

Asking for a Recommendation Letter

A recommendation letter (or letter of reference) is a written assessment of your qualities, capabilities and characteristics. This letter is meant to endorse you for a particular graduate program, internship, fellowship, volunteer opportunity or job. Most letters of recommendation for an academic program are written by faculty members, supervisors, or academic advisors who have had direct contact with you and know you well.

Consider the following:

- Give your reference at least three to four weeks to write the recommendation.
- Asking for a recommendation in-person is more meaningful than through any other method, but email is fine if done correctly. Just make sure it has correct punctuation, is free of grammatical or spelling errors and that you use his/her correct title (i.e. Dr. Smith etc.).

Provide the following:

1. Your contact information
2. A copy of your most recent résumé or curriculum vitae (CV)
3. Brief overview of the job or program for which you are applying and the reasons for your interest
4. Explain how they will be submitting their recommendations (i.e. online link, email, etc.). Be clear to mention any guidelines and deadlines that must be followed or met.

TIPS

1. Get to know your professors! If professors know you well, it will be easier for them to write a good recommendation.
 - Attend office hours and ask questions.
 - Talk to them about your career goals and ask for their advice.
2. Follow up a week or two before the deadline to confirm that he/she has submitted your recommendation.
3. Whether selected for the job or program or not, be sure to send a thank you note to your references and provide them with a status of your application.