

## **SAMPLE REFERENCE QUESTIONS**

Prepared by: Marc R. Engel, Esq.

1. How long have you known this individual?
2. In what context(s) have you known this person?
3. Can you comment on this employee's passion on a scale of 1 to 10?  
What makes you say this?
4. Can you comment on this employee's dedication on a scale of 1 to 10?  
What makes you say this?
  - a. What could the employee have done to improve that rating?
5. Can you comment on this employee's reliability on a scale of 1 to 10?  
What makes you say this?
  - a. What could the employee have done to improve that rating?
6. Can you give me an example when the employee went above and beyond what was asked of him or her to get a job done?
7. Can you assess the individual's commitment to professional growth on a scale of 1 to 10? What makes you say that?
  - a. What could the employee have done to improve that rating?
8. Can you comment on this individual's initiative on a scale of 1 to 10?
9. Can you give me an example when this employee demonstrated initiative that you found to be particularly impressive?
10. Can you assess the employee's willingness to assume personal responsibility for her/his actions?
11. Can you comment on the individual's motivation?
12. What seems to motivate him (or her)?
13. What does this individual pride himself (or herself) on?

14. Overall, how would you rate this person's performance in comparison to the employees that have worked with (or for) you over the years? among the best? average? among the worst? why?

15. Do you have any reservations whatsoever about recommending this individual for employment with us?

16. [If the answer to the previous question is "yes", ask the reference to elaborate.]

17. Can you comment on the individual's responsiveness to feedback?

18. On a scale of 1-10, how would you assess the individual's resiliency?

a. What could the employee have done to improve that rating?

19. On a scale of 1-10, how would you assess the individual's willingness to learn from mistakes?

a. What could the employee have done to improve that rating?

20. On a scale of 1-10, how would you assess the individual's collegiality?

a. What could the employee have done to improve that rating?

21. In terms of the individual's job performance, is there anything noteworthy that you would like to share with me that I have not asked you about?

22. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you assess the individual's curiosity?

23. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you assess the individual's adaptability?

24. Can you give me an example of when she/he adapted successfully to a challenging situation?

25. On a scale of 1 to 10, how open is the individual to change?

26. Can you describe a situation where the individual's openness to change helped to solve a problem?

**[Note: Neither this summary nor the seminar presentation are intended to provide, or should be construed as providing, legal advice as to any specific matter.]**

Marc R. Engel is a shareholder at Lerch, Early & Brewer, Chartered. Marc can be reached at 301-657-0184; [mengel@lerchearly.com](mailto:mengel@lerchearly.com).