



April 30, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is provided as a reference for Doug Smith.

I have had the privilege to hire Doug two times in my career, and if I had an appropriate position in my current company I would do everything possible to hire him a third time.

In my first company Doug worked for us off and on in an IT consulting role, assisting with overflow work and large projects. He quickly built a reputation as one of the most knowledgeable technicians on the team, and continued working with us periodically for several years until that business was sold.

The best example of Doug's value on a team though comes from our second tenure together. In 2007 I owned and managed an IT services franchisor, and we also had one company-owned franchisee location in Decatur, GA. This company-owned location was started by an excellent young manager and it grew well for a year or two, but then the manager wanted to leave to pursue his passion in another industry. With plenty of notice we recruited a new person who shadowed the outgoing manager for several weeks, meeting all the key clients and getting up to speed on all the internal processes. The original manager left on a Friday, and the following Monday I received a resignation note from the would-be new manager.

I was in a bind – the businesses that relied on that service center were already anxious because of the leadership change, and now the person who we had convinced them would continue taking care of them had just disappeared. For a brief time I considered just closing that location as it seemed like too much of a challenge to bring in a third new manager and ask them to win back the trust of these business customers.

I realized I needed to “hit a home run” with the next replacement hire if we had any chance to be successful, and there was only one person who had the technical and operational skill, plus the right customer-reassuring temperament, to make it work. I approached Doug, who had recently started his own IT consulting business, and convinced him to come on board as our new manager – and it was a glowing success.

In a short time Doug was able to build relationships with the business clients, begin recruiting and mentoring new staff, and improve the operational efficiency of that location. Within our franchise network he quickly became a respected source of guidance and advice for other franchisees, and became a popular trainer at conferences and new franchisee onboarding sessions.

Doug has a depth of technical and operational skills, but his best trait may be his ability to motivate and encourage others around him. I highly recommend him for any future employers.

Respectfully,

Chip Reaves, President
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