

May 22, 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

Mary Hickman has asked me to write a letter giving readers an idea of her probable value as a consulting director of marketing and marketing communications projects, and I am delighted to do so. I worked with Ms. Hickman for over six years at BullsEye Telecom, as vice president of marketing. BullsEye Telecom has been in business for eight years, and Ms. Hickman was among our first employees. As is typically the case with most businesses growing rapidly from start-up to expansion to relative stability, everyone in the company had to be willing to do a lot of different things to ensure that we succeeded, first in the short term – by which I mean month to month – and over the long term. We had to develop the services that we wanted to offer to our customers, and help find the customers, but at the same time we had to develop the business systems and other infrastructure on which those services and our marketing efforts were based. Job descriptions in this kind of environment are very unstable, to say the least, and we needed people willing to work beyond the normal envelope of managerial responsibility, flexibly and for long hours, to get these things done. Along the way, we had a couple of existential crises to manage – as its name suggests, BullsEye Telecom is in the telecommunications business, and this industry has, during our eight years, gone through the full cycle of boom and bust. We had many “opportunities” to fail, but we didn’t.

The fact that we are still in business at all says something about us, but it also says a lot about Mary Hickman. She spent the six most difficult years we are likely to see in this company, managing projects that included:

- Leadership role in development of multiple carrier integration program
- Development of IT-intensive, database-driven online customer reporting
- Marketing collateral and sales presentation development
- Extensive training of sales personnel
- Industry award-winning radio advertising
- Promotional sales programs
- Sales performance and revenue reporting tools
- Development of new billing services
- Pricing and product management of data circuits
- Service pricing and packaging for local voice lines for national corporate accounts with hundreds of locations across the country
- Et cetera

She is, in short, willing to work and capable of delivering successful results across a broad range of marketing and management projects. She is not a technical resource, meaning that, although she has had a successful career in telecommunications, she is not a network engineer. But she is extremely methodical and she has an active, integrative mind, capable of working with technical personnel to translate technical information into procedural and descriptive materials that communicate successfully and at an appropriate level of detail with other support personnel inside the company and, most important, with customers and prospective customers. I have every reason to believe that her ability to do these things is not limited to undertakings in telecommunications, precisely because she is not limited by technical background.

Our company’s standard policy is to do no more than acknowledge employment; therefore, I feel compelled to state that this letter is a personal endorsement of Mary Hickman’s capabilities as a professional manager. If you have questions about this letter, or want additional information, you are welcome to contact me personally; Ms. Hickman has my private contact information and can give it to you, or can ask me to contact you.

Sincerely,  
Scott Loney