

Assignment: Read the following article about letters of recommendations then take a look at sample letter of recommendation.

Letters of Recommendation

Requesting References

If you're interviewing for a new job, expect to have your references checked prior to getting an offer. Having good references can be the clincher to getting that new job. Plan ahead and compile a list of references and some letters of recommendations now, so you're prepared when a prospective employer requests them.

Whom to ask for references ~

Who should you ask to provide references? On the average, employers check three references for each candidate, so have at least that many ready to vouch for you. It's important to know your references, to select the right people, and to get their permission to use them. You need responsive people that can confirm that you worked there, your title, your reason for leaving and other details. It's also very important to have a good idea of what they are going to say about your background and your performance. It's perfectly acceptable to use references other than your employer. Business acquaintances, professors/academic advisors, customers, and vendors can all make good references. If you volunteer consider using leaders or other members of the organization as personal references.

When leaving a position you should ask for a letter of recommendation from your manager. As time passes and people move on, it's easy to lose track of previous employers, so with letters in hand, in advance, you'll have written documentation of your credentials to give to prospective employers. If you haven't done so already, it's never too late to go back and ask for letters from previous employers to include in your personal files.

How to ask for a letter of recommendation ~

Don't ask "Could you write a letter of reference for me?" Just about anyone can write a letter. The problem can be what they are going to write about. Rather, ask "Do you feel you know my work well enough to write me a good recommendation letter?" or "Do you feel you could give me a good reference?" That way, your reference writer has an easy out if they are not comfortable writing a letter and you can be assured that those who say "yes" will be enthusiastic about your performance and will write a positive letter. Offer to provide an updated copy of your resume and information on your skills and experiences so the reference writer has current information to work with.

In addition to references, you may be asked for contact information concerning your supervisor. However, prospective employers should get your permission before contacting your current supervisor to avoid jeopardizing your current position.

Sample Letter of Recommendation.

XYZ Engineering

123 XYZ Way • New York City • NY • 12345
(123) 555-0000 • Fax (123) 555-0001

February 1, 2000

To Whom it May Concern:

I've been Michael Smith's manager at XYZ Engineering for almost four years. It was my pleasure to promote Michael to mechanical engineer II last year, because he consistently meets and often exceeds his job requirements.

Michael is an enthusiastic, dedicated employee with reliable work habits. He often does not need guidance or supervision, but willingly accepts it when offered. He is consistently successful in improving his skills, and he works hard to do so.

Michael is always willing to pitch in to help the team, and he gets the job done right the first time. He is efficient in planning projects, punctual in meeting deadlines, and conscientiously adheres to company standards and guidelines.

You'd be hard pressed to find an employee more dedicated than Michael, and I recommend him as a rock-solid addition to your engineering staff. If you'd like more information, I'd be happy to provide it. Please call the phone number above and ask for me by name.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

John Doe
Manager, Mechanical Engineering

Resume Assignment E. Letters of Recommendation

Think of two people that know you well enough to give you a reference. Print out two copies of the sample below and give each of those people a copy. Tell them to use the sample as a guide when writing the letter for you. If the person agrees to write you a letter of recommendation, be sure to thank them for their time and to ask when you can pick up the letter. It is your responsibility to get the letter and then bring it in for a grade. You may not ask Lupe or me, find someone else who knows you. 1000 points.

[Your Name]
[Street Address]
[City, ST ZIP Code]
October 25, 2004

[Recipient Name]
[Title]
[Company Name]
[Street Address]
[City, ST ZIP Code]

Dear [Recipient Name]:

It is with great pleasure that I recommend_____. I have known her for _____years.

_____has always displayed a high degree of integrity, responsibility, and ambition. She is definitely a leader rather than a follower. In addition to her excellent scholastic accomplishments, she has proven her leadership ability by organizing a hockey league in North Dakota to provide young people an opportunity to compete and learn good sportsmanship.

She is also a most dependable team player. Her good judgment and mature outlook ensure a logical and practical approach to her endeavors.

_____would be an asset to any organization, and I am happy to give her my wholehearted endorsement.

Sincerely,

Your Name and title