
SkillSurvey Reference FAQs

What makes SkillSurvey Reference the industry-leading automated online reference-checking solution?

We're not just automating the process of checking references, or moving online an inefficient, time-consuming, low-value, telephone process. Our patented solution is revolutionary, delivering feedback from references in a much quicker and more candid way that can be used earlier in the hiring process. The Pre-Hire 360® workflow has a growing library of hundreds of job-specific surveys designed to help the references rate the candidate on the specific behaviors that are relevant to a given job. Ratings have been validated to correlate with reduced first-year turnover for cause and better post-hire performance.

How is your solution based on science and data analytics?

All Pre-Hire 360 workflow surveys are created by our Analytics Team of industrial and organizational (I/O) psychologists. Our Analytics conducts thorough industry research, follows best practices in competency modeling, and uses rigorous statistical validation to create job-specific surveys that include the range of competencies found to be most relevant to success. Our results have been scientifically validated and published in a peer-reviewed science journal.

Most references say very little. How does SkillSurvey Reference get actionable feedback from references?

At least 85% of references complete the survey and offer candid input. They do so because the system generates and sends them an email request from someone they know, the job candidate. The email includes a link to an online survey that consists of a variety of behavioral based job-specific questions

(the competencies that really matter for each job). In addition to being a personal request, within the Pre-Hire 360 workflow, references are advised that all of their feedback will remain confidential and will only be provided to the hiring organization in a report that averages all of the references' ratings.

What does it mean when you say the Pre-Hire 360 workflow has scientific integrity?

There are three components that our system meets to prove scientific integrity: Reliability – Does the system provide consistent and reliable results for a given candidate when it's completed by multiple references, and across different points in time? Validity – Are the surveys job-related, and when the data is leveraged by a company, is it predictive of subsequent work outcomes like lowering turnover, improving hiring manager satisfaction, and predicting performance ratings? Compliance (EEOC) – Is the system free of bias against all protected classes of candidates? Read more about our [science](#).

How do you indicate results or ROI of using SkillSurvey Reference?

A study published in the International Journal of Selection and Assessment examined the correlation between pre-hire reference ratings and performance on the new job. The question asked was this, could reference feedback and ratings from the Pre-Hire 360 process truly be used to predict future work performance? According to this peer-reviewed, published research, organizations that utilize pre-hire performance data in their hiring process achieve clear benefits: Anticipate future performance – The higher the references' performance rating, the better the supervisor performance review once on the job.

Reduced turnover – Our customers have experienced first-year turnover reductions of 35 percent. Improve satisfaction – By selecting employees with a track record of exceptional customer service as perceived by their references, overall customer satisfaction scores increased by an average of

16 percent year-over-year. To explore how these results can benefit your organization, check out our [ROI calculator](#).

How does SkillSurvey Reference differ from other tools used in the hiring process?

There are a variety of employment tests used to evaluate an applicant's skills, competencies and personality traits. Unfortunately, most of them pose significant challenges. First, applicants take the test themselves, and with the advent of most tests now being done online, one must hope that the applicant is not getting any help from a friend or even the Internet, where the answers might be posted. Second, most tests allow the applicant to judge their own skills and behaviors. There are even more challenges including bias and adverse-impact, yet these first two challenges are unavoidable for you if you use a test in your hiring process. SkillSurvey Reference allows others to offer their points-of-view on a job applicant.

Specifically, SkillSurvey Reference allows you to obtain and manage job-specific feedback from a candidate's former managers, co-workers and direct reports. This insight can be obtained confidentially, typically in less than two days, and when the data has been utilized by a company, has been scientifically validated to be more predictive than traditional "self" assessments.

How long does the process take to get results on the candidate?

On average surveys are completed by a minimum of 4 references in less than 2 days.

We hire some workforce categories where the job candidates may have limited references and we only want to connect with a few. Are there options for that?

Yes. With the customer-configured workflow available in SkillSurvey Reference, you may choose to tailor the automated reference checking process to meet your needs. This includes utilizing your own custom surveys or questions, setting the minimum number of references and whether or not the reference feedback is confidential.

How do you obtain insight on soft skills?

We take the time to translate general competencies such as ‘being a team player’ or ‘adapting to change’ into specific job behaviors in the context of real work situations. The predictors are professionalism; interpersonal skills; problem solving and adaptability; personal value commitment. For those who manage people or projects, there are other predictors such as setting goals; assigning tasks and providing feedback. For executives and leaders, predictors include the ability to provide vision and motivate others. We identify a meaningful set of behaviors or ‘soft skills’ for each job and use detailed and candid feedback from former managers and coworkers to suggest how a candidate performed in these behaviors in a previous position.

Is it easy for hiring managers to understand reference feedback?

We make it easy for hiring managers to interpret survey results by providing [data-driven reports](#). In the candidate feedback report, we point out differences of opinions when references disagree, separate manager feedback from co-workers and we also provide job specific behavioral questions that can be used during the interview. There are options available to set your own corporate benchmarks and to see percentile rankings for the thousands of other candidates who have been assessed by SkillSurvey Reference for a similar position.

Does SkillSurvey Reference allow for ratings of job skills?

Our Pre-Hire 360 workflow is designed to help understand the “soft skills” a candidate has which include the specific behaviors that are required to be effective in a particular job. For example, for a customer service role, a question asks the references to rate the candidate on their ability to handle customer complaints with patience, listen well and work well with other stakeholders in the organization to resolve issues. Each survey includes approximately 20 behavioral questions. Customers may also choose to tailor the reference process for certain workforce segments. In this workflow, they may opt to create their own questions relevant to skills.

What is the best time for a client to use SkillSurvey Reference for a job applicant?

The reference checking process should be used using the survey after a verbal offer has been made or at the final stage of the selection process.

It may be beneficial to generate a SkillSurvey Reference candidate feedback report on a job applicant after the phone screen and before the candidate's first interview, and our clients have found that it is most effective to use it at this point in the hiring process. Considering the information in the candidate feedback report before interviews allows a recruiter and/or hiring manager to develop interview questions, or use the provided job specific behavioral interview questions, so they can perform a more thorough interview leveraging the feedback of the references. It is not a best practice to use, and SkillSurvey strongly recommends against using, reference feedback report after a job offer has been made.

Which browsers are supported?

SkillSurvey Reference® supports Microsoft® Internet Explorer® version 11, and Apple® Safari® version 11.x on macOS. The most recent stable/supported versions of Microsoft Edge, Mozilla® Firefox®, and Google Chrome™ are also supported.