highlighted Anne's tendency to sometimes be a disruptive influence within the Call Centre. Anne had been counselled about this, and was taking steps to amend this behaviour.

## **Comparative Benchmarking**

When we asked John to benchmark Anne's performance compared to others he had seen in a similar capacity, he rated her an 8 - 8.5 out of ten. He added that she was definitely in the top 20% of performers he had seen come through the Centre.

## **Interpersonal/ Teamwork Skills**

After a pause, John commented that Anne managed up extremely well. She related well to management in the company, and saw herself as being their peer. Occasionally her relationships with her real peer group were not so effective, largely as a result of Anne sometimes not treating them with equal respect.

John added that Anne has very high expectations of herself, and of those around her. When others don't reach her perceived benchmarks, she can communicate her feelings abruptly.

## **Work Habits**

Reliability-wise, Anne was an absolute role model. She was always punctual and reliable, and took very little sick leave. Her ethics and integrity were never brought into question.

## **Business Development**

Anne's sales record was always among the best in the company. She was a real high achiever, and relished the kudos which came with that status.

Her job was a combination of new account sales, and looking after existing accounts. She enjoyed the thrill of securing competitor accounts, and even did some training with the new guys on how she went about doing this.

### **Customer Service Orientation**

John spoke effusively about Anne's Customer Service skills. She would often handle the most aggrieved customers, and was very skilful at turning them around.

She once spent over 90 minutes on one call to a large corporate that Company XYZ were on the verge of losing. She let the client vent all his anger, took personal responsibility for fixing his problems, and then addressed each issue one by one. By the end of the call, the client was thanking her for her help and was recommitted to the company. It was outstanding work.

### **Negotiation**

Her negotiation skills were very strong, especially, as already indicated, in handling angry clients. She had attended some excellent training in this field, and had learnt well.

### **Suitability for the position**

Career-wise, John has no doubt that Anne is very well suited to a sales role. He does not see her moving into sales management unless she receives some solid people management training.

We explained the role that you are considering Anne for, and John has no doubt that she has all the skills to be successful in it. His only reservation was that if she is working in a high achieving team, she will be excellent. If some members of the team are not so achievement oriented, Anne will probably not be very tolerant around them.

### **Management/ maximising the effectiveness of the candidate**

If John were to talk to Anne's next manager, his advice would be to ensure that Anne knows exactly what is expected of her and what is not tolerated. Perhaps it would be an idea to set a KPI based on her teamwork.

### **Other referees recommended**

John suggested that the Sales Manager, Peter Williams, may also be worth talking to about Anne.

### **Additional Comment/ Information:**

Anne obviously has all the skills to be a great success in your role, based on John's feedback. Her ability to interact effectively in a team of varied capability would appear to be her greatest challenge.

**Referee Name:** John Smith

**Checked by:** James Thomas