

## LECTURE -04

# Letter of Recommendation

Course Instructor: Laiq Hasan

## What is a letter of Recommendation?

- A letter written by a previous employer, professor, colleague, client or a teacher for recommending an individual's work or academic performance.
- The goal of recommendation letter is to vouch for the skills, achievements and aptitude of the person being recommended.

## Where is it needed?

- A letter of recommendation is usually required when applying for
  - Higher studies (MS,PHD etc.)
  - Internships.
  - Jobs etc.
- It is a very important part of the application and is given high weightage by the admission committees/recruiters.

## Requesting a Letter of Recommendation

- Request a recommendation letter from people who know you and your capabilities, such as
  - Former employers.
  - Teachers.
  - Coaches.
  - Influential friends who have known you for a long time.
- Relatives are not a good choice.
- Be sure to give the referee enough time to write the reference letter.

## Continued..

- Tell the people who agree to write letters for you about your goals and what they could write that would help you achieve those goals.
- It may be helpful to suggest specific phrases or sentences that the writer could write in your letter.
- Once you receive your recommendation letters, send the writers thank-you notes.
- It is always a nice gesture to let each writer know about your subsequent success and how much their letters helped you to attain your goal.

# Writing a Letter of Recommendation

## Guidelines

- Explain how you know the applicant and how long you have known him/her.
- Explain in what respect is this person exceptional to others you have known with a similar background.
- Describe the applicant's exceptional qualities and skills, especially those which are related to the applicant's field of interest or job search.
- Present specific examples to back up what you have written.

## Continued..

- Talk about the candidate's competencies like
  - Organizational and communication skills.
  - Academic and other achievements.
  - Interaction with others.
  - Sound judgment.
  - Reliability.
  - Analytical ability.
- Emphasize key points from the candidate's resume that you want the reader (employer, admission committee etc.) to take note of.

## Continued..

- Generally, a letter of recommendation for employment is one page while for academic programs, it maybe longer (up to two pages).
- Unless it is absolutely relevant, do not refer (either in a direct or implied reference) to the applicant's race, religion, national origin, age, disability, gender, or marital status.



# Recommendation Letter Template

Typically, a Recommendation Letter has the following structure

- Salutation.
- Paragraph 1.
- Paragraph 2.
- Paragraph 3.
- Summary.
- Conclusion.

## I. Salutation

- If you are writing a personal letter of recommendation, include a salutation (Dear Dr. Smith, Dear Mr. Jones, etc.).
- If you are writing a general letter, say "To Whom it May Concern" or simply do not include a salutation.

## 2. Paragraph I

The first paragraph of the recommendation letter explains your connection to the person you are recommending i.e.

- How you know him/her?
- Why you are qualified to write a reference letter to recommend employment or admission to graduate school?

## 3. Paragraph 2

- The second paragraph of the recommendation letter should contain specific information on the person you are writing about including
  - Why (s)he is qualified?
  - What makes him/her stand out?
  - What (s)he can contribute?
- If necessary, use more than one paragraph to provide details.

## 4. Paragraph 3

- This paragraph should include information on how the person's skills match the position they are applying for.
- Ask for a copy of the job posting and a copy of the person's resume so you can target your reference letter accordingly.

## 5. Summary

- This section of the recommendation letter contains a brief summary of why are you recommending the person.
- State that you "highly recommend" the person or you "recommend without reservation" or something similar.

## 6. Conclusion

- The concluding paragraph of the reference letter contains an offer to provide more information.
- Contact details can be given in the return address section of your letter, or in your signature.

# Recommendation Letter Sample


## Letter of Recommendation

After having known Afzaal Ahmad for about three years now, as his instructor, it is my pleasure that I recommend him to the summer internship programme of Pakistan Tobacco Company. I first got to know Afzaal when he was a student in my Principles of Financial Accounting class and later on he got enrolled in my other class, Principles of Auditing. Both of these courses he passed with good grades and made a strong impression on me. His intelligent questions and dedication to the course quickly made him stand out from his peers. Later on, when he requested to be my Teaching Assistant (TA) I was more than happy to have him on my team.

Afzaal performed his duties with finesse and alacrity. I saw that he has an insightful and perceptive mind through his ability to make meaningful recommendations about how the testing instruments should be conducted. Once I had delegated something to him, I never had to worry about it because he was as dependable as he claimed to be. I was impressed with his ability to finish the tasks well before the deadline. He was punctual and always came prepared in the class. He has great interpersonal skills and is great when working in a team. He always made me feel that he and I were on the same page. The other students working with me also commented favorably about his dedication and I could see in him a worker who has a positive impact on his group mates.

Afzaal is a careful observer and creative thinker with an eye for details and a devotion to logic, which will help him tremendously in his field of interest. He has a great zeal for research and higher studies. He is fully motivated and enthusiastic towards his higher studies.

In short, Afzaal has high level of moral and ethical standards, self-confidence and leadership skills. He is always motivated to take up new challenges. I am sure his talents will be utilized and proven in your programme if given a chance. I, therefore, strongly recommend him as a potential candidate for your summer internship programme. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you need any further information in this regard.

 03/04/18  
Syed Zain ul Abidin



Teaching Fellow

Suleman Dawood School of Business

Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS)

e-mail: [syed.zain@lums.edu.pk](mailto:syed.zain@lums.edu.pk) phone: +92 42 35605326



## Assignment

- Suppose you are applying for graduate school or for a job in a company of your choice.
- Write a recommendation letter on your referee's behalf for yourself keeping in mind the guidelines.
- Submit your assignment before the class next week.

## Acknowledgement

The content presented in this lecture is inspired by miscellaneous sources.

- [Writing-letters-of-recommendation-PACE UNIVERSITY CAREER SERVICES.](#)
- [Writing good letter of recommendations.](#)