



How to Ask for a Recommendation

Having references or recommenders is a way for a new organization to get a feel for your workstyle and how you really function in your day to day. There is a lot of responsibility wrapped up in being someone's reference, so when you ask, don't take it lightly.

The Ask

- Ensuring your recommender is not only knowledgeable about your skills and interests, but also the opportunity they are recommending you for.
- Not all recommendations are enthusiastic, even if your person has committed to writing you one. Remember to clarify that they would be willing to write you an enthusiastic recommendation or reference.
- Presentation and clarity are key for the success of any written document on your behalf.
- Ask potential recommenders three to four weeks in advance to provide them ample time to write and edit as needed. If you have asked that recommender for a similar document in the past, requests should be made two weeks prior to submission (at a minimum).

The Power 3

➤ Share your updated resume

Nobody wants to go in flying blind. Even if your recommender knows you well, a resume sets a good base for them to work from.

➤ Statement of purpose

A brief outline about why you are a good fit for this position and 3-5 skills or attributes you wanted highlighted in your recommendation. This is a great place to enter your statement of purpose.

Your recommender may know one or two really great things about your skills and work, but don't let the well run dry. Make sure they know what to highlight.

➤ Description and instructions about the position

Never leave your recommender without a clear path and reminders. They are busy people, too. It's all too often that your recommendation may be second priority. Be proactive.