

Letters of Recommendation: Who to ask, what to give them.

(For Student Use Only)

Why this is important: Many times letters of recommendation are required when applying for scholarships or college. Don't underestimate the importance of these letters. While your transcript, standardized test scores, and essays provide vital information about you, an excellent letter of recommendation can make up for weaknesses in any of these areas and provide information that isn't found elsewhere in the application. This letter usually includes your character traits, accomplishments, leadership qualities, and experiences that make you unique.

Who to ask: First rule is you CANNOT use a relative. It should be someone who knows you well and can say good things about you. Possible people ask include: teachers, club sponsors, coaches, administrators, counselors, employers, & community leaders. These people should...

- know you well & long enough to write with authority
- know your work & can say positive things about you
- have a high opinion of you & be able to favorably compare you with your peers
- know your educational and career goals
- know what college you are applying to
- be able to write a good letter

How to ask: When you approach potential person, ask if they know you well enough to write a meaningful letter. Pay attention to their demeanor. If you sense reluctance, thank them and ask someone else. Remember the following:

- Ask early (giving them 2-3 weeks is best, but at the very least give them 48 hours before YOU need it)
- If adding to portfolio to use in the future, ask a teacher before the course ends
- Ask in person if possible
- Explain what you are applying for

Info to provide: Don't assume your letter writer knows or remembers everything about you. Provide all information that you think may be helpful or that you would like to have appear in the letter of recommendation by completing the "**Letter of Recommendation Request.**" Additional Items you may need to provide the letter writer:

- A copy of your unofficial transcript
- Copy of Recommendation Form (if college/scholarship requires their own form be used)
- If the letter writer is to submit recommendation themselves, provide mailing instructions and a pre-addressed stamped envelope
- The "*Tips for Writing Recommendation Letters*" *handout*

Deadline Approaches: Check back to see if they have completed/submitted your recommendation.

Afterwards: Send them a short thank you note and let them know the outcome of your application. You never know when you might need to use them again.

- The note should be **handwritten** on a blank Thank You note card.
- The note should be addressed to the person writing the recommendation letter for you.
- The note should either be given along with the Letter of Recommendation Request form, or mailed within one week of receiving the completed letter from them.
- See sample below:

Dear _____:

Thank you very much for taking the time to write a recommendation letter for me. It will play an important role in the application process in my pursuit of financial aid for college in the form of scholarships.

I deeply appreciate your investment in my future as my _____ (teacher, counselor, coach, advisor, pastor, supervisor....). I hope that one day I will be able to give something back to those who have assisted me in achieving my dreams.

Sincerely,

(Your Full Name so they can read it)

Letter of Recommendation Request

To: _____ From: _____ Date: _____

If you would please write a letter of recommendation for me on **official letterhead**, I would appreciate it very much. Could you also please make me 5 (five) additional **original** copies addressed, "To Whom It May Concern:" so that I may use them for additional scholarships?

This letter of recommendation is for: ___ Scholarship ___ College ___ Job ___ Other

Name of scholarship/ college/business to which I'm applying _____

The deadline for this letter of recommendation is _____

GPA 4.0 _____ Class Rank ____/____ SAT Score (CR & Math) _____ Cumulative ACT Score _____

My intended college major is _____ My career goal is _____

Clubs/organizations (school, community, church) I've been a member of or Awards I've received during high school			
Club/Organization or Award Name	Position Held (member/officer)	Membership Dates	Activities, Events & Awards

Jobs I've had during high school			
Business Name	Position	Employment Dates	Job Duties & Awards

Volunteer work I've done during high school		
Place of Service	Dates of Service	Description of Service & Awards