

Schulich's Application Tips

REFERENCES

The Schulich School of Business requests references as part of the application process.

Who should you choose as your referees?

HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING IN THE PROFESSIONAL ARENA?

If you have been working for several years, chances are that you will want your references to come from the professional arena.

- Your direct managers, past or present, make the best referees as they are most intimately familiar with your work and potential.
- If you have worked on a project for several months, the project lead could also make a strong referee, especially if you worked with that individual extensively.
- It is acceptable for both references to come from the same company, and you do not have to include a current supervisor if this is too difficult.

ARE YOU SELF EMPLOYED?

If you are self-employed or work for a family business, you may need to get creative regarding who you choose as a reference.

- A relative does not make a suitable referee.
- A client, vendor, or professional services provider that you work with could do the trick, as long as you have extended exposure working with the referee.

HAVE YOU VOLUNTEERED OR WORKED ON-CAMPUS?

- Choosing a referee from your extra-curricular life can work if you have committed yourself to a volunteer or on-campus role over a length of time.

DO YOU HAVE A STRONG RELATIONSHIP WITH A PROFESSOR?

If you are in school or have graduated within the last two years, you can choose to have a professor act as a referee.

- Only go this route only if you have an established relationship with the professor, and you made a positive impression beyond the typical student-professor relationship.
- We suggest that at least one of your references come from a work environment, even if it's from a part-time or summer position.

How should I break the ice?

Consider taking your prospective referees for coffee and explain why you are applying to the MBA program. Feel free to remind them of your greatest accomplishments!

Formally ask for a recommendation

Ask if they are willing to give you a positive recommendation. You may think you know how they feel, but should ensure the references will be on your side. References are submitted online and remain confidential.

Give your referee enough time

We suggest approaching your referees at the start of your application process, to give them the time they need to complete the reference form.