

JOB REFERENCE

A peculiarity of the German-speaking world

In Switzerland, there is a legal entitlement to a qualified job reference. This should provide information about the performance and social behavior of the employees. In the application process, job references form part of the written application documents, along with the CV, motivation letter and certificates. Although their predictive value with regard to the suitability of employees for a position is low, they play a role in the recruitment process. Good job references tend to be assessed neutrally. Recruiters pay more attention to very good or unsatisfactory references. This is especially true if the quality of the references is consistently above or below average. They can then influence the decision whether or not to invite applicants to an interview. Job references are practically only common in German-speaking countries. Because applicants from other countries do not bring any certificates with them anyway, their importance is likely to decrease.

Write your own job reference if possible

Unfortunately, many employees are somewhat careless with their job references. It is important to ask for an interim reference every time there is an internal change of job or a change of supervisor. You should also question the references more critically and, if necessary, suggest improvements. Sometimes employees are given the opportunity to write their own references. This is particularly the case if companies do not have a personnel department. Or the HR department asks employees to contribute the list of activities. I strongly recommend using both opportunities, although it is not the idea that employees should judge themselves. But to lighten the load, I can say that many job references are not very meaningful as courtesy letters anyway. If you cannot write it yourself, then at least make suggestions for improvement. However, formulate them in a ready-to-use form. This increases the chances that they will be accepted.