**top five tips for securing a reference**

1. **Always Ask Before Submitting Your Application**
   References should never be surprised when they are contacted to talk about their experience working with you.

2. **Choose Someone Who Can Attest to Your Work, Volunteer, and/or Leadership Ability**
   Former employers or supervisors are great references! The selection team strongly discourages using family and friends.

3. **Provide a Copy of the Position Description**
   References are better able to attest to your skills and abilities if you give them more context on the position you are applying for.

4. **Give at Least Two Weeks’ Notice**
   Your references will not be able to access the form until you submit your application. You should strive to give references at least two weeks’ notice (keep in mind: your application deadline is January 5 and the reference deadline is January 14).

5. **Thank Them**
   Sending thank you cards and/or emails are professional ways to express gratitude.