

HOW TO CHECK REFERENCES ON A PROSPECTIVE BOSS

You are in second round job interviews. If you have the characteristics your prospective boss is seeking, have you thought through the boss characteristics YOU are seeking?

Focus on power and decency.

Power is defined as someone who can make things happen in the organization. Potential power is defined as someone who is perceived as on a fast track to get power.

Hitch your wagon to powerful boss' star and you will move up as the boss moves up.

Hitch you wagon to a boss who is on a permanent power plateau and guess where you are going?

QUESTIONS TO ASK

The best way to determine power or potential power is to speak with current subordinates and ask, "Tell me about this person's ability to make things happen?" It is not all that important what is said. What is important is how they react once you ask this question! You want to see people smile, remain relaxed and say positive things.

Be wary if people get uncomfortable with this question even if they eventually say soothing things.

The second question focuses on decency. Ask the boss, "If I spoke with your direct reports what would they say about you?"

The best answer is, "good question. Why don't you speak with them? I will set it up for you." Be wary of, "I am sure they will say I am firm but fair..."

BUYER BEWARE

You've heard the cliché: "be careful what you ask for. You might get it." Too many of our clients get so caught up in the game of winning that job offer, we have to shout, "Have you done your due diligence? Will this really help you in your search for a good career?"

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