

## **Do's and Don'ts for Giving References**

Certain safeguards should be followed when providing references on current or former employees. It is important for the supervisor to provide job related facts not opinions.

### **DO's:**

- Do return the phone call to ensure that you are talking to a potential employer.
- Do provide references only to persons with a legitimate reason to need a reference on a current or former employee.
- Do be consistent in the type of reference information provided.
- Do provide only factual information related to job performance that is documented in the departmental personnel file.
- Do ask non-KU employers to provide a signed release from the current or former employee authorizing you to provide any other work-related information. Without a release, furnish only standard types of information e.g., dates of employment, job title, and basic job duties. Salary data should be provided by HR/EO. Refer the caller to HR/EO's verification line at 785-864-4959.
- Do provide on-campus departments with a comprehensive reference and for on-campus queries a release is not necessary. Provide the requestor with any job related information or offer the requestor an opportunity to review the employee's departmental personnel file (e.g. performance evaluations, commendation letters, disciplinary letters, etc).
- Do draw upon specific examples and performance evaluations to give informative, concrete examples.
- Do let the candidate know if you will be contacting references not provided by the candidate.

### **DON'TS:**

- Don't provide a poor reference or refuse to provide a reference because you did not like the employee or the person has filed a grievance.
- Don't make character judgments; only make statements related to the employee's job performance.
- Don't provide any health or medical background information about an employee.
- Don't say anything to a reference about an employee's specific performance that you would not say directly to an existing or former employee.