



Sample: Seven Core Inquiry (7CI) Format

Reference: Mary Smith, Co-worker and Business Analyst at ABC Corp (1-800-555-5555)

The Applicant – Reference Relationship

Ms. Smith states he has known the applicant for three and a half years. They currently work together at ABC Corporation where Mary is a business analyst and the applicant is a product manager. "I have to meet with his team on a weekly basis to stay apprised of their progress and direction."

The Job Description and Work Environment

He is a product manager and is currently responsible for building forecast models in support of our marketed products, pipeline products, and business development evaluations. In addition, he also provides senior management with market research and competitive intelligence utilizing databases such as IMS Health and Wolters Kluwer. He has no direct reports, but is an integral part of a small team of product managers."

The Applicant's Competencies

Ms. Smith describes some of his strengths as his analytical capabilities, multitasking, meeting deadlines, customer focus and detail oriented. She continues, "John is easy to understand while explaining projects. He is quite clear and concise both in his writing and verbal communication. He is an enthusiastic team player. He is always willing to extend himself to his teammates and help out on projects for others. In my opinion, he is time efficient and productive under pressure." Ms. Smith adds that the applicant only needs minimal supervision. "I have noticed that he takes complete ownership of many of the projects he works on."

Regarding motivations, Ms. Smith relates, "I think he likes taking on different challenges such as initiating miscellaneous projects and coordinating with other internal departments. Also, "he values his ability to impact business decision making for senior management and the satisfaction to see his ideas being implemented even if it is only in part at times." Regarding frustrations she states, "I think predominantly a lack of focus on primary market research and training courses through the company for professional advancement was a frustration to him.

Overall Job Performance

"To the best of my knowledge, John always successfully accomplished the objectives assigned to him."

Areas for Improvement

More exposure to industry conferences and more business travel in order to widen his horizons is an area for further growth development. We are currently limited in these areas here at ABC Corp."

Reason for Job Separation

Ms. Smith did not know why the applicant was looking for other employment opportunities at this time. "He's probably exploring new challenges. I have no doubt that John would be a great asset to any company he chooses to join. He brings with him excellent interpersonal, analytical and platform skills. I wish him the best."

Rehire / Recommendation Comments

Absolutely, I would recommend him for a position that requires a degree of responsibility and public trust. John was often entrusted with the opportunity to represent ABC Corp in various conferences and client meetings."



Sample: Traditional Block Narrative Format

Reference: Mary Smith, Co-worker and Business Analyst at ABC Corp (1-800-555-5555)

Ms. Smith states he has known the applicant for three and a half years. "John and I have worked as co-workers since 2006. He is Product Manager and is currently responsible for building forecast models in support of our marketed products, pipeline products, and business development evaluations. In addition, he also provides senior management with market research and competitive intelligence utilizing databases such as IMS Health and Wolters Kluwer. He has no direct reports, but is an integral part of a team small team of product managers."

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Sample: Question and Answer Format

Reference: Mary Smith, Direct of Engineering and Former Supervisor at ABC Corp (1-800-555-5555)

Q: How do you know the applicant? How long?

A: I have known John for five years. I was his supervisor at ABC Corp for four of those years.

Q: What was his title? Please describe his essential duties and responsibilities as a (title):

A: John was a Senior Industrial Engineer / Project Manager at ABC Corporation. His responsibilities included running project teams in the completion of consulting assignments for various manufacturing and distribution clients. He was responsible for the delivery of the project from the initial kick-off meeting to the delivery of the final report. Many of our projects extended into implementation and he was responsible for coordination with the Architectural/Engineering team.

Q: Any supervisory responsibilities? Number of direct reports?

A: At ABC Corp we were a matrix organization. John was responsible for managing a team during the execution of projects, but did not have any direct reports during my tenure.

Q: Were they successful under his management? How would you describe his management style?

A: John was highly successful in all of the project teams that he managed. I feel he is a highly effective, hands-on manager that leads by example.

Q: How well did he satisfy your expectations and the requirements of that position?

A: John exceeded the my expectations for his position

Q: What have you observed as some of his primary strengths, talents, or skills?

A: He had strong technical skills, excellent work ethic, excellent customer skills, strong knowledge of the industry and he was willing to put in the time to get it right!

Q: How effective were his communication skills - verbal and written? On-the-job example?

A: John is very experienced and has excellent written and communication skills. All of our assignments required the development of a final report and a final presentation. I personally observed Ben successfully give numerous presentations to all levels within client organizations.

Q: How would you describe his interpersonal skills, or the ability to work closely with others? Is he a team player or works best independently?

A: John is very personable and works very well as a member of a team or an effective leader of a team. His technical skills allow him to also work without any other assistance. This flexibility is clearly one of his strengths.

Q: How well did he manage his time, or deal with pressure or deadlines?

A: I wish our business was not one of pressure or deadlines, but no one can survive without the ability to deliver a quality product while under time pressure and resource constraints. There is no doubt in my mind that Ben can do what is necessary to deliver for TZA. John is also experienced enough to manage his time, his client's expectations, and use his team effectively.

Q: In what way, and to what extent, did he require supervision?

A: John is a self starter that needs no supervision

Q: What motivates him to put forth his best effort, strive for success, or what did he like most about this position?

A: Respect motivates John, from those above him, from clients, and from his team. John enjoys being part of a successful team.

Q: What part of the job frustrated him, or what did he dislike most about the position?

A: Since our Business Unit was part of a much larger Architecture/Engineering Company, we were often overlooked when it came to company priorities. We often had to fight for internal resources, which made our job much harder to do successfully. I believe this would be something that he disliked.

Q: What would be an area where you would recommend some improvement, or perhaps additional experience or education?

A: We all can improve on something. I am not sure of the specific requirements of his position at TZA, but I am sure John is willing to pick up whatever additional skills or training that is necessary.

Q: Are you aware of any issues he had with excessive attendance or tardiness?

A: This was NEVER an issue while John worked for me. I am not aware of any issues beyond that.

Q: Would you recommend him for the position?

A: Again, I am not sure what position John is interviewing for. I do know XYZ and the type of work that they do. I believe John is capable of filling virtually any role in their organization.

Q: Do you have any hesitation whatsoever in recommending him for a position requiring a high level of public trust, responsibility, and integrity?

A: No hesitation whatsoever.

Q: Do you know of anything in his background that would indicate a future propensity for threatening behavior, harassment, or violence.

A: I do not know of anything

Q: Any other information that you would like to provide that would help my client make a hiring decision?

A: I feel John is a solid fit for XYZ. They are a really good company with a solid reputation. John fits right in with them. There should be no hesitation whatsoever in hiring John.

Q: Why did he leave his position?

A: The economy ravaged the A/E industry. Following a number of downsizing exercises, the company eventually just went away. I am not sure if John was a victim of one of the final downsizings, or was part of the final closure of the company, but there were no survivors.