

How to Get a Great Letter of Recommendation

Letters of Recommendation are often required for graduate school, scholarships, and job interviews. Sometimes these letters carry tremendous weight; therefore you should strive for the best letter possible.

1st: Ask your professor (employer, friend, etc) to write the letter **at least** 2 weeks in advance.

2nd: Once they have agreed to write the letter, provide them with all the information regarding the letter's recipient:

- a. What is the letter for
- b. Who should the letter be addressed to
- c. What are the directions for delivery (does the letter need to be sealed, do they mail the letter directly or give it to you, etc)

3rd: Also, provide them with all your information. **DO NOT ASSUME ANYTHING.** Doing this accomplishes two things. First, it provides an outline for your letter-writer, making it easier and quicker to generate a letter. Second, this gives you a chance to make sure everything you want is in the letter, including information the letter-writer may or may not have known. Here are some examples of what you should supply:

- a. List the classes you had with the professor, the grades you received, attendance (if impressive), and anything else that may have made you stand out in that class.
- b. Provide your degree information, GPA (if impressive), extracurricular/volunteer activities, scholarships/awards, job experiences (if relevant), and future goals/plans.
- c. Finally, describe any experiences or information that makes you unique among other applicants.