

Agency Reference Check Script

Goal: Uncover the truth about working with the agency.

Format: 15-minute phone call (do not do this via email).

Intro: "Hi [Name], I'm looking at hiring [Agency Name] for a project similar to yours. I'd love 10 minutes of your honest feedback to help me make a decision."

The "Must Ask" Questions

1. **"What exactly did you hire them to do, and did they deliver it?"**

- *Context:* Verify the scope matches what the agency claimed.

2. **"On a scale of 1-10, how happy were you with the final quality?"**

- *Follow up:* "What would have made it a 10?"

3. **"Did the project stay on budget and on timeline?"**

- *If no:* "What caused the slip? Was it them or internal factors?"

4. **"Who was your primary point of contact, and were they responsive?"**

- *Context:* Verify if the team they pitched is the team that delivered.

5. **"How did they handle feedback or disagreements?"**

- *Look for:* Collaborative problem solving vs. defensiveness.

6. **"Did they solve business problems, or just make things look pretty?"**

- *Context:* Critical for UX/Product projects.

7. **"What is one thing you wish they had done differently?"**

- *Context:* This often reveals the most honest "minor" red flags.

8. **The Golden Question:**

"Would you hire them again for your next project?"

- *Listen for:* Hesitation. A standardized "yes" vs. an enthusiastic "Absolutely!"

Interpreting Responses

- **Enthusiastic Yes:** "We are already working on phase 2 with them." (Green Flag)
- **Hesitant Yes:** "I think so... mostly because they know our system now." (Yellow Flag)
- **Vague Answers:** "They were... fine. Good people." (Often code for "mediocre results but I'm being polite")
- **Specific Praise:** "Their project manager, Sarah, saved us when..." (Green Flag)

Pro Tip: If you sense hesitation, ask: *"I hear a little hesitation there—is there something specific I should watch out for?"*