

Top Tips for a Great Letter of Recommendation

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Preparing a great application is an essential skill for any researcher. However, no application for a job or an academic program is complete without a letter of recommendation. What makes a letter of recommendation great, and who can write one for you? In this article, we discuss the different types of recommendation letters, as well as whom you can ask to write one. We also offer some tips for what mistakes to avoid when you prepare your recommendation letters so that you can ensure a successful application for any position.

What is a Letter of Recommendation?

A letter of recommendation is a [letter provided by someone](#) who has experience and authority and who can explain how you are qualified. It is a letter from someone who knows you, confirming your suitability for the position or program you are applying for. A recommendation letter can take several forms. Generally, when you apply for a job, internship, program of study, or other such position, you will be asked to provide at least one letter of recommendation.

A recommendation letter [should not be confused with a reference letter](#), which is more general. While a recommendation letter explicitly highlights your skills, achievements, and qualifications for a particular job or program, a reference letter lists your general qualifications and good character.

What Information Should be Present in a Recommendation Letter?

Different types of applications require different types of recommendation letters. Recommendation letters can be of two types: academic and professional/business. For job applications, recommendation letters should be focused on a candidate's relevant work experience and skill set. Recommendation letters for educational programs need to be related to academic ability and experience. Do you need a recommendation letter for a graduate or postgraduate position? It is best to have both professional and academic references who can attest to your skills.

The letter should explain why you are a [good fit for the program](#) or job you are applying for. Ideally, it can highlight points already included in your application, such as any relevant experience you may have or specialized skills. If you have already written a cover letter or essay for your application, provide this to your recommender. It can help them emphasize the points you have made and strengthen your application.

In addition to describing a candidate's qualifications, a recommendation letter should also promote their character. Leadership skills, dedication, ability to focus, and ability to learn quickly are all skills that are good to highlight in a recommendation letter. A great letter of recommendation balances describing both work that someone has done in the past and how it relates to their suitability for the position.

Who Can Write a Recommendation Letter?

Who should you ask to write you a letter of recommendation? The answer [depends on what you need the letter for](#). Teachers, school counselors, extracurricular activity coaches or sponsors, and principals can write a recommendation letter if you are applying to an undergraduate program. If you are applying to a graduate program, you should ask your college professors, internship supervisors, or work superiors or colleagues to vouch for you. Recommendations from job supervisors or managers strengthen applications for MBA programs. Letters from undergraduate professors are generally not as helpful for MBA applicants as they are for MS/MA applicants.

Before you ask anyone to write you a recommendation letter, you should make sure that they feel comfortable and confident in recommending you. They should know you and how you work reasonably well. In other words, if you didn't work with the CEO, don't ask her to write you a letter! If someone seems hesitant to provide you with a recommendation, don't push the issue. It's better to ask someone else than to risk receiving an unfavorable recommendation.

Remember, friends, family members, or juniors are all examples of who you should never ask to write you a recommendation letter. It is always preferable to obtain a recommendation from a non-family member, even if you have worked for your family's business. Like this way, you can avoid the appearance of bias.

What Makes a Recommendation Letter Stand Out?

A great letter of recommendation [includes specific examples and anecdotes](#) that demonstrate the applicant's skills and qualifications. It backs up descriptions of your qualifications with examples. You want your letters of recommendation to demonstrate that you not only possess good qualities but also apply them. Let us compare the following two examples:

- Sukrit has excellent leadership skills and is confident.
- Sukrit has demonstrated leadership skills during his internship with our company. When the interns were assigned a group project, it was Sukrit who immediately organized the group. He led the process of listing the tasks to be completed and arranging a schedule to do so. He led the team in delegating the work and did so in a manner where everyone felt heard and comfortable.

While the first example lists Sukrit's characteristics. The second gives a clear example of how Sukrit functions in a team environment. It also shows that this recommender understands that "leadership" means working well with others and not merely ordering them around. If Sukrit is applying for a job where he needs to work in a team, this letter shows that he has what it takes to succeed. A great letter will [focus on your accomplishments, contributions, motivation, attitude, reliability, consistency, and other such skills](#).

It is crucial to ensure that the person providing the recommendation knows you well and has a favorable opinion of your capability. With a great letter of recommendation, your application will stand out from the rest!

Do you have any tips for getting a great recommendation letter? Has a recommendation letter ever secured you a position? Let us know your thoughts in the comments below.

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